2016

Identity Styles, Mediated by Commitment and Syncretism, as Predictors of Undergraduate Students' Attitudes Toward Selected Discipleship Practice at Vally View University in Ghana in 2015: Implications for Religious Education

Juvenal Balisasa

Andrews University, balisasa@andrews.edu

This research is a product of the graduate program in [Religious Education, PhD](#) at Andrews University. [Find out more](#) about the program.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dissertations>

Part of the [Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Balisasa, Juvenal, "Identity Styles, Mediated by Commitment and Syncretism, as Predictors of Undergraduate Students' Attitudes Toward Selected Discipleship Practice at Vally View University in Ghana in 2015: Implications for Religious Education" (2016). *Dissertations*. 1614.

<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dissertations/1614>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Research at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact repository@andrews.edu.

Seek Knowledge. Affirm Faith. Change the World.

Thank you for your interest in the

**Andrews University Digital Library
of Dissertations and Theses.**

*Please honor the copyright of this document by
not duplicating or distributing additional copies
in any form without the author's express written
permission. Thanks for your cooperation.*

ABSTRACT

IDENTITY STYLES, MEDIATED BY COMMITMENT AND SYNCRETISM, AS
PREDICTORS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD
SELECTED DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICES AT VALLEY VIEW
UNIVERSITY IN GHANA IN 2015: IMPLICATIONS
FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

by

Juvénal Balisasa

Adviser: John V. G. Matthews

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: IDENTITY STYLES, MEDIATED BY COMMITMENT AND SYNCRETISM,
AS PREDICTORS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES
TOWARD SELECTED DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICES AT VALLEY VIEW
UNIVERSITY IN GHANA IN 2015: IMPLICATIONS FOR RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION

Name of the researcher: Juvénal Balisasa

Name and degree of faculty adviser: John V. G. Matthews, PhD

Date Completed: May 2016

Problem

The study of student life on campus has attracted numerous social science enquiries especially in the areas of spirituality, religiosity, and meaning making in life. Of particular interest has been the attempt to restore value-based education in Christian institutions of higher learning, taking cognizance of the need for cultural contextualization and the influence of postmodern ideology. This present study sought to examine the possible predictive role of identity styles, mediated by commitment and

syncretism, in the attitudes towards discipleship practices among undergraduate students of Valley View University in Ghana, West Africa in 2015.

Method

The study employed the principles of a quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional survey. Non-random convenient sampling method was used to collect data. Eight hundred students were sampled from the second to the fourth year groups. The study used path analysis as the main technique to examine the data.

Results

All the endogenous variables were significantly predicted (Commitment [$R^2 = .400$], Syncretism [$R^2 = .278$], Satisfaction [$R^2 = .020$], and Involvement [$R^2 = .482$]) in their respective hierarchical path models. However, the overall hypothesized model did not fit the data. The total effects of the exogenous variables (i.e., Informational identity style, Normative identity style, and Diffuse-avoidant identity style) on satisfaction (.118; .009; and .028, respectively) and on involvement (.082; .006; and .019, respectively) were weak. However, there were significant relationships between some variables, which have important implications for discipleship and religious education in higher education.

Conclusions

The results of the study showed that students' self-reported identity styles did not significantly predict their satisfaction and involvement in discipleship practices at Valley View University. These results are in line with the biblical perspective of discipleship, in that Christian discipleship does not primarily depend on what the prospective disciples are at the point of their calling, but on the way in which they are led to encounter Jesus Christ.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

IDENTITY STYLES, MEDIATED BY COMMITMENT AND SYNCRETISM, AS
PREDICTORS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD
SELECTED DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICES AT VALLEY VIEW
UNIVERSITY IN GHANA IN 2015: IMPLICATIONS
FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Juvénal Balisasa

May 2016

© Copyright by Juvénal Balisasa 2016
All Rights Reserved

IDENTITY STYLES, MEDIATED BY COMMITMENT AND SYNCRETISM, AS
PREDICTORS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD
SELECTED DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICES AT VALLEY VIEW
UNIVERSITY IN GHANA IN 2015: IMPLICATIONS
FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A dissertation
presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Juvénal Balisasa

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

John V. G. Matthews, Faculty Adviser
Professor of Religious Education and
Educational Foundations

John V. G. Matthews
Interim Director, PhD (Religious
Education)

Kathleen A. Beagles
Assoc Professor of Religious Education

Jiří Moskala
Dean, SDA Theological Seminary

Tevni E. Grajales,
Professor of Research and Statistical
Methodology

Elvin Gabriel
Professor of Educational Psychology
and Counselor Education

Gregory C. Carlson
Professor of Christian Ministries
Trinity International University

Date approved

To my mother, who always urged me
to serve in the house of God

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	viii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
ABBREVIATIONS	x
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	xi
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background of the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	7
Purpose of the Study	7
Research Questions	8
Conceptual Framework	9
Methodology	11
Significance of the Study	12
Definition of Terms	12
Delimitation of the Study	14
Limitations of the Study	14
Outline of the Chapters	15
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	16
Introduction	16
Elements of Syncretism in African theological thought	
On Christian Discipleship	17
Introduction	17
The Concept of Religious Syncretism and Contextualization	17
Theological Orientation of African Christian Thought	19
Christ's Discipleship Model	26
Introduction	26
Jesus' Baptism in Mark as a Didactic Springboard	
for Discipleship Modeling	28
Preliminary Observations on "Jesus' Baptism Narrative"	29
Gleanings From Literature on Jesus' Baptism in Mark's Gospel	31
Structural Analysis of Mark 1:7-11	38
The Dynamics of Discipleship in Jesus' Baptism Narrative	42

Concluding Remarks for the Reader of Mark 1:7-11 and Some Implications for Discipleship Practices at VVU	44
The Postmodern Context of Campus Discipleship	45
Introduction	45
Postmodernism and Christian Discipleship	46
VVU Discipleship Context and Strategies	49
Identity Styles	52
Student Commitments and Attitudes	55
Social Desirability	58
Chapter Summary	60
3. METHODOLOGY	62
Introduction	62
Type of Research	62
Population and Sample	63
Description	63
Sampling Methods	64
Hypotheses	67
Definition of Variables	68
Instrumentation, Validity, and Reliability	73
Identity Styles Inventory (SIS-5) Scale	73
Social Desirability Scale	74
Syncretism Scale	75
Satisfaction and Involvement Scales	75
Data Collection	78
Data Quality Control	78
Announcement of the Research	81
Voluntary Participation	82
Confidentiality and Participant Consent	83
Data Collection in the Classroom	84
Data Collection in the Auditorium	85
Data Analysis	85
Choice of the Main Analysis Technique	86
Data Screening	86
Screening for Participation During Data Collection	87
Screening for Errors, Missing Data, Outliers, and Multicollinearity	87
Chapter Summary	93
4. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH	95
Introduction	95
Description of Participants	95
Description of Variables in the Study	99
Computation and General Characteristics of Summative Variables	100

Analysis of Variance	102
Variables Bivariate Correlations	104
Hypotheses Testing	105
Prediction of Desirability	106
Prediction of Desirability and Commitment	106
Prediction of Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism	108
Prediction of Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction	108
Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, Satisfaction, and Involvement	109
Path Model Summary	111
Chapter Summary	112
 5. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	 115
Introduction	115
Summary of the Study	115
Literature	116
Methodology	120
Results	121
Demographic Information	121
Distribution and Dispersion of Scores	121
Bivariate Correlations	122
Hypotheses Testing	122
H ₀₁ : Prediction of social desirability	123
H ₀₂ : Prediction of social desirability, and commitment	123
H ₀₃ : Prediction of social desirability, commitment, and syncretism	123
H ₀₄ : Prediction of social desirability, commitment, syncretism, and satisfaction	124
H ₀₅ : Prediction of social desirability, commitment, syncretism, satisfaction, and involvement	124
Discussion of Results	125
Participants' Characteristics	125
Bivariate Correlations	126
Hypotheses Testing	127
H ₀₁ : Prediction of Social Desirability	127
H ₀₂ : Prediction of Social Desirability and Commitment	128
H ₀₃ : Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism	128
H ₀₄ : Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment. Syncretism, and Satisfaction	129

H ₀₅ : Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, Satisfaction, and Involvement	130
Conclusions	131
Implications for Religious Education	134
Limitations	142
Recommendations	143
Recommendations for VVU Campus Ministries	143
Recommendations for Further Research	144
Appendix	146
A. LETTERS	147
B. PILOT STUDY RESULTS	101
C. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT	165
D. SOURCES AND DEFINITIONS OF VARIABLES	173
E. MULTIPLE CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR RESEARCH VARIABLES	185
REFERENCE LIST	187
VITA	209

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Conceptual Model of the Impact of Students' Identity Styles on their attitudes Towards Discipleship Practices at VVU	11
2. Prediction of Social Desirability	107
3. Prediction of Social Desirability and Commitment	107
4. Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism	109
5. Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction	110
6. Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, Satisfaction, and Involvement	111
7. Christ's Discipleship Model	137

LIST OF TABLES

1.	Enrollment Statistics on Oyibi Campus for Second Semester 2014/2015	65
2.	Enrollment Statistics on Techiman Campus for Second Semester 2014/2015	65
3.	Fit Indices for the Measurement Model	78
4.	Representativeness of Levels of Study in the Overall Sample	88
5.	Representativeness of Areas of Study in the Overall Sample	89
6.	Overall Summary of Missing Values for Research Variables	90
7.	Overall Summary of Missing Values for Demographic Variables	90
8.	Frequencies and Percentages of Demographic Variables	96
9.	Bonferroni's Post Hoc Test for Comparison Between Adventists and Other Groups	100
10.	General Characteristics of Summative Variables	101
11.	Test of Homoscedasticity and Equality of Means	103
12.	Bivariate Correlations Between Summative Variables	104
13.	Fit Indices for the Empirical Model Based on Hierarchical Hypotheses	113
14.	Summary of Effects in the Hypothesized Model	114

TABLES IN APPENDIX D AND APPENDIX E

1.	Sources of Items of the Research Instrument	174
2.	Conceptual, Instrumental, and Operational Definitions of Variables	175
3.	Multiple Correlation Coefficients for Research Variables	186

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

VVU	Valley View University
ACCU	Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
CCCU	Council of Christian Colleges and Universities
ESCA	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
IRRD	Inter-Religious Relations and Dialogue
PCID	Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue
MCSDS	Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
TLI	Turker-Lewis Index
NFI	Normed-Fit Index
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index
AGFI	Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Residual
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
MCAR	Missing Completely at Random
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to Andrews University for granting me a tuition scholarship, and to Valley View University for supporting me with study leave and some school expenses. May the Lord bless all who contributed to the scholarships.

While many people contributed in diverse ways to making my religious education journey a reality, some played outstanding roles and need to be mentioned. Jane Thayer fought against waves and tides until I was able to start the program. Kathleen Beagles continuously ensured that I remained in the program despite challenges on the way. Jimmy Kijai offered me free textbooks and tutorials when I could not afford to pay for classes. Lyn R. Bartlett offered me free accommodation when I could not afford rent. Tevni Grajales demonstrated to me the Christian ministry of presence and instilled in me the worth of academic integrity. John Matthews instilled in me deep Christian thought and scrupulously supervised my dissertation. My two course mates— Pastors Pete Palmer and Anthony Gavin—made several sacrifices to attend to my needs.

My dear wife Victoria and our children Alfred, Théonille, and Esther went through difficult moments during my journey; but the Lord still used them immeasurably to support me spiritually and emotionally. They are an indispensable part of my life.

My greatest thanks go the Almighty God for calling even me to partake of his holy religious education ministries. To Him be glory forevermore for great things He has done for me through His sons and daughters.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study set out to explore the interplay of selected factors that are involved in student discipleship practices at Valley View University (VUU)—a Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher education in Ghana, West Africa. The study specifically focused on the possible relationships between students’ self-reported identity styles and their involvement and satisfaction vis-à-vis the university’s discipleship practices as outlined in its current academic bulletin and student handbook.

Background to the Study

Effective Christian religious education in the twenty-first century is confronted with, as Chang (2000) puts it, “what to proclaim to a society that previously understood itself to be ‘Christian’ but now seems to be fragmenting, and what to say when truths previously held to be universal are under assault from a disorienting religious pluralism” (p. 9). This challenge is arguably more accentuated in the case of religious education in academic environments where the clash of worldviews is probably fiercest. And the negative consequences for religious education on campus can be very significant.

For instance, Kullberg (2007) remarks that despite its early religion-enshrined mottoes such as “*Veritas* (Truth, 1643), *In Christi Gloriam* (To the Glory of Christ, 1650), and *Christo et Ecclesiae* (For Christ and the Church, 1692)” (p. 17), Harvard University has become a place where “souls are reduced to bodies. Minds are reduced to

brains. Consciences are reduced to political polls” (p.13). “Many professors have become like ‘priests who have lost their faith, and kept their jobs’” (p.18).

Obviously, such a dramatic effacement of religious and spiritual values on campus might have been an important drive for the recent growing enquiry into spirituality and religiosity in higher education in general. In this regard, Astin, Astin, and Lindholm’s (2004) study reported “[a] high level of spiritual engagement and commitment” (para. 5); Dennis, Cox, Black, and Muller (2009) observed that “religiosity and spirituality decreased unhealthy drinking behaviors” (p. 95); Gebelt, Thomson, and Miele (2009) also observed a similar student spiritual interest on both religious and public campuses (p. 230); Clarke (2010) noted the increasing spiritual development among student athletes (p. xi); Parades-Collins and Collins (2011) discovered a decreased religious involvement in colleges that are not intentional about creating adaptive optional environments to cater for students of different backgrounds (p. 95), and Wood and Hilton (2012) reported that spirituality served as an inspiration for excellence (p. 43).

Christian higher education should, in principle, provide a holistic education that leads learners to discover the divine meaning and purpose of life through all realms of academic and non-academic endeavors. “In the highest sense,” White (1952) observed, “the work of education and the work of redemption are one” (p. 30). In this regard, Trueblood (as cited in Woodrow, 2005) describes a befitting Christian campus environment, saying that “a Christian college is an institution of higher learning in which the Christian revelation provides the major premise for the entire intellectual operation” (p. 316).

Indeed, Christian colleges and universities have generally spelt out in their mission statements their distinctiveness from other colleges and universities. The aim of such a distinctive educational philosophy is to lead students to perceive their academic pursuit as not an end in itself but a tool to help them know God better and service him and humanity selflessly. This is a way of training students into “Christian discipleship,” which, as Pratt (2009) puts it, “is a matter of engaging both self and the world in the quest for deeper knowledge of God and living out the life which goes with that quest and knowledge” (p. 333). In the same line of thought, the World Council of Churches (2014) affirms discipleship as “drawing people to Christ to be his witnesses, and not merely focusing on the numbers or namesake conversions” (p. 131).

Abelman and Malessandro (2009) conducted a study that sought to compare mission statements of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ESCA), and the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). This study established the fact that “clearly, Catholic, Evangelical and ‘Christ-centered’ colleges and universities have realized the importance of institutional vision statements in reflecting and reinforcing their distinctive religious identity and academic aspirations” (p. 89).

This is, for example, reflected in the early rules of famous institutions such as Harvard’s “Every one shall consider the Mayne End of his life & studies, to know God & Jesus Christ, which is Eternal life,” and Yale’s “youth may be instructed in the arts and sciences, who through the blessings of Almighty God, may be fitted for public employment, both in church and civil State” (Woodrow, 2005, p. 314).

In fact, despite the negative attitude towards fundamentalist pietism which, as Gehrz (2011) asserts, used to be accused of making “the Christian college an extension of Sunday school” (p. 140), Gehrz still recommends two prominent pietists (Lundquist and Olsson) for their conception of the Christian college “as a church-renewing community sustained by shared convertive piety, and their struggles to seek orthodoxy and orthopraxy without sacrificing a high view of Christian freedom” (p. 154).

Earlier, Andreasen (2005) had perused the more or less congruent missions of some of the main Christian higher educational systems in a search for life-fulfilling education. He noted that for a Catholic college, “the sacraments make all life sacred, including the life of an unborn;” for a Lutheran college, the emphasis is on “grace and faith in the life of students to the exclusion of almost everything else;” for an Evangelical college, students are entreated “to come to Jesus just as they are, and to claim Him as their Personal Savior;” for a Reformed college, the emphasis is on the belief that “God has already claimed the whole world and everyone within it as His;” for Seventh-day Adventists, the distinctive element is “we Adventists are people who wait for God to come, once each week, and from the future” (pp. 124, 125).

Hittenberger (2004) had also contended that the Pentecostal/Charismatic distinctiveness in Christian higher education is “to participate and thrive ‘in’ the world of globalization and marketization without becoming ‘of’ that world” (p. 215). In my estimation, Pecherskaya’s (as cited in Griffioen, 2002) reminder to Christian educators of their calling sums it up as far as the ultimate goal and mission of higher education is concerned. He contends that

we people of the Church of the 21st Century are also responsible that the students we are teaching through us could hear at last [the] solemn and victorious words which

have been sounding now for about 2000 years saying: I am standing at the door knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you and you with me (Rev 3:20). (p. 298)

There has also been a growing interest in research on the interaction of campus practices and student faith and religion (Henderson, 2003; Kazanjian, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Shadrach, 2003). In this same line of enquiry, some preliminary exploration has been done at VVU campus—which is the location for the present study—connection with students’ spirituality and religiosity. These include Takyi’s (2010) D.Min. dissertation on winning Pentecostal students to Adventism, Abolarin’s (2013) Ph.D. dissertation on interpersonal relationships and student spirituality, and my investigation on the interaction between campus practices and students’ faith preference (Balisasa, 2014).

Moreover, research findings are gradually elucidating the strong connections between non-academic activities and students’ spirituality and religiosity on campus. Such connections include the stronger effect of non-academic factors than academic on student spirituality (Ma, 2003, p. 334), students’ growing interest and engagement in many new forms of spiritual search and practice (Dalton, Eberhardt, Bracken, & Echols, 2006, p. 2), and the strong positive relationships between participation in religious organizations and social integration, emotional well-being, and spirituality (Bryant, 2007, p. 14). Notwithstanding the increasing amount of information about students’ attitude toward religion and spirituality in the Western world, very little is known about related African realities. This is more critical in that even the few studies conducted on African populations stem largely from assumptions and observations made on Western

populations. This provides no guarantee that the outcome of the enquiries will reflect the sought-after understanding of African realities.

Additionally, while the effacement or distortion of religious education on campus might be yielding significantly similar consequences on all campuses worldwide, the approaches to effective religious education or discipleship may be different on campuses in each cultural and philosophical context. This is why there is the need to examine some peculiar characteristics of the population under study that may significantly interact with any discipleship or religious education endeavors. This study considers students' identity styles, commitment, and syncretism as possible significant factors that do interact with students' satisfaction and involvement in regard to discipleship practices.

Identity is understood in this study, as defined by Schwartz, Luyckx, and Vignoles (2011), as consisting of

the influence of the person's self-chosen or ascribed commitments, personal characteristics, and beliefs about herself; roles and positions in relation to significant others; and her membership in social groups and categories . . . as well as her identification with treasured material possession and her sense of where she belongs in geographical space. (p. 4)

Previous studies have identified some links between identity and the way people react in given circumstances. For instance, White and Jones' (1996, p. 502) found significant relationships between identity styles and behavior as well as attitude, while Hill, Allemand, and Burrow (2010, p. 9) observed a strong relationship between identity development and forgiveness. These findings allow for the assumption in that there may be significant relationships between identity styles and attitude such as involvement and satisfaction among the population under study.

Student's involvement in and satisfaction with the discipleship practices were also considered in this study based on findings such as Leonardi and Gialamas' (2009) observation that "attendance and belief salience were associated with better life satisfaction" (p. 241). Commitment and syncretism were used in this study as mediating factors for the relationship between identity styles (Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant) and attitudes (Satisfaction and Involvement). Finally, Social Desirability was used to control for the general perception that Africans tend to provide answers in conformity to what is socially acceptable instead of what is indeed true.

Statement of the Problem

In line with the Seventh-day Adventist Church's (2001) statement with reference to discipling students, VVU has defined spiritual goals for its graduates as follows: "Students should have a growing relationship with the Lord, nurtured through Bible study, personal devotion, commitment to witnessing, and selfless service to humanity" (*Valley View University [VVU] Academic Bulletin*, [2010], p.11). The problem this study set out to explore is encapsulated in the following interrogative statements. To what extent do students' identity styles influence their attitudes toward VVU's discipleship practices? What role would commitment and the presumed African religious syncretic traits play in the relationship between students' identity styles and their attitudes toward VVU's discipleship practices?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to initiate the identification of significant factors that influence the actualization of the goals of Seventh-day Adventist discipleship endeavors in higher education in West Africa. This purpose was achieved by examining

the interactions between students' self-reported identity styles and their satisfaction and involvement vis-à-vis VVU's discipleship practices, and how these interactions were mediated by students' commitment and syncretic traits.

Research Questions

The research attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Is the hypothesized path model—which describes the direct effects of Informational identity style, Normative identity style, and Diffuse-avoidant identity style on Social Desirability—consistent with observed correlations among these variables?
2. Is the hypothesized path model—which describes the direct and indirect effects of Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, and Social Desirability on Commitment—consistent with observed correlations among these variables?
3. Is the hypothesized path model—which describes the direct and indirect effects of Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, and Commitment on Syncretism—consistent with observed correlations among these variables?
4. Is the hypothesized path model—which describes the direct and indirect effects of Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism on Satisfaction—consistent with observed correlations among these variables?
5. Is the hypothesized path model—which describes the direct and indirect effects of Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style,

Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction on Involvement—
consistent with observed correlations among these variables?

Conceptual Framework

Christian higher education seems, over the years, to be gradually losing its focus. In America, for instance, Kullberg (2007, pp. 13, 17, 18) deplores the loss of mission at Harvard that has led the institution to becoming a main harbor of naturalism. Marsden (1994) had earlier described the role of religion, especially liberal Protestantism, in American higher education as a story of “disestablishment of religion” on the one hand, and “secularization,” on the other (p. 6).

The situation does not seem to differ in Eastern Europe, even though the major challenge takes its root in an orchestrated anti-Christian political propaganda. Petrenko and Glanzer (2005) explain this saying that

the relationship between religion and higher education was radically transformed following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. The teaching of religion was phased out and gradually replaced with disciplines aimed at propagating the materialist perspective on human life and history and Marxist-Leninist ideology. (p. 87)

For Asia, Vikner (2003) provides a wider scope of the struggle of Christian higher education:

Although, in Asia, there clearly appears to be a larger number of Christian institutions valiantly attempting to maintain a stronger Christian orientation, the pressures to move away from their founding principles are inexorable. More and more Christian institutions in Asia are becoming convinced that, if they are to survive, they have no choice but to succumb to the pressure to secularize, which has become so ubiquitous in modern society. (p. 3)

In Europe, according to Griffioen (2002), the compromises in Christian higher education have resulted in secularization which, “although nowadays of global dimensions, shows its ugliest face in this continent” (p. 298). With regard to the

challenges of Christian higher education in Africa, van der Walt (2002) deplored, on the one hand, the lack of

Christian servant-leaders in all areas of life. . . . Without committed leaders in this area, there can be little hope of a Christian approach in different disciplines, let alone establishing and maintaining a Christian institution for Christian higher education. (p. 219)

On the other hand, Kanitz (2005) identified the lack of contextualization of Westernized Christian higher education to the African learning factors. For him, Christian higher education in Africa should aim to

go beyond mere Christianity, taking into account the local Christian dialect shaped by denominational and institutional histories and by cultural influences. Doing so will perhaps help us and students avoid the missionary blunders of not learning first what indigenous worldviews already inhabit our minds and of not responding strategically to them. (p. 107)

And this approach to higher education in Africa, Kanitz contends, will lead students to discover their own minds and help them develop vibrant, holistic Christian worldviews.

In light of the literature as sampled above about an apparently general decline of discipleship or religious education on campus, the mission of VVU, a Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher learning, sounds natural, appropriate, and indispensable in the context of both the general *raison d'être* of Christian higher education and the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education. The mission statement reads: “Valley View University, a Seventh-day Adventist institution, emphasizes academic, spiritual, vocational, and technological excellence in a context that prepares lives for service to God and humanity” (*Valley View University [VVU] Academic Bulletin* [2010], p. 8).

However, despite the fact that the university is generally considered by some as one of the success stories on the continent in respect to the integration of Christian mission and transformational development (Schultheis, 2005, p.101), no thorough

empirical study, besides Takyi's (2010), Abolarin's (2013), and Balisasa's (2014) exploratory works, has been conducted with regard to effective discipleship on campus. The conceptual model in Figure 1 below illustrates the hypothesized relationships between the exogenous variables (identity styles), mediating variables (Commitment and Syncretism), and the dependent variables (Satisfaction and Involvement).

Figure 1. Conceptual model of the impact of students' identity styles on their attitudes towards discipleship practices at VVU in 2015

Methodology

This research employed the principles of a quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional survey. The main analysis technique employed is Path Analysis. Further details on methodology are provided in chapter three.

Significance of the Study

The concern for leading students to Christian discipleship commitment, as noted earlier, is of great significance especially on religion-based campuses such as VVU. The faith-based institutions' fear for secularization and loss of faith among young adults as they graduate and launch into searching for jobs, meaning, and purpose is real and justified. Field research that would inform the strategies for students' Christian discipleship is critical, notably in Africa where much of the discipleship practice is merely imported without significant contextualization. The present study could help inform West African Christian campus ministries in general and VVU in particular about the factors and dynamics of effective discipleship.

Definition of Terms

Identity: According to Schwartz, Luyckx, and Vignoles (2011),

identity consists of the confluence of the person's self-chosen or ascribed commitments, personal characteristics, and beliefs about herself; roles and positions in relation to significant others; and her membership in social groups and categories (including both her status within the group and the group's status in the larger context); as well as the her identification with treasured material possessions and her sense of where she belongs in geographical space. (p. 4)

Identity style: Identity-processing orientation "that governs and regulates the social-cognitive strategies used to construct, maintain, and/or reconstruct a sense of personal identity" (Berzonsky, 2011, p. 55).

Religiosity: "The practice of being religious (e.g., attending religious services, praying, ascribing value to one's religious beliefs)" (Gunnore & Moore, as cited in Beagles, 2009, p. 16).

Christian discipleship: Discipleship can refer to both the act of helping someone become a follower of Christ (John 1:40, 41; Matt 20:19, 20), or the process of becoming

a follower of Christ (1 Cor 9:27; Phil 3:8–11). In this study, discipleship will be used (unless otherwise indicated) in the sense of helping someone become a follower of Christ. In other words, discipleship will be understood in the sense of ‘discipling,’ which Collinson (2004) defines as “a voluntary, personal relationship between two individuals, in community or alone, in which the ‘discipler’ commits him or herself to mentor the disciple, by communicating (teaching) the Word of God to the disciple” (p. 4).

African religious beliefs: Set of beliefs that define the general religious atmosphere of a black African both as an individual and as a member of the community. Black Africans are often described, as Mbiti (1993) puts it, as “*homo africanus homo religiosus radicaliter* (the African man is radically religious)” (p. 136).

Syncretism: In the present study, syncretism will be understood from an African religious perspective as the “Christian involvement in occult practices such as visiting seances [sic] and fortune-tellers, playing with ones [sic] horoscopes, participation in magic of any kind, consulting mediums or spiritists in an attempt to locate some missing object(s), practice of placing curses, hexes, or a spell on someone” (Kasomo, 2012, p. 11).

Statement of Seventh-day Adventist Educational Philosophy: The official document of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that describes the assumptions, philosophy, aim and mission, agencies of education, the role of schools, colleges, and universities, the key components, as well as responsibilities and outcomes of the Church’s educational systems.

Religious education: Beagles (2009) defined religious education as “‘teaching them to obey all things whatsoever I have commanded you’ (Matt 28:19) within the

context of relationships in the home, school, and church” (p. 16). In the context of VVU discipleship practices, religious education would entail the proclamation of Christ’s word and love, and exhibition of Christlikeness in daily interaction among the members of the university community in order to foster Christian living. This definition of religious education links it operationally to discipleship, and both terms will be used interchangeably.

Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited to the data collected among the students enrolled at VVU in the second semester of the 2014/2015 academic year. More specifically, the study is delimited to the enrolled undergraduate students from the second (sophomore) to the fourth (senior) year who are assumed to have had a two-semester minimum exposure to the implementation of VVU’s discipleship practices. Note should be taken that I hold a high view of Scripture and interpret the Bible as the inspired word of God. This is important in chapters 2 and 5 where models of discipleship are discussed.

Limitations of the Study

1. The findings of this study are reflective of the general characteristics of self-reported identity styles, traits of religious syncretism, commitment, and attitudes to discipleship of currently enrolled students at VVU, but it does not identify changes in these characteristics over time. To identify trends based on an understanding of developments in the lives of the students would require a longitudinal study.
2. The scales for measuring students’ identity styles and commitment are yet to be validated in West African populations where the present study was conducted.

3. Due to lack of scales for religious syncretism, involvement and satisfaction that are specific to the African context, the scales used in this study were developed based on arguments and assertions from some African theologians. It is worth noting that these scales might be liable to unexplored validity and reliability issues.

Outline of the Chapters

This study is structured as follows: The first chapter consists of the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, conceptual framework, methodology, significance of the study, definition of terms, delimitations and limitations. The second chapter provides an overview of literature on elements of syncretism in African theological thought on Christian discipleship, Christ's discipleship model, the postmodern context of campus discipleship, VVU discipleship context and practices, identity styles, Commitment, student Involvement and Satisfaction, and Social Desirability.

The third chapter describes the research design and methodology that were used in the study. In other words, it describes the population and sample, sampling techniques, hypothesis formulation, definition of variables, and statistical techniques used to analyze the data. The fourth chapter reports the results in light of the research questions and hypotheses. The last chapter presents the summary of the study, discusses the results in light of other related findings, and draws conclusions on how students' identity styles interacted with their Satisfaction and Involvement vis-à-vis VVU's discipleship practices. The chapter also brings out implications for religious education, and finally makes recommendations for practice and further research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Enquiry on the subject of students' attitudes toward religion on campus has assumed a crescendo in recent times (Mayrl & Oeur, 2009, p. 260). With the multiplicity of postmodern religions and spiritualities "ranging from angels, to new age, to astrology, to amalgamated Eastern religions" (Van Gelder, 2002, p. 498) coupled with students' very high levels of spiritual interest, involvement, and expectations (Lindholm, Millora, Schwartz, & Spinoza, 2011, p. 8), it is becoming increasingly difficult to tell the extent to which specific campus-life factors are influencing the religious and spiritual life of students. In the case of Christian institutions where intentional strategies are set out to chart and implement the transformational course of student life, it should be possible to measure, albeit difficult, the impact of such discipleship strategies on students' becoming disciples, mainly by quantifying student Satisfaction and Involvement in the implementation of the strategies.

This chapter overviews literature on the key issues that were considered for the investigation of possible relationships between student identity styles, and their attitudes (Satisfaction and Involvement) towards discipleship practices in the particular context of an African Seventh-day Adventist university's student population. Consequently, the literature review is organized under these sections:

(a) Elements of syncretism in African theological thoughts on Christian discipleship, (b) Christ's discipleship model, (c) the postmodern context of campus discipleship, (d) VVU discipleship context and practices, (e) Identity styles, (f) Students' commitment and attitudes, and (g) Social Desirability. A summary is provided at the end of the chapter to highlight the hypothesized relationships between the variables under study.

It is finally important to note that this sampled literature was obtained primarily from and through the James White Library, Andrews University. Most articles were accessed from electronic libraries especially EBSCO, JSTOR, OXFORD, SAGE, and the James White Library itself.

Elements of Syncretism in African Theological Thoughts on Christian Discipleship

Introduction

The attempt to situate a study of the possible relationship between identity styles, commitment, and attitudes toward discipleship practices in the context of Christianity in Africa can be risky and challenging. This may be primarily attributed to a number of issues including lack of empirical research on African identity styles and, especially, the presumed syncretic ontology of Christianity in Africa, which should provide the basis for Christian discipleship strategies. The literature under this section highlights the concepts of religious syncretism and contextualization, and how these have shaped the theological orientation of African Christian thought in the past four decades.

The Concepts of Religious Syncretism and Contextualization

The expressions "religious syncretism" and "religious contextualization" appear to be intimately related both conceptually and practically. The term syncretism was

originally used by Plutarch (c. 46-120 AD) “to refer to the alliance of two antagonistic groups on Crete as they faced a common enemy” (Gregory, Volk, & Long, 2013, p. 310). But it was the seventh century theologian Calixtus of Helmstad who used the word syncretism in Christendom as he called “churches to doctrinal reconciliation and mutual access to each other’s rituals of communion and baptism” (Heideman, 1997, p. 38).

According to Gregory, Volk, and Long (2013), “syncretism entails the active creation of new practices—not just blended ones—as people live in multiple worlds, drawing on the resources of these worlds without obliterating them, making sense and creating cohesion while crossing borders” (p. 131). Syncretism denotes “conscious harmonizing of different religions or individual elements thereof” (Koertner, 2013, p. 296), and “acknowledges and embraces the multiplicity of religious traditions that exist not only within a multicultural society, but also within the individual” (Lynch, 2000, p. 754).

Syncretism is a reality that emerges from an already recognized identity and external elements that are important to that identity (my translation of Beyer’s (2005) “syncretisme est une réalité qui relève à la fois d’une identité déjà reconnue et d’éléments importants extérieurs à cette identité,” (p. 420). Some thinkers like Schmidt (2006) even consider syncretism as a mere theological way of describing the flexibility and dynamism of a religion (p. 242). In this line of thought it is no wonder that Koertner (2013) regards the concept and implementation of Christian mission as a form of syncretism (p. 298).

But this view of syncretism tends to link it with contextualization—a concept that should ideally help Christian mission to implement Christian discipleship that is free from religious syncretism on the one hand and religious acculturation on the other.

Contextualization is defined as “the effort to take seriously the context of each human group and person on its own terms and in all its dimensions” (Mashau & Frederiks, 2008, p. 119).

When religious contextualization is successful, the ‘discipled’ community embraces the new religion as its own. For example, Ojo (1988) argued that the rapid spread of Charismatic movements in Nigeria is attributable to successful contextualization whereby these movements “have been presented in a manner acceptable to Nigerians, and they have been adapted to the situation in Nigeria” (p. 176). For Song (2006), contextualization “must be understood in a comprehensive manner, covering not only the areas of Bible translation, the expression of worship, leadership culture, and so on, but also the very fabric of believers’ commitment to and involvement in society as disciples of Jesus” (p. 250). However, much as the consequences of cultural impact has been identified as an important consideration “in seeking to understand and implement the biblical discipleship model” (Scarone, 2014, p. 99), it is essential to note with Kwan (2005) that “false contextualization yields to uncritical accommodation, a form of culture faith” (p. 237)

Theological Orientation of African Christian Thought

Over three decades ago, Pobee (1979) noted, “the case for translating Christianity into authentic African categories hardly needs to be argued. The need has long been recognized in both Africa and Europe” (p. 9). This issue of “authentic African categories” had been in theological discussion in earlier years. For instance, Nyamiti (1973), pondering over the exact shape the “mythopoeic African theology” might take, suggested that “an obvious possibility would be to give the African myths and symbols a new

Christian meaning, as did the sacred writers in relation to Oriental and Hellenistic mythologies” (p. 25). Then he portrayed the resulting benefit of such a theology as being “more fitting for preaching purposes, especially among the African majority still leading a traditional way of life” (p. 25).

Bujo (1992) would later ask “on what ground are Africans still subject to a canon law based on the European-Roman constitution and without any reference to the Black African legal situation?” (p. 104). This longing for African Christianity seems to stem from the general perception African theologians have had on the kind of Christianity that was introduced by Western missionaries. On this, Nketia (1974) provides a glimpse of missionaries’ probably sincere but non-transformational approach to discipleship. He remarks that the church “preached against African cultural practices while promoting Western cultural values and usages” (p. 14). Muzorewa (1985) later added: “That Christianity was planted in Africa during the period of colonization was unfortunate. . . . The progress of African spiritual growth was not enhanced by the coming of Christianity under these circumstances; it was disrupted and distorted” (p. 98).

Tiénou (1997) would even be more categorical as he asserted, “Christianity and the white man’s civilization were identical” (p. 94). Bediako (1999) also expressed his concerns about the situation of the Christian Church in Africa as he argued that “the church is still a dependent one looking to missionaries from outside for manpower and material resources, dependent on its theology, its liturgy and its church discipline, in fact, in its whole expression of the Christian life” (p. 268).

Worse still, West (2002) recorded some extreme attitudes towards the Bible and Christianity, such as what Mofokeng of South Africa is reported to affirm, that young

Blacks in particular “have categorically identified the Bible as an oppressive document by its very nature and to its very core” and that the best option “is to disallow the Christian faith and consequently be rid of the obnoxious Bible” (p. 29). Some “have zealously campaigned for its [the Bible’s] expulsion from the oppressed Black community” (p. 29). Prior to Nketia’s (1974) assertion about anti-African missionary attitude, Imasogie (1983) had lamented that

by the time Christianity was introduced into Black Africa in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, the worldview of Christian theologians retained only a veneer of the biblical worldview. . . . It is true that we could still talk about God, heaven, angels, Satan, Holy Spirit, evil forces; but these were no more than cultural clichés that lacked the existential dynamism they once had prior and during the medieval period. (p. 52)

Subsequently, probably stemming from Nketia’s (1974) lament over the rejected treasures of African theology, Kalilombe (1994) explicitly argued in favor of ancestral worship as an integral part of theology, likely expanding on Parkman and Karlton’s (1986) ideology that “in Africa, the ‘corporate personality’ includes many generations, even those who are dead” (p. 93). Kalilombe (1994, p. 126) later argued, particularly, for the prominence of ancestors’ powers and how these powers are invasive in all surroundings of the living. In the same vein, Parratt (1995) argued for the reality of the community between the living and the dead (p. 92), and lamented Christianity’s rejection of the said community and failure to replace it (p. 108).

Gradually, the African ancestor-worship-based theology motif became an ideology to live by. Benda (2012) illustrates this by referring to Mgr. Aloys Bigirumwami’s incorporation of ancestral worship in Catholicism (p. 19). In the same way, Kasomo (2012) highlights the ancestor-worship-based theology by pointing to the appointment of His Grace Archbishop Nicodemus Kirima to head the Kenyan

Presidential Commission on Devil Worship (p. 10). Other thinkers who promoted African theological emancipation include Muzorewa (1985) who called for resistance toward Western domination and dehumanization of Africans (p. 98), Bujo (1992) who proposed Africa's realities-based seminary programs (p. 104), and Young (1993) who hailed syncretic features of African Christianity (p. 42).

Still other thinkers decided to step out of the general African theological argument to borrow from Black/Liberation theology in order to build a case for African theology. Wan-Tatah (1989) for instance suggested an African theology that centers on poverty and human exploitation (p. 193). Hengehold (2013) also provided a helpful insight to a somewhat African holistic worldview concerning the driving force of the emerging African Christian theology. He noted:

For many Africans . . . the ontology of globalization includes the non-living. Spirits are part of the omnipresent unofficial economy that never results in final bills of sale because its merchandise is illegal. Spirits also play a role in the 'economy of miracles'. (p. 103)

It is important at this juncture to remark that the above-illustrated mindset of notable African theologians has not gone without caution, even from the continent itself. For instance, Palmer's (2008) survey on the issue of Jesus as Africa's ancestor revealed that "ancestor Christology causes too much confusion and does not meet the pastoral needs of the average Nigerian Christian" (p. 73). Reed and Mtukwa (n.d.) also later argued that "what Africa desperately needs is not a Jesus formed in our (African) image, but us to be shaped in Jesus' image. What Africa desperately needs in a Christology is not one which makes Christ out to be the property of a particular ethnic community but the Lord of all" (p. 30). This seems to set a principle against Parratt's (1995) view of

Jesus as African Proto-ancestor. Maina (2009) appears to react in the same way to the concept of Jesus as African proto-ancestor as he cautions:

Claiming Jesus as an African ancestor will be viewed as raising concerns on how to reconcile the particularity of Jesus as a historical person. . . . The claim in African theology that Jesus is the African ancestor par excellence or the Proto-Ancestor will be seen to raise some questions in the understanding of the Incarnation. (p. 87)

Kato (1975), one of the earliest critics of the African theology sounds even more prophetically harsh. After persuasively confronting the rising quest for African Christianity, especially as presented in the dissertation and other writings of Mbiti—the arguably greatest exponent of African theology—Kato warned that

the religious challenge of the second century is reasserting itself today. Religions ranging from Greek individual gods to the emperor worship of the Roman world were the order of the day. . . . The defunct gods of African traditional religions are now rearing their heads. (p. 175)

Despite these cautions, the agenda for distinctive African Christianity continues to gain further ground, even among international theological circles. A typical example is the institution, by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) and the Office of Inter-Religious Relations and Dialogue (IRRD) of the World Council of Churches, of a joint Project in 2000 to explore Africa's contributions to the religions of the world.

Mbiti (2001) reported the proceedings of the standing committee that was appointed by the PCID and IRRD saying, among other things that “the Committee sought areas of study that might be given priority of further study. Suggestions included the mediating role of spirits, the role of ancestors vis-à-vis that of Jesus Christ, a holistic understanding of life and what it entails, and a Theology of celebration” (para. 6).

Mbiti then noted one of the key reasons why the Western style of Christianity is steadily losing ground in Africa by highlighting the rapid growth of African churches that aim at responding to African realities. He posited that

the complex area of religiosity is still prevalent in the use of charms and magic for success in examinations, football matches or sports, law courts, business transactions or search for good jobs. Likewise, witchcraft and sorcery are a social reality that affects many and leads sometimes to serious accusations and fights in the family and community. (para. 17)

He further linked the above practices to African Christian churches saying that

the work of the traditional doctors (medicine men and women) finds parallel in the healing work of the founders and "prophets" of the Independent/Indigenous Churches (that have branched off from Mission Churches and one another). The motto of these Churches would be: "We heal, therefore we are." They focus on healing and exorcism, which is an expression of partnership with traditional religiosity in moments of crisis. There are about 10,500 of these Churches (2001) and their number continues to grow. Some have expanded to other continents, and there are many instances of people in Europe or America who have come under their influence or joined them. (para. 17)

As one listens carefully to the sentiments and ideologies as expressed in the literature so far reviewed, one begins to wonder, what then is the nature of Christianity in Africa? Assuming that the assumptions about African religious beliefs as highlighted above are true, can one rightly assume that Christian believers in Africa are practicing Biblical Christianity? Could it be a hybrid or metamorphosed Christianity? How true is the African Christian faith to the Biblical faith? Are these arguments about African Christianity merely academic, or do they reflect the reality among the populace as Tiénou (1997, p. 94) has argued?

The search for authentic Christianity is definitely a genuine endeavor and not limited to Africans. Wright, Zozula, and Wilcox (2012) report in their "Christian-failure narrative" that "many of [sic] public pronouncements that Christians make about themselves are negative, frequently describing the Christian church as failing and in need

of reform” (p. 1). More recently, Richard (2014), presenting syncretism as the preferable way of perceiving the true nature of religion, posited that “Christianity should not be referred to in the singular; there is too much diversity present for the usage in the singular to carry any substantial meaning” (p. 213). Indeed Imasogie (1983) underscored the reality of syncretic traits in the African Christian faith when he said that

because of the orthodox Christian theologian’s failure to be informed by the African self-understanding, the average African Christian has remained superficial in his commitment. The superficiality of his faith is betrayed by his reversion to traditional practices in times of existential crisis. In the face of such crises he naturally reverts to traditional religious practices to establish metaphysical security. (p. 77)

And this is not only about church members, as Fortunak (2008) later revealed that

many of the pastors will preach from the pulpit that this type of thing is wrong, but secretly take part in it at night. There is the mentality, especially in African Initiated Churches . . . that you . . . rely on the powers available to you. You are hopeful that Christ will help, but when he can't come through on Sunday, you may take out a different insurance policy at night. (para. 2)

Therefore, the path to discovering genuine Christianity may not necessarily be synonymous with merely returning to cultural and traditional religious beliefs and practices. And as Africans keep struggling with whether to Christianize the African cultures or Africanize Christianity, Semporé’s (2003) advice seems to be a relevant option as he calls “for African Christianity to be neither borrowed nor syncretistic” (p. 155). This is arguably why, “given a worldview in which man understands himself as living in the immediate atmosphere of spiritual forces, many of whom are hostile to his existence” (Imasogie, 1983, p. 77), African theologians should endeavor to “rescue theology from the shelves of the universities and the sanctuaries of the churches and to make it a living, dynamic, active, and creative reality in our societies” (Appiah-Kubi, 1979, p. viii).

The intriguing question that connects the above sample of literature to this study would be, how cultural and transcultural is Christianity? The corollary questions would be, how are students predisposed to interacting with Christianity at VVU? How biblically and Africa-adapted are the discipleship practices at VVU? These questions lead to the exploration of Christ's critical discipleship model. Suffice it to say at this juncture, that the African Christian discipleship context of this study is somewhat problematic.

Christ's Discipleship Model

This section's ultimate purpose is to present a reflection on what may be considered as Jesus' *didactic springboard* for effective discipleship, particularly in the gospel according to Mark. The section argues that the said springboard for effective discipleship is wrapped into the scene of Jesus' baptism as presented in the gospels (Matt 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21, 22). The reason for focusing on Mark's gospel is at least twofold: Mark appears to place a higher premium on Jesus' baptism than do the other gospels by situating it at the apex of the plot of the introductory narrative, and by conspicuously linking it with basic characteristics of discipleship as will be demonstrated in this section.

Introduction

Literature abounds on the subject of discipleship from both academic and professional arenas. However, most endeavors in this regard, as will be shown in the ensuing paragraphs, locate the starting point of the discipleship process at the calling of disciples. For instance, Hinkle's (2005) dissertation on *Discipleship in the Age of Whatever*, confines Jesus' way of discipling to discipleship recruitment and evangelistic strategies (pp. 25-28). Kraus' (2012) exhaustive review, in relation to what he calls "from

radical to missional discipleship” (p. 9), brings out almost all the key characteristics of discipleship except Christ’s demonstration of how to become a disciple. Mattes’ (2012) presentation of the core mission of Lutheran discipleship also emphasizes that,

in contrast to the prevailing approaches to discipleship, the Lutheran tradition is more ambitious, more radical. It speaks to the heart of personal and public sin. The aim is not to reform immoral humanity or immoral society, but to announce the death of sinners. (p. 142)

Here, the focus is on the *doing* rather than the *being* aspect of discipleship.

Pinson’s (2012) dissertation was on discipleship ministry to students of the millennial generation. On emphasizing the significance of discipleship in Christ’s earthly ministry, Pinson rightly points out that “Jesus not only commanded all believers to be busy making disciples, He modeled how to do it” (p. 56). Interestingly, by way of explaining how Jesus modeled discipleship, Pinson simply says,

As the mentor of twelve ordinary men, He taught (Matthew 5-7, 10), encouraged (Matthew 28:20), reproved (Matthew 16:17), corrected (Matthew 16:8-12), inspired (Matthew 16:24-27), challenged (Matthew 14:16), demonstrated ministry (Matthew 9:18-30) and provided opportunity to practice ministry (Matthew 10:16-23). (p. 56)

One notices that Pinson misses the *Jesus person* in the process of modeling discipleship.

Henderson’s (2012) work that fairly scrutinizes discipleship in Mark prefers to locate the starting point at Jesus convening “a band of followers who remain mostly in his presence” (p. 112). Though Henderson clearly brings out Mark’s interest in discipleship as presence (p. 112), she overlooks Jesus’ presence as a proto-disciple as embedded in Mark 1: 9-11. Bedford (2012) provides an insightful definition of Christian discipleship saying, “one way to understand Christian discipleship or following Jesus is as a ‘pneumatic’ (through the Holy Spirit) participation in the beauty of God” (p. 55). But this definition only alludes to the end point of the foundational stage of becoming a

disciple as described especially in Mark 1. Wan-Tatah's (2008) dissertation is arguably one of the most scholarly works on the subject in recent years. Unfortunately, though Wan-Tatah devotes a whole and thoroughly discussed section on baptism and the spirit (pp. 68-74), he does not connect Jesus' baptism with the process of becoming a disciple. He rather waits till he gets to Mark 10 before linking Jesus' baptism with the cost of following Jesus.

Though these examples are excellent exegetical and theological discussions on discipleship, the reader of these studies is not fully introduced to the starting point of the process of becoming a disciple or making disciples as far Jesus' model is concerned. The ensuing discussion provides more evidence of this oversight.

Jesus' Baptism in Mark as a Didactic Springboard for Discipleship Modeling

The succinctness of Mark's account of the gospel of Jesus Christ can sometimes lead the casual reader to think that Mark is not as exhaustive in presenting the gospel as other evangelists. Indeed Ryder (1999) remarked that "the author has been criticized because of his limited vocabulary and his excessive use of words such as 'immediately' and 'then'" (p. 22). Yet Ryder seems to be right as he further argues that "if the evangelist lacks elegance, his vivid and direct speech enlivens the way he tells the story of Jesus" (p. 22).

The following paragraphs aim at building on the latter argument to bring out the dynamics of discipleship as succinctly coded in Mark 1:7-11. To borrow Cicero's words, the discussion hopes to uplift Mark's literary style with the fact that "brevity is the best recommendation in a speech, whether for a senator or for an orator" (Brainy Quote, n.d.).

Preliminary Observations on “Jesus’ Baptism Narrative”

It can be argued that the role-modeling characteristics of Christian discipleship and religious education are graphically and fully presented in Mark 1:1-15, where the attitude and practice of Jesus—the main character of the narrative—is a vivid elaboration of the discipleship model par excellence. Mark 1 (and the whole of the gospel for that matter) begins with a clear declaration of the theme (the gospel about Jesus Christ) and the principal character (Jesus Christ, the Son of God) of the whole narrative (v. 1). The narrative proceeds with the description of a second character whose role seems to attenuate the impressive nature ascribed to the principal character by emphatically revealing his dependency on the work of the new character (vv. 2, 3).

Even though the reader is naturally not surprised to see the second character immediately begin his work of preparing the way for the principal character, he/she (the reader) least expects the principal character to merely come to perform at most the same duties as his forerunner (or second character [vv. 2-4]). In fact, the forerunner (second character) himself expects the principal character to be greater than he and to perform different and even higher duties (vv. 7b, 8). Surprisingly, not only does the principal character appear to fail to be greater than his forerunner (for instance, the principal character undergoes water baptism by the forerunner instead of baptizing people with the Holy Spirit (cf. vv. 8b and 9), he also takes up the work of his forerunner instead of doing greater work (cf. v. 4 and vv. 14, 15).

This unexpected attitude of the principal character raises suspicion in the mind of the casual reader as to whether the nature ascribed to the principal character in the narrative is indeed real. Is the principal character indeed “*Jesus Christ, the Son of God*”

(Mark 1:1, NKJV)? If so, why should he receive baptism that is said to be of repentance? Besides, why does he fail to carry out his work as announced by his appointed forerunner? Why does he not confer the Holy Spirit on people but rather receives Him (the Holy Spirit) (cf. vv. 8 and 10)?

Despite some emphatic arguments of writers such as van Iersel (1998) insisting that “the Baptist states frankly that he relates to Jesus as the servant who humbly unstraps his master’s sandals, which is reflected in the great difference between the baptism in water and that in Holy Spirit” (p. 98), the reader still misses this reality in the fulfillment of John’s prophecy. The reader, while struggling with this early apparent crisis in the narrative, is surprised at the emphatic re-echoing of the nature of the principal character which shifts from the mere descriptive words of the narrator to the direct words of a voice from Heaven that is none other than God’s voice (cf. vv. 1 and 11). The reader wonders what might be going on with Jesus and will likely be led to agree with Strelan (1991): “Jesus shows solidarity with his people, by hearing the call of John and going out to the desert” (p. 31). At this point in the narrative the reader is propelled forward in attempting to encounter the principal character initiating his main work.

Interestingly, in the ensuing scene of the narrative, the principal character is soon found authoritatively calling people saying: “Come, follow me . . . and I will make you fishers of men (v. 17). Though this activity (calling and asking people to follow him) does not obviously or clearly sound like the beginning of his previously described work (baptizing people with the Holy Spirit), it does initiate the distinction between his work and that of his forerunner. Therefore, the reader can reasonably assume a close relationship between the apparently “unwarranted” self-subjection of the Lord (the

principal character) to his forerunner's ministry with the Lord's calling of people to follow him. If this is the case, then the understanding of Jesus' baptism narrative is a key to understanding the dynamic of Christian discipleship (i.e., making people followers of Jesus).

The above reasoning warrants a threefold argument: (a) Jesus' baptism narrative in Mark 1 is a complete description, albeit succinct, of the basic requirement for true discipleship; (b) Jesus becomes a disciple in order to exhibit the characteristics and demonstrate the overt starting point of the discipleship process; and (c) Jesus' baptism is indispensable for the sake of religious education/discipleship role-modeling.

In the ensuing paragraphs I use a transphrastic structural analysis of Mark 1:7-11 to substantiate my argument. But before the analysis of the passage, some relevant literature is worth considering.

Gleanings from Literature on Jesus' Baptism in Mark's Gospel

The delimitation of the passage for the main analysis is largely determined by the perceived link between John's prediction of the coming of the "stronger one"—of whom John had been appointed as forerunner (vv. 2-4)—and the arrival of Jesus who, after water baptism, is identified by a voice from heaven as the Son, just as he was identified earlier by the narrator as Jesus Christ, the Son of God (v. 1). Since the whole gospel is about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whose way would be prepared by John, any passage that involves the three characters (Jesus, God, John) must be considered with particular attention. Mark 1:7-11 is one such a passage and, since it is the first to appear in the gospel, it should constitute a key to understanding the leading idea of the gospel. Moreso, if Hurtado (1996) was correct in his argument that "Mark's story of Jesus is vitally

concerned with discipleship” (p. 27), then, with the assumption that Jesus’ baptism is the cardinal model for discipleship, the passage under consideration must be of indispensable significance.

With regard to the significance of the passage in the whole prologue of the gospel, Marcus (2000) actually begins his observation by saying that “verse 7 is a turning point in the pericope [1:1-8] and indeed in the prologue as a whole . . . the focus shifts from John’s ministry to his prophecy of the advent of the ‘stronger one’ who will baptize with the Holy Spirit” (p. 154). Then Marcus expatiates on the whole passage noting:

Mark 1:9-11 constitute [sic] the most dramatic moment in the entire prologue, giving the reader access to a series of apocalyptic events of transcendent importance, a veritable theophany. . . . After ages of alienation, heaven itself has drawn near; the barrier between it and the earth has been ripped apart, the power of the new age has begun to flood the earth (p. 166).

However, though Marcus clearly brings out the significance of the theophanic manifestation and apocalyptic events at Jesus’ baptism, he is silent on the discipling purpose thereof. And it is interesting to note that Marcus is not the only one who pays little attention to this rather crucial discipleship lesson in the very prologue of the gospel. For instance, van Iersel (1998) justifies this lack of attention to the significance of Jesus’ baptism, asserting:

The baptism itself is mentioned only in passing. In fact it receives so little attention that the reader may overlook that what happens here is exactly the opposite of what John has announced: Jesus does not baptize in the Holy Spirit but is baptized in the Holy Spirit. (p. 99).

Unfortunately, van Iersel does not help the reader to grasp the dynamics of the narrative but he rather quickly focuses on the ensuing events, leaving the crisis literarily unresolved. McBride (1996) had preceded van Iersel by simply arguing that the gospel writers themselves did not so much value the significance of the event. He contended that

the story of Jesus submitting himself to John's 'baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sin' is clearly an embarrassing memory for the early church, and the evangelist deals with it in his own way. . . . Mark briefly mentions Jesus' baptism by John and goes on to concentrate on Jesus' vision of the heavens opening, the spirit descending, and the heavenly voice addressing him as beloved son. In Matthew's account John recognizes Jesus as the giver of the greater baptism, and Jesus gives John permission to baptize him (Mt 3:14-15). Before telling the story of Jesus' baptism, Luke has John conveniently locked up in prison; Luke then passes over the baptism of Jesus to concentrate on the wonderful elements that now happen during Jesus' prayer experience (Luke 3:19-22). The fourth evangelist suppresses the story of Jesus' baptism—it would hardly be fitting for the eternal Word that was God to submit to John's baptism—although the theophany is retained but is now addressed to John, not Jesus (John 1:32-33). (pp. 30, 31)

In the same line of thought, Collinson (2004) devotes a whole, heavily referenced chapter on "Discipling in Mark's Gospel." but apparently misses the significance of Jesus' baptism in the process. She analyzes in detail the use of key words such as *mathētēs* (follower), *akolouthēō* (to follow), *elthein* (come), and *aparnēsasthō* (deny) in order to bring out the characteristics and dynamics of discipleship in the gospel; but she overlooks the arguably key phrase *opiso mou* of which LaVerdiere (1999) had earlier contended: "The preposition *opiso* with the genitive *mou* or *autou* does not refer to a temporal but to a personal relationship" (p. 32). LaVerdiere understands the use of the phrase *opiso mou* to mean Jesus coming after John in terms of discipleship (or followership) rather than temporally, and proposes that "by undergoing John's baptism Jesus becomes 'a follower of John'" (p. 23).

Coming back to Collinson's (2004) work, one notices that as a result of omitting the discipling purpose of Jesus' baptism, Collinson ends her thorough study with a discipling model that lacks the *elthein* (come) and *aparnēsasthō* (deny) characteristics of the life of Jesus—the discipleship role model par excellence. In other words, even though Collinson affirms that "Jesus modeled the life of faith for his disciples" (p. 35), she does

not explicitly acknowledge the basics; that is, Jesus enacting the process of becoming a disciple.

An earlier and equally important work on discipleship in Mark is Hurtado's (1996) *Following Jesus in the Gospel of Mark—and Beyond*. Throughout the discussion, Hurtado entices the reader with promising expressions such as

In Mark's account, Jesus is both the basis for and the pattern of discipleship. . . . Mark begins with Jesus' baptism because baptism is where discipleship begins. . . . The absence of a resurrection appearance is likewise probably a direct reflection of Mark's concern to focus on Jesus as the sole model for discipleship. . . . Mark's story of Jesus is vitally concerned with discipleship. (pp. 25-27)

Surprisingly, the reader is not told anything more about *how* Jesus' baptism is the basis for discipleship except, "His [Jesus'] death is the salvific ransom (10:45), the covenant-making sacrifice (14:24), the index of commitment for his disciples (e.g., 8:34) and the servant-pattern that they are to follow (10:43-45)" (p. 25). Hurtado ends up compelling the casual reader to ignore the claimed significance of Jesus' baptism in discipleship, and the attentive reader to struggle with the text to discover the relationship between Jesus' baptism and discipleship.

Ryder's (1999) *Following Christ: Models of Discipleship in the New Testament*, is another appealing work in discipleship literature. A whole chapter is devoted to "The Way of Discipleship in Mark." However, Ryder's analysis of the way of discipleship raises some questions. He observes that "to understand Jesus properly, warns Mark, the reader must see him not only as a preacher, a teacher, and a healer, but, above all, as a Son of God who submits to crucifixion and whom his Father raises to glory." Ryder's limited scope takes away from the reader's mind the discipleship purpose of Jesus' baptism. His observation fails to see Jesus as fulfilling the requirements of discipleship (followership, submission and baptism of repentance, baptism of the Holy Spirit, and

proclaiming the good news) before he calls others to make them disciples. Ryder apparently misses the role-modeling component for discipleship or religious education in the preliminary events of Jesus' ministry.

Hull's (2006) popular book, *The Complete Book of Discipleship*, has been hailed by several biblical scholars such as Michael Wilkins who describes it as "the definitive A-to-Z resource on discipleship for every Christian" (see the cover of the book). Surprisingly, not even in his chapter "Biblical Foundations for Discipleship" does Hull allude to Jesus' baptism, which, I propose, is the springboard for Christian discipleship models.

Though Hull succeeds in extracting most of the characteristics of discipleship and disciple-making, he conspicuously denies the reader the privilege of seeing Jesus as exemplar of becoming a disciple. In his attempt to present Jesus' model for developing followers, he succeeds in highlighting the segments (come and see, come and follow me, come and be with me, remain in me) of the model but misses the justification for the model which Jesus would, in the light of His baptism, formulate thus: Become a disciple after the manner in which I became a disciple.

It would be amiss to leave out Bonhoeffer's (1995) *The Cost of Discipleship*, which has stood the test of time and is extensively cited in discipleship literature (first published in 1937 with the title *Nachfolge*). The second chapter titled "The Call to Discipleship" surveys the processes and circumstances in which Jesus' disciples were called. But Bonhoeffer does not give the reader the slightest impression that there is a connection between Jesus' baptism and his calling of the disciples to follow him. Bonhoeffer's discourse shows that, despite his excellent perceptions of discipleship, he

probably does not know why Jesus got baptized before calling his disciples. He believes that “Christianity without the living Christ is inevitably Christianity without discipleship and Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ. . . .

Discipleship without Jesus Christ is a way of our own choosing” (p. 59). But nowhere does he explicitly link Jesus’ baptism to discipleship, especially as narrated in Mark 1.

Scarone’s (2014) dissertation on understanding discipleship is probably closest to what the gospels reader would expect with regard to Jesus’ discipleship model. Scarone peruses the concept of discipleship in both Bible testaments, Ellen G. White’s affirmation of the biblical model, and some contemporary models. He carefully illustrates the various models and finally settles on an integrated model (4MAT—Rabbi-Witness Discipleship Model) which mainly consists of four steps, namely, “CALL to a mission”—“LEARN the information & Theory”—“LEARN the practical skills”—“GO FORTH & witness/make disciples” (p. 98).

This model has an advantage over those previously considered in that it successfully integrates the biblical discipleship model with learning concepts/theories and praxis. Indeed, it would have completely represented Jesus’ model in Mark 1 if it had suggested “demonstrative learning” between learning Type 1 and Type 4 (p. 97) or the “WHO” between the “GO FORTH” and “CALL” quadrants of the 4MAT—Rabbi-Witness Discipleship Model (p. 98). Scarone’s model is adapted and arguably improved under Implications for Religious Education in the final chapter of this study, to illustrate the proposed complete discipleship model from Mark 1 as the primary model for the initiation and practice of discipleship.

Since the literature reviewed to this point does not really seem to resolve the crises in the text (i.e., Jesus Christ the Son of God receiving a baptism of repentance and failing to baptize people with the Holy Spirit), the reader may want to consider some more scholarly discussions on Mark 1 with the hope of getting helpful clues to grasp the grammatical-syntactical dynamics of the text. However, even though such scholarly and highly technical works exist (e.g., Abbott, 1999; Boring, 1990; Drury, 1985; Guelich, 1982; Harrington, 1996; Havener, 1988; Henderson, 2006; Hooker, 1983; Jackson, 1982; Kirchhevel, 1994; Kowalski, 2000; LaVerdiere, 1999; Matera, 1995; Parachuvattil, 2002; Samuel, 2002; Sankey, 1995; Santos, 1997; Suh, 1991; Sweetland, 1987; Telford, 1999), they do not explicitly address the significance of Jesus' baptism in the overall purpose of the gospel.

This missing connection keeps re-echoing in the reader's mind, as McBride (1996) notes that "the story of Jesus submitting himself to John's 'baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sin' is clearly an embarrassing memory for the early church" (p. 30). And the reader may, unfortunately, go through the whole gospel without encountering any definite solution.

One of these more technical works is Palmer's (1998) "The Markan Matrix"—an important doctoral thesis with valuable insights. This study is briefly explored here with regard to the significance of Jesus's baptism to illustrate how Markan scholars have yet to offer the key resolution of the crises about Jesus the Son of God as found in the gospel prologue. Palmer begins by stressing the historical and yet-to-be-resolved contention over the "main idea" (pp. 11-14) of Mark's gospel, and impresses the reader with an in-depth dissection of the gospel episodes, most especially through his unprecedented unveiling of

Mark's [.α] [.β] [.β'] scheme and αββ' rhetorical style with its alternatives (αβγδε-which is the listing of parts, and αβγγ'β'α' which is a chiasm of parts) (p. 297). Though Palmer rightly concludes that "Mark's gospel is at once both an evangelistic appeal, which would provoke commitment on the part of the hearers, and an educational tool, which would raise issues and encourage question and answer" (p. 309)—a conclusion that arouses the religious educator's interest—he leaves it to the reader to guess what role Jesus' baptism might have played in this evangelistic and *educational* account of the gospel about Jesus, the Son of God.

Suffice it to say at this juncture that this overview of the literature, albeit limited, has demonstrated the lack of insight in Markan scholarship in identifying and emphasizing the essential link between Jesus' baptism and the modeling of discipleship/religious education. This calls for a closer look at the text from a structural and religious education perspective, as attempted below.

Structural Analysis of Mark 1:7-11

A closer look at the structural features of Mark 1:7-11 reveals several characteristics that justify Jesus' baptism as a springboard for discipleship and religious education role modeling. It is important to note right away that scholarly and highly technical structural diagrams of the text exist (e.g., Leedy's [2005] *NT Diagrams*), which are helpful in visualizing the striking skills of the narrator to package the core of the whole gospel in a succinct but poignant literary style. But I suggest below a simpler structure that hopefully helps the non-technical reader to follow easily the progression of the narrative plot while identifying the key elements thereof. Once the reader understands the problem, development, crisis, complication, and the resolution of the plot, it becomes

easier to appreciate the reasons behind the dynamics in the text (Mark 1:7-11) and discover the necessity for the crises therein. The text reads:

καὶ ἐκήρυσσεν λέγων, Ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου ὀπίσω μου, οὗ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς κύψας λῦσαι τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων αὐτοῦ· ἐγὼ ἐβάπτισα ὑμᾶς ὕδατι, αὐτὸς δὲ βαπτίσει ὑμᾶς ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ. Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις ἦλθεν Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ Ναζαρέτ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ ἐβαπτίσθη ὑπὸ Ἰωάννου εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην καὶ εὐθὺς ἀναβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος εἶδεν σχιζομένους τοὺς οὐρανοὺς καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ὡς περιστερὰν καταβαῖνον εἰς αὐτόν· καὶ φωνὴ ἐγένετο ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, Σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα (Robinson & Pierpont, 2005).

The following simple structural diagram emphasizes the centrality of the principal character showing how he is either the subject or the object of most verbs in the narrative. The structure also helps to visualize the unexpected crises in the attitude of the principal character, thereby alerting the reader to pay attention to a possible veiled lesson.

Verse 7: καὶ ἐκήρυσσεν

λέγων, Ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου ὀπίσω μου,
οὗ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς κύψας
λῦσαι τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν
ὑποδημάτων
αὐτοῦ·

Verse 8: ἐγὼ ἐβάπτισα ὑμᾶς ὕδατι,
αὐτὸς δὲ βαπτίσει ὑμᾶς ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ.

Verse 9: Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις
ἦλθεν Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ Ναζαρέτ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ
ἐβαπτίσθη ὑπὸ Ἰωάννου εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην

Verse 10: καὶ εὐθὺς
ἀναβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος
εἶδεν σχιζομένους τοὺς οὐρανοὺς καὶ
τὸ πνεῦμα ὡς περιστερὰν καταβαῖνον εἰς
αὐτόν·.

Verse 11: καὶ φωνὴ ἐγένετο ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν,
Σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου
ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα.”

A literal translation of the text follows:

“And he was preaching saying, **he comes the stronger** than I after me
whose I am not considerable to stoop
to loose the thong
of the sandals
of him.

	I indeed have baptized you in water.
	He but <i>will baptize</i> you in the Holy Spirit.
And it was in those days,	Jesus <i>came from Nazareth</i> of Galilee and
	<i>was baptized</i> by John into the Jordan.
And immediately	<i>coming out</i> of the water,
	he <i>saw</i> being split the heavens and
	<i>(saw) the Spirit</i> like a dove coming down
	over him.
And a voice came from the heavens, you you <i>are the son</i> of me,	
	the beloved in whom I am well
	pleased”

The simple syntactic structure of Mark 1:7-11 as shown above affords the reader a glimpse into the specific roles played by the various characters in the baptism narrative. The key activities as announced in verse 8 are baptism with water and baptism with the Holy Spirit. According to the narrative, baptism with water is to be performed by John, while baptism with the Holy Spirit is to be carried out by *the stronger than*, and *the one who comes after John* (cf. *ἐβάπτισα ὑμᾶς ὕδατι* [I have indeed baptized you in water] and *αὐτὸς δὲ βαπτίσει ὑμᾶς ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ* [he but will baptize you with the Holy Spirit] in v. 8 with), even though the *stronger than* does, eventually, not baptize with the Holy Spirit but rather receives John’s baptism (see *ἐβαπτίσθη ὑπὸ Ἰωάννου εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην* [was baptized by John in the Jordan] in v. 9). Note the contrasting emphasis underscored “ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου” (the greater than I) in verse 7, which is re-echoed (“ἐγὼ . . . αὐτὸς δὲ” [I . . . He but] in verse 8. It can also be linguistically argued that these comparative and contrasting particles equally highlight the superiority of baptism with the Holy Spirit over baptism with water.

Surprisingly, as the scene unfolds, only John carries out his task, while *the stronger than* not only “fails” to fulfill his task (*βαπτίσει ὑμᾶς ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ* [will baptize you with the Holy Spirit], v. 8), but also undergoes John’s water baptism. More

surprisingly, rather than baptizing with the Holy Spirit, he receives the Holy Spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα ὡς περιστερὰν καταβαῖνον εἰς αὐτόν [the spirit like a dove coming down over him], v.10). Interestingly, *the stronger than* does not receive the Holy Spirit from John but from heaven. And the Holy Spirit is accompanied with a voice (also from heaven) identifying Jesus as its son.

The questions the reader may reasonably raise are, can Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ Ναζαρετ τῆς Γαλιλαίας (Jesus of Nazareth in Galilee) logically be identified with ὁ ἰσχυρότερός (the stronger than)? After all, even John himself does not confirm this identification. Could it be that Jesus of Nazareth is simply one of the Jews (probably a prominent one thus warranting identification in the narrative) who came to receive the baptism of repentance, but who has nothing to do with ὁ ἰσχυρότερός (the stronger than)?

The reader has enough clues to clear this ambiguity. Logic compels the reader to reason that since Ἰησοῦς is claimed to be the son of both φωνή (a voice) and θεὸς (God—see Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ—of Jesus Christ, son of God] in v. 1), it follows that φωνή (voice) is either θεὸς (God) himself or from θεὸς. And since John is identified in verse 2 as “τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου (the messenger of me before your face),” which he himself confirms in verse 7 (“Ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου ὀπίσω μου [he comes the stronger than I after me]), then the one who comes after him (Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ Ναζαρετ τῆς Γαλιλαίας [Jesus of Nazareth in Galilee]) and is identified by God’s voice as Son, cannot but be ὁ ἰσχυρότερός (the stronger than), despite the fact that Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ Ναζαρετ τῆς Γαλιλαίας does not baptize with the Holy Spirit.

By the way, if John is indeed a messenger sent before the Lord to prepare a way for him (v. 2) by preaching a baptism of repentance and baptizing (v. 4), then his

prediction of Jesus baptizing with the Holy Spirit cannot be used to discredit the one who came after him. In other words, such a prediction is not a core part of John's role as a forerunner of the Lord. John's prediction of Jesus baptizing with the Holy Spirit should be understood as the first "'literary echo' for foreshadowing of events beyond the narrative" (Just, 2012, p. 2). Essentially, what qualifies Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ Ναζαρετ τῆς Γαλιλαίας as the one to come after John is that He indeed comes after John (cf. vv. 2, 9) and He is identified as the Son (cf. vv.1, 11).

The Dynamics of Discipleship in Jesus' Baptism Narrative

An interesting plot characterizes Jesus' baptism narrative in the gospel of Mark. The problem in the story begins with John not identifying Jesus to the crowd (one even wonders whether John himself recognizes Jesus as *the stronger than* he and the one to come after him). John's silence over Jesus's arrival troubles the reader as to whether this Jesus is indeed the Son of God, the greater one. In fact, the reader becomes more alert as the narrator identifies the one who came as simply *Jesus of Nazareth in Galilee*. The problem persists because, even though John has just declared the one coming after him as the one who is greater and will baptize with the Holy Spirit, Jesus is passive in the whole account as far as baptizing is concerned. Jesus comes and does not behave the way he was described by his forerunner.

The crisis sets in as Jesus undergoes John's baptism of repentance. The crisis becomes more complicated by the fact that Jesus alone, as far as the Markan account is concerned, sees the Spirit and hears the voice (probable evidence that His greatness and baptizing role are not the focus of the narrative). Of course, it is important to note that while Matt (3:16, 17) and Luke (3:21, 22) are not explicit about who saw the Spirit and

heard the voice, the Gospel of John (1:32-34) attests that John the Baptist saw the Spirit and heard the voice.

However, a quick reflection on what is at hand awakens the reader to some considerations that lead to a trustworthy resolution: the voice is not from the dove, but comes from the same place as the dove. The voice identifies itself as the Father of Jesus. John and the voice are active in performing Jesus' baptism. Jesus is the central character of the central activity (baptism). Had Jesus come and started baptizing with the Holy Spirit, then He would have been merely seen as John's "greater than I." But He comes as one of those who followed John so he can enact the first step of discipleship (i.e., to follow).

Moreover, Jesus chose first to demonstrate repentance—a requirement for discipleship—before urging his recruits to "repent and believe the good news (v.15)." He would not rightly have asked his recruits to take up the cross (self-denial) and follow him without demonstrating it (I argue that by accepting the baptism of repentance, he willingly forfeited his privilege as one who is holy and without blemish, and thus made possible his own death, the consummation of his discipleship model). By receiving the Holy Spirit, He demonstrated the necessity of baptism by the Holy Spirit for witnessing and ministering to the needs of others as he did immediately after his temptation, which followed baptism (vv. 12-15).

But in order not to jeopardize John's true testimony, the voice identifies him (Jesus) as Son. Since Jesus had already been identified as the Son of God (see v. 1), the voice is obviously that of God. And since the voice is coupled with the descent of the Holy Spirit to identify Jesus as Son, the voice and Spirit must be assumed to have come

from the same source. And if Jesus' Father has the power to impart the Holy Spirit, Jesus also can indeed impart or baptize with the Holy Spirit even as John has predicted.

The interpretation of Jesus's baptism should therefore not be narrowed to John's prediction (baptizing with the Holy Spirit) but understood in connection with John's assignment (preparing the way for the Lord). Jesus, the Lord, comes after John (*opismou*), stemming from John's ministry (preaching the baptism of repentance and belief in the Good News), but he chooses to undergo the process of becoming God's follower by coming to join (v. 9) those who hear the Good News, submitting to God's biddings and receiving the baptism of repentance (v. 9), receiving (or being baptized/empowered with) the Holy Spirit (v. 10), being recognized/adopted as God's child (v. 11, cf. John 1:12, 13), and witnessing to the Good News (v. 15).

Concluding Remarks for the Reader of Mark 1:7–11 and Some Implications for Discipleship Practices at VVU

Jesus' baptism vividly brings out four essential characteristics of religious education role-modeling for effective disciple-making, namely, a religious educator must (a) be a follower/disciple, (b) identify himself or herself with his/her prospective discipleship recruits (cf. Exod 32:32 and Dan 9:15–19), (c) be truly converted, and (d) be filled with the Holy Spirit. Needless to say, Jesus' discipleship model is not a new or precipitated teaching, but rather a New Testament reiteration of God's discipleship model throughout the Old Testament as it can be traced to God's faithful servants such as the call of Moses to lead Israel through the desert after his experience as a shepherd in the desert (Ex 3:1-10), David fighting the enemy of his father's flock in preparation for his fight against the enemy of God's flock (1 Sam 17:34-51), and Isaiah's cleansing experience before receiving the divine commission to wayward Israel (Isa 6:1-13).

With regard to the present study, one would argue from the discussion above that the effectiveness of VVU discipleship practices would significantly depend on whether the disciplers (Collinson, 2004, p. 4) are true followers of Christ, identify themselves with the students' circumstances, are truly converted Christians, and are filled with the Holy Spirit. This analysis of Jesus' discipleship model becomes useful in both the discussion of findings and the formulation of recommendations for effective discipleship. The analysis also implicitly suggests that the discipleship statuses of VVU disciplers would have some extraneous impact on students' Satisfaction and Involvement in VVU discipleship practices, which are highlighted in the ensuing sections.

The Postmodern Context of Campus Discipleship

Introduction

College years may rightly be perceived as the best time to affirm and consolidate the youth in their discipleship journey since, as Melin (2015) reports in his study of second-year students, "it is during that time that students are exploring questions of meaning and purpose as it relates to the vision of their future selves" (p. 223).

However, campus ministry in the postmodern world seems to be confronted with the challenges of a paradigm shift in discipleship perspectives. In this regard, Grenz (1996) had earlier suggested that in order "to reach people in the new postmodern context, we must set ourselves to the task of deciphering the implications of postmodernism for the gospel" (p.10).

Later, Chang (2000) seemed to call religious educators to ponder over "what to proclaim to a society that previously understood itself to be 'Christian' but now seems to be fragmenting, and what to say when truths previously held to be universal are under

assault from a disorienting religious pluralism” (p. 9). Subsequently, Johnston (2001), addressing the issue of preaching to a postmodern world, declared that “if biblical communicators fail to perceive the significant ideological shifts affecting humanity, the church may wake up to discover that preachers are merely talking to themselves about matters only the deeply committed comprehend” (p. 9).

Obviously, providing young intellectuals such as college students with what is life-transforming in the postmodern context of religious pluralism is likely to be challenging. It may require deep understanding of the basic philosophical tenets of postmodernism, as well as requiring purposeful intentionality in designing and implementing contextualized discipleship models. This section considers briefly the key characteristics of postmodernism and their implications for Christian discipleship and religious education.

Postmodernism and Christian Discipleship

According to Huang (2006), “postmodernism has dominated the intellectual world since the 1980s, but reached its peak at the turn of the century” (p. 100). The *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines postmodernism as “a late 20th-century movement characterized by broad skepticism, subjectivism, or relativism; a general suspicion of reason; and an acute sensitivity to the role of ideology in asserting and maintaining political and economic power” (para. 1).

Nath (2014) goes further to explicitly unveil the overarching philosophical tenet of postmodernism, saying postmodernism “denies the possibility of truth” (p. 27). This seems to accentuate Hurd’s (1998) submission when he earlier suggested that for postmodern people, “the quest for truth is a lost cause” (para. 8). From a different angle,

Watson (2014) provides a reason for the postmodern rejection of modern ideas—a reason that may be of interest in relation to studying social settings such as in Africa where community identity prevails over the individual. He asserted that “modernist confidence in objective reason has given way to postmodern assumptions that rationality always reflects *community-specific standards* that can find no indisputable foundation in objectivity” (p. 33; emphasis added).

This idea of postmodernist reflection of community-specific standards had earlier been expressed with even more emphasis by Ley (2003) who, stemming from a socio-historical perspective, approached postmodernism “as a form of local knowledge, characterized as knowledge inevitably framed through the here of our collective presence and the now of our collective interests” (p. 537). By relating postmodernism as illustrated above to discipling African students who are, according to Parkman and Karlton (1986), ontologically community-oriented and therefore more corporately than individualistically identified (p. 93), it seems right to explore the possible opportunities postmodernism may avail toward ministering to students in the context of an African worldview. In other words, it may be right to agree with Han, Kuchinke, and Boulay (2009) in their submission that “we need to liberate ourselves from dominant thoughts so that we continuously explore and search for truth” (p. 65; see also White 1952, p. 17).

But this suggests some potential frictions between the existing Christian status quo and the glaring quest for African Christianity. On this note, Parker’s (1998) admonition becomes indispensable as he cautions the postmodern world about

the danger that flows either from an optimistic naive adoption of postmodern nostrums (relativism, amorality, collectivism or autonomy) or from a pessimistic disappointed embrace of the alternative visions it incites (scientism, fundamentalism, individualism or organicism) needs to be urgently addressed. (p. 601)

Otherwise, we may shockingly end up joining Friedrich Nietzsche to wonder either sarcastically or groaningly as cited in Sire (2007), “whither is God? We have killed Him—you and I. All of us are His murderers” (p. 215). Parker’s admonition will also deter African discipleship endeavors from perpetuating the intellectual war that for much of the twentieth century “raged within Christendom between those who will give priority to either evangelism or social action” (Miller & Guthrie, 1984, p. 69). African discipleship will passionately have to guard against, as Chang (2000) asserts, “the impact of biblical scholars who are influenced by postmodern literary theories and are now scanning the Scriptures not for God’s revelation but for evidence of socio-economic and political agendas” (p. 20).

The situation at hand makes it clear, as Van Gelder (2002) noted, that “the scope of change in the present shift is calling for some fundamental rethinking of how we understand both the gospel and the church” (p. 492). And both postmodernism and African corporate identity appear to call disciple-makers’ attention to White’s (1952) perception of Christ’s discipleship model whereby “He mingled with people as one who desired their good, showed sympathy, ministered to their needs, won their confidence, and bade them ‘follow me’” (p. 59). Rodin (2010) seems to agree with White’s perception as he advises: “For transformation to take place, there must be connection between leader and follower around a common need for a change according to their wants, discontents and hopes” (p. 72).

It is clear from the sampled literature that the task of discipleship to the postmodern generation (especially in Africa where the quest for indigenous Christianity is on the increase) requires painstaking consideration and even a change of mindset on

the part of disciplers. Sire (2007) recommends that “if our culture is to move toward a hopeful future, it will first have to move back to a more realistic past, pick up from where we began to go wrong, take into account the valuable insights derived from what has happened since and forge a more adequate worldview” (p. 243). This makes White’s (1915) observation worth considering as she submits that “the ministry is no place for idlers” (p. 64).

As for discipling students, disciple-makers will have to invest all that it may take to lead them, as White suggests (1930), to “appreciate the high destiny to which they are called” (p. 21). Cress (2000) argues that helping the youth to discover their calling will curtail their dropping away from the journey to an experiential knowledge of God (p. 40). A promising way of perceiving transformational discipleship could be to consider Dudley’s (1986) advice that “youth must choose their own values. . . . And the right kind of models can make the very best values look so attractive that these youth will want to build them into their own value systems” (p. 185).

It is important at this point to note that the discussion on postmodernism as a context for discipleship was eventually helpful for interpretive and recommendation purposes. It also informed the study about potential dynamics in identity styles, religious beliefs, and worldview among African youth, since the impact of postmodernism is being globalized through the multifaceted media. The next section attempts briefly to explore the VVU context and practices for discipleship.

VVU Discipleship Context and Strategies

Valley View University, as a Christian institution of higher learning, has spirituality enshrined in its vision, mission, core values, educational philosophy, general

goals, and learning outcomes statements. Its vision says that VVU is poised “to be a centre of excellence for Christian Education” (VVU *Academic Bulletin*, [2010, p. 8]). With regard to the nature of its philosophy of education, the university claims to set out on a mission to emphasize “academic, vocational, and technological excellence in a context which promotes intellectual, *spiritual*, psycho-social and physical dimensions of life to *serve God and Humanity*” (p. 8; emphasis added). The mission makes it clear that, for Seventh-day Adventist Education, spirituality is considered one of the key building blocks of a successful life both before God and humanity. This area of responsibility falls to the chaplaincy department, and it is the chaplains’ task to plan and monitor the implementation of the university discipleship practices that are intended to foster spiritual growth.

The outcomes of discipleship are also embedded in other university statements. For example, spiritual core values include “willingness to serve God and humanity in a sacrificial manner” (p. 8); the educational philosophy includes “trust in God (p. 9)”; general goals include “to enable students to believe that God is the creator and sustainer of the earth and its inhabitants” (p. 9); and the learning outcomes aim for students to “have a growing relationship with the Lord, nurtured through Bible study, personal devotion, commitment to witnessing, and selfless service to humanity” (p. 11).

The embodiment of discipleship in the vision, mission, educational philosophy, and educational goals has naturally called for discipleship practices that are summed up in the Bulletin (VVU, [2010]) as follows:

The University aims to provide a campus atmosphere that will encourage students to grasp Christian beliefs and values as understood by the SDA Church. Along with at least, 9 credit hours of mandatory religion courses, students participate in various religious activities including worship seminars, religious convocations, camp

meetings, mid-week prayer meetings, weekend services, youth fellowships. These provide opportunities for internalizing Christian values and ideas. The University Chaplaincy ensures that pastoral counselling and spiritual guidance are always available to any who may need help. Integration of faith and learning in the classroom further helps students appreciate and acknowledge God as the ultimate source of all wisdom and understanding. (p. 10)

This statement of spiritual goals clearly depicts what pertains at VVU in terms of discipleship practices. The present study uses the activities described above to assess students' self-reported Satisfaction and Involvement vis-à-vis the discipleship events.

It is however important to indicate that the discipleship aspect of VVU's vision, mission, and educational philosophy are not peculiar to the university, but rather an expatiated reiteration of the educational philosophy of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2001), which accredits the university. Consequently, the core contents reflect more of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist campus ministry requirements than a customized West-African Seventh-day Adventist campus discipleship culture.

The reflection this study stimulates in regard to the VVU discipleship context for students' spiritual growth centers on questions such as: to what extent do West African undergraduate students' self-reported identity styles relate to the Seventh-day Adventist campus discipleship guidelines and activities in terms of Satisfaction and Involvement? To what extent would commitment and syncretism mediate between students' identity styles and their satisfaction as well as involvement in discipleship practices? These questions lead to consideration of literature on identity styles to help explore the possible interactions between them and attitudes towards discipleship practices.

Identity Styles

The inclusion of identity in the present study is motivated by three main reasons. The first is the conspicuous absence of literature on African identity—whether identity formation, development, status, or style. The second is that inasmuch as the study seeks to explore students’ attitudes towards VVU discipleship practices, there is the need, (Burke & Stets, 2009) would argue, to first of all “learn the identity of the others with whom we would interact” (p.13). The third reason is that the relevance of whatever discipleship practices are implemented depends on getting to know the prospective disciples. Elmer (2006) emphasizes this as he says, “you can’t serve someone you don’t understand. . . . You can’t understand others until you have learnt about, from and with them” (p. 38). This section briefly describes the perspective from which identity will be included in the study.

Identity is studied from different angles, most especially identity structures, processes, domains, and categories. One of the most recent and comprehensive reviews of these aspects of identity is Schwartz, Luyckx, and Vignoles’ (2011) work, which pulls together over fifty scholars to analyze the extent of research and theory on the subject and pave the way toward an integrative approach. More specifically, this two-volume handbook analyses in detail many issues including identity status, construction and evaluation, narrative identity, group identities, cross-cultural perspectives on identity, dynamics of identity, identity motives, moral and spiritual identities, occupational identity, civic identity, ethnic identity, cultural identity, and bicultural identity integration, among many others. For the purpose of the present study, I consider only

identity styles since they directly relate to the dynamics of individual response to situations challenging a person's existing identity.

According to Berzonsky et al. (2013), "identity processing style refers to differences in how individuals process identity-relevant information as they engage or manage to avoid the challenges of constructing, maintaining, and/or reconstructing a sense of identity" (p. 893). Berzonsky (2011) had earlier explicated "three different identity-processing orientations or styles namely, informational, normative, and diffuse-avoidant" (p. 55). He said that "individuals with informational processing style are skeptical of their own self-views and they intentionally seek out, process, and utilize identity-relevant information to personally resolve identity conflicts" (p. 55). He continues with normative style explaining that "individuals with normative processing style more automatically adopt a collective sense of identity by internalizing the standards and prescriptions of significant others and referent groups" (p. 55). With regard to people with diffuse-avoidant processing style, Berzonsky et al. (2013) say they "are reluctant to confront and face up to identity conflicts; they procrastinate and delay as long as possible" (p. 55).

Studies have been done that back Berzonsky's description of identity styles. For example, Soenens et al.'s (2011) study of identity commitments found out that "different styles of exploring one's identity were differentially related to motives for commitment, with an information-oriented style showing the most adaptive pattern of motivational regulation and subsequent personal adjustment" (p. 367). More recently, Courey & Pare's (2013) study of effect of identity styles on low self-esteem and delinquency discovered, "the diffuse-avoidant identity style is an important criminogenic factor for all types of

delinquent behaviors studied” (p. 23). They also realized that “the effects of the informational identity style are criminogenic for some reasons (e.g., identity exploration, search for new experiences, thrill-seeking) and preventive for other reasons (e.g., planning, self-monitoring, achievement) and that these effects cancel each other out” (p. 24).

The above examples indicate the importance of including identity styles in a study that seeks to explore students’ probable attitudes towards institutional transformational apparatus such as VVU discipleship practices. According to Burke, (2006), there is the need to find out the possible ways students may use “to avoid situations that require identity changes” (p. 94) so they can keep confirming their existing ones. Again, Berzonsky and Sullivan (1992) had earlier recommended the consideration of how “self-reports about identity style, identity status, or any behavior for that matter are subject to a variety of potential problems and distortions, such as deliberate falsification, inadvertent distortion, and impression management tactics” (p. 153). This is important especially in dealing with VVU students who, as Africans, tend to prefer giving what they consider to be expected rather than absolutely honest answers (see Abolarin, 2013, p. 216).

Concerning the interaction between identity styles and religion-related behaviors or attitudes, studies have considered specific interactions such as Berzonsky and Kuk’s (2000) report of a negative association between diffuse-avoidant and educational involvement (p. 94). Later, Duriez, Soenens, and Beyers (2004) observed that “information oriented adolescents critically evaluate whether certain religious contents correspond to their personal self-definitions” (p. 898), while Gebelt, Thompson, and Miele (2009) also reported that “having a more informational identity style related to

having stronger faith and engaging in more spiritual questing” (p. 229). More recently, Parker (2011) observed that diffuse-avoidant individuals tend to be irregular in personal and public religious activities (p. 84), and Reio, Portes, and Nixon (2014) subsequently reported that diffuse-avoidant correlated negatively with commitment, while normative identity style highly and positively correlated with commitment (p. 37).

There are therefore enough reasons to explore the possibility of interaction between students’ self-reported identity styles and their Satisfaction and Involvement toward discipleship practices. The interesting observation will be to discover the interactions in which West African students behave the same way or differ from their Western counterparts among whom the results stated in the literature were found.

Student Commitments and Attitudes

From Coetsee (1999), involvement and commitment can be compared as follows: Involvement has to do with the interplay of knowledge, reward and recognition and empowerment, participation, willingness to co-operate and taking responsibility, using energy, and skills and abilities. Commitment, on the other hand couples involvement with shared vision, being part of the vision, longer-term enthusiasm, ownership, identification and internalization, being passionately attached, and internalization of vision (p. 218). Wardley, Bélanger, and Leonard (2013) recently argued that academic environment is key to institutional commitment among non-traditional students (22–55+ years of age), whereas university and organizational support features contribute more to traditional students’ (17–21 years of age) campus integration (p. 90). Additionally, a positive association between student participation and commitment to college courses has been reported (Curran & Rosen, 2006, 135).

Concerning students' religious commitment and involvement in institutional religious events, Mayhew, Alyssa, and Bryant (2013) have also discovered that "religiously coercive environments undermine the commitments of all students regardless of worldview identification" (p. 81). They add that "when students feel coerced to join religious organizations, pressured to change their beliefs, or compelled to listen to others' views, commitment wanes (p. 81). On the other hand, a positive association between religious commitment and religious engagement has been observed (Small & Bowman, 2011, p. 170). Religious commitment has also been identified as a predictor of life satisfaction (Fife, Adegoke, McCoy, & Brewer, 2011, p. 398).

Taking inspiration from Berzonsky (1989), the ideal may be to help students feel the need of gradually renegotiating and revising the "decisions and choices made in adolescence and adulthood in light of new information or new environmental demands" (p. 279) as they are guided to continue seeking, elaborating, and evaluating alternatives and new information. The dynamics of commitment to and involvement in campus religious environment that may lead students to switching religions were considered by Ongong'a and Akaranga's (2013) insightful study in the universities of Nairobi and Kenyatta in Kenya. The study discovered that the leading causes of students switching religion are "peer influence and sensitivity of theological or doctrinal interpretation and presentation" (p. 12), and the "present critical and selective characteristics of the contemporary postmodern individuals" (p. 12). Ongong'a and Akaranga's findings seem to suggest the possibility of students switching from their initial religion to another if the discipleship practices take into account, borrowing Woosley and Miller's (2009) words,

“the significance of early experiences and the value in both assessing and understanding student experiences as early as the third week into their first semester”(para. 6).

This can probably be compared to the variation in student customers’ commitment patterns that emerged in Hur and Kang’s (2012) study involving 427 university students and employees, which showed that “customers stay committed for different reasons: because they want to be, because they feel they ought to be, and because they feel they have to be (p. 1540). In other words, if effort is made to assess both the students’ needs and identity processing styles, the impact of discipleship practices may be such that “even high-quality identity commitments may be abandoned by individuals having a strong need for change or variability in their lives” (Waterman, 1999, p. 476).

Concerning students’ satisfaction with campus discipleship practices, a sample of previous studies provides divergent ideas on potential trends to expect among VVU students. Mooney’s (2010) study on religion, college grades, and satisfaction among students at elite colleges and universities in the USA, revealed “a robust positive effect of religious attendance on grades earned at college and a positive effect of both religious attendance and a scale of religious observance on satisfaction at college” (p. 213). Conversely Marques, Lopez, and Mitchell’s (2012) study on Portuguese adolescents found that “religious practice did not emerge as a significant predictor of adolescents’ life satisfaction and had a small to medium correlation with life satisfaction across time, compared to the medium to strong correlations for spirituality and hope” (p. 258).

In relation to satisfaction through integration of faith and learning, and teaching and service, Gruber et al.’s (2012) study is useful in revealing that “students prefer

professors who sustain the human interface within the learning environment and who get along well with them” (p. 172). Moreover, McCollough and Gremler’s (1999) study has shown how “student satisfaction guarantee demonstrates the important educational gains to be achieved by treating students as customers, education as a service product, and applying the lessons of service marketing to the classroom” (p. 129).

The literature reviewed under this section has highlighted the dynamics of students’ potential interest in discipleship practices, on the one hand, and pointed out some factors that do play a role in arousing students’ involvement and satisfaction, on the other. The information gathered so far will be useful in the discussion of findings and the formulation of recommendations.

Social Desirability

Social desirability had to be considered in this work due to the remarks made by earlier researchers (see Abolarin, 2013; Adaboh, 2014) concerning the tendency the present research population has to provide answers that are socially acceptable. Several other researchers have also described this tendency. For example, Freeman, Schumacher, and Coffey (2015) describe Social Desirability as the tendency to “answer questions in a manner that is viewed positively” (p. 566); He, Bartran, Inceoglu, and van de Vijver (2014) describe social desirability as “the tendency of respondents to reply in a manner that will be viewed favorably by others (p. 228); Zerbe and Paulhus, as cited in Verardi et al. (2010) call it “the tendency of individuals to present themselves favorably with respect to current social norms and standards” (p. 20); and Holtgraves (2004) defines it as “a tendency to respond to self-report items in a manner that makes the respondent look good rather than to respond in an accurate and truthful manner” (p. 161).

Holgraves goes further to identify the two aspects of social desirability, namely, impression management, which

refers to a tendency to purposely tailor one's answers to create a positive social image; it is other-deception and need not be consciously believed. The other factor, termed self-deception, refers to an honest but overly positive self-presentation; it is self-deception and might be consciously believed. (p. 161)

Social desirability is often observed among Africans in different circumstances of research enquiry. Examples include inflated frequency altruistic responses in Lindegger, Quayle, and Ndlovu's (2007) findings on HIV-preventive vaccine in South Africa (p. 120), Fox et al.'s (2007) observation of women feeling uncomfortable to disclose their risk of living with their HIV positive partners (p. 598), Brittan, Lewin, and Norris' (2013) report of the difficulty to accurately estimate the prevalence of African Traditional religion in present-day South Africa, because it is often not reported (p. 645); and Wubs et al.'s (2009) findings about the youth underreporting relationship violence, especially aggression perpetrated against a partner (p. 76).

For the present study, Social Desirability items were selected from Reynolds and Gerbasi's (1982) short form of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSDS). Even though Verardi et al.'s (2010) validation study of eight African countries and Switzerland suggests that the MCSDS scale short form C should not be used in cross-cultural studies (p. 30), some items of the scales were used in the present research as control variables in order to appreciate the impact of Social Desirability on the collected responses as projected by previous research works on the same population. More specifically, a measure of Social Desirability was included based on Ong and Ward's (2005) advice in order to counter the said "response bias" and "its systematic influence" (p. 642). Several other scales exist that are used to assess the response bias known as

Social Desirability. But is it important to note that critics such as Visschers, Jaspaert, and Vervaeke (2015) often argue that the existing Social Desirability Scales do measure “the tendency to avoid social disapproval rather than the tendency to gain social approval . . . being unable to differentiate between impression management and self-deception . . . not measuring desirability at all” (p. 4).

Chapter Summary

The sampled literature has been gathered around the themes that underscored the purpose and context of the study in defining variables or variable constructs for this study. These themes are: Elements of syncretism in African theological thought on Christian discipleship, Christ’s discipleship model, the postmodern context of campus discipleship, VVU discipleship context and practices, identity styles, and Commitment and attitudes (Satisfaction and Involvement) toward discipleship practices.

Literature reviewed under elements of syncretism in African theological thought on Christian discipleship afforded an acquaintance with not only the concepts of syncretism and contextualization, but also the current growing pursuit of an African Christian theology. It was noted that much of the Christian missionary endeavor built on the Western origin of Christian mission to Africa—a mission that hardly dissociated itself from the overarching colonial agenda. Moreover, the literature unveiled the potential syncretic nature of the would-be African Christian theology, and finally gathered some Bible-oriented arguments that are calling for Christianity in Africa that is neither borrowed nor syncretic. This theme was instrumental in picturing the potential mindset, needs, and challenges of the population for this study at VVU vis-à-vis the current form of Christianity in Africa.

Literature reviewed under Christ's discipleship model brought out an arguably critical factor for effective discipleship; that is, the "Jesus as a disciple" element which seems to be missing in available models of Christian discipleship. In other words, role modeling was identified as a central element of Christ's discipleship model, and would be recommended under the implications of the present study for religious education.

Concerning the postmodern context of campus discipleship, the literature revealed a compelling necessity for Christian discipleship endeavors to rethink their strategies in order to face a world that now rejects absolute truth and metanarratives.

With regard to the VVU discipleship context and practices, much of the discussion centered on the vision, mission, goals, and practices of the university as formulated and implemented in light of the guidelines of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church. Identity was briefly discussed from the perspective of its different processing styles and how these may interact with students' attitudes vis-à-vis VVU discipleship practices. The literature therein reviewed elucidated some possible interactions between students' self-reported identity styles and students' attitudes in general.

Finally, literature on commitment and attitudes (Satisfaction and Involvement) was reviewed together, featuring findings that seem to link the two. This helped make clear that indeed campus strategies for students' non-academic development matter in student engagement or disengagement, satisfaction, and involvement with the institutional culture. With this in mind, I now turn to the methodology section of the study where I define, describe, conceptualize, and operationalize the various parameters of the study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study aimed at examining the relationship between students' identity styles, Commitment, Syncretism, and attitudes towards discipleship practices at Valley View University (VVU). The primary purpose for this examination was to ascertain the role students' identity styles, as mediated by Commitment and level of syncretism, play in their relating to university practices that have been designed to foster Christian discipleship. The present chapter provides details on the type of research that was conducted, a description of the population and sample, the hypothesized expectations, variable definitions, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis techniques.

Type of Research

The nature and parameters of this study dictate that the research paradigm be a quantitative survey. This is because the study sought to test and verify the hypotheses that were formulated concerning the possible relationship between students' identity styles, commitment, level of syncretism, and their attitudes toward discipleship practices. More specifically, since the main task of the study consisted, as Grajales (2013) posits, of describing "relationships that may exist among naturally occurring phenomena, without trying in any way to alter these phenomena" (p.127), and since the study was applied to the population only once, the research is rightly referred to as a quantitative, non-

experimental, correlational, cross-sectional survey. The main statistical technique for data analysis was path analysis. Mishra and Min (2010) say that this technique “was originally developed by Wright in 1921 (p. 115). They add that it “addresses the concerns and limitations of multiple regression” and “is well suited for estimating the relationship between dependent and independent variables” (p. 115). The suitability of the technique for the present exploratory study stems from the fact that it helps, according to Hourihan (1984), to decompose the relationship between an endogenous variable and anyone of a set of predictors into direct and indirect effects which occur when the predictor is mediated through other endogenous variables (p. 426).

Population and Sample

Description

Pitcher (1990) defined population in reference to research as “the total number of units of concern in a study; the total number of cases about which one is generalizing, as distinguished from a sample of those cases” (p. 237). He defined a sample as “a number of units selected on some basis from a population” (p. 137).

Based on Pitcher’s definition, the population for this study was the total number of returning, regular, undergraduate students, who were enrolled on the two main campuses (Oyibi and Techiman) of VVU during the second semester of the academic year 2014/2015. VVU is a Seventh-day Adventist institution situated along the Dodowa road in the vicinity of Oyibi Township, 19 miles East of Accra metropolis in Ghana, West Africa. As soon as the registration was closed for the semester, I requested from the enrolment database administrators of both campuses to provide me with the enrolment statistics. Upon receiving the statistics, some areas of study (economics and mathematics)

were intentionally omitted due to the fact that they are still new in the system (with a total of only nine students entering in 200-level courses). These programs would therefore not be represented in the three levels of study under consideration. Tables 1 and 2 are adapted from the enrolment statistics tables from the two campuses.

From Tables 1 and 2, the total population for the study was computed and equalled 2071. In the ensuing sections and chapters, the two sub-samples are combined to constitute the overall sample.

Sampling Method

Data collection was carried out using the non-random convenient sampling method. Non-random convenient sampling has the advantage of being fast, inexpensive, and easy because the subjects are readily available. However, the technique also has some disadvantages, most notably its systematic bias stemming from sampling bias, and its low external validity due to limitation in generalization and inference making about the population (Explorable.com, Sep 16, 2009). This weakness of the sampling method was ameliorated by collecting a large sample size.

The choice of non-random convenient sampling technique was warranted due to two critical reasons, namely, the generally observed reluctance of the VVU student community to participate in data collection, and the possibility among the population under study of providing presumed desired data—rather than honest self-report—in order to please the researcher (Abolarin, 2013; Adaboh, 2014). Non-random convenient sampling provided me the opportunity of dealing only with as many participants as would be willing to participate (Warner, 2008, p. 4). This weakness of convenience

Table 1

Enrollment Statistics on Oyibi Campus for the Second Semester 2014/2015

Areas of Study	Levels of Study		
	200	300	400
Business	306	200	208
Education	71	52	21
Computer/IT	122	77	61
Nursing	206	61	47
Develop. Studies	59	49	46
Theology	42	28	44
Biomed Equip.	9	0	0
Total	815	467	427

Table 2

Enrolment Statistics on Techiman Campus for the Second Semester 2014/2015

Areas of Study	Levels of Study		
	200	300	400
Business	82	63	49
Education	31	27	45
Agri-Business ¹	7	11	4
IT	15	14	14
Total	135	115	112

Note. ¹Agri-Business is computed in the subsequent overall data set as part of Business.

notwithstanding, the study ensured quality control during data collection as explained in the ensuing paragraphs.

With regard to the determination of sample size, several formulae are suggested in the literature depending on whether the population is known or not, or whether the population is small or large. According to Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size table, the sample size for a population of 2071 subjects would fall between 322 and 337, which are sample sizes for populations of sizes 2000 and 2200, respectively. However, more recent studies suggest more contextualized methods of determining sample size. According to Kelley, Maxwell, and Rausch (2003), the contention on sample size determination revolves around the "power analytic framework of sample-size planning" vs. the approach "that emphasizes accuracy in parameter estimation" (p. 260).

Since the present study is exploratory in nature and relies on path analysis, the size of the sample is critical. For instance, MacCallum, Browne, and Sugawara (1996) demonstrated that power estimates and effect size tend to increase with large samples (pp. 140-142). Petraitis, Dunham, and Niewiarowski (1996) argued that "as a rule of thumb, sample size should be at least five to 20 times larger than the number of estimated paths to ensure reliable results" (p. 426). In the present research, the maximum number of estimated paths is calculated from the formula $n*(n+1)/2$ (where n is the number of variables in the model) and is equal to 36. The final sample size for this study is 800, and this is larger than 20 times the number of estimated parameters. Furthermore, the concern raised by earlier researchers on the attitude of the population under study toward data collection led me to decide on sampling more subjects than needed (1217 participants,

representing 55.9% of the population) for the study so as to maximize the amount of usable data.

It is critical to note that after going through all the questionnaires and ascertaining their possible usability, the final sample for the study was obtained by randomly selecting 800 out of the 1217. This final sample (i.e., $N = 800$) represents 38.6% of the population. The sample meets the required minimum sample size for studies involving path analysis, and should therefore allow for generalization of the conclusions that are drawn from the findings.

Hypotheses

Bobbie (2004) defines a hypothesis as “a testable expectation about empirical reality that follows from a more general proposition; more generally, an expectation about the nature of things derived from a theory” (p. 44). For the sake of clarity of the type of hypotheses formulated in this study, it is important to differentiate between null and alternative hypotheses. Bobbie (2004) refers to the null hypothesis as “that hypothesis that suggests there is no relationship among the variables under study” (p. 48). Warner (2008) explains a null hypothesis as one “that specifies a ‘guessed’ value for an unknown population mean” (p. 86). Bakeman (1992) says: “the null and alternative hypotheses are usually formulated so that, as a matter of logic, they are mutually exclusive (only one of them can be true) and exhaustive (one of them must be true)” (p. 23).

Based on the five research questions as earlier stated in this study, related alternative hypotheses were formulated as follows:

H₀₁: Informational identity style, Normative identity style, and Diffuse-avoidant identity style have significant direct effects on Social Desirability among VVU undergraduate students.

H₀₂: Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, and Social Desirability have significant direct and indirect effects on Commitment among VVU undergraduate students.

H₀₃: Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, and Commitment have significant direct and indirect effects on Syncretism among VVU undergraduate students.

H₀₄: Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism have significant direct and indirect effects on Satisfaction among VVU undergraduate students.

H₀₅: Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction have significant direct and indirect effects on Involvement among VVU undergraduate students.

Definition of Variables

This study revolved around the interaction of two categories of variables. namely exogenous (those hypothesized to influence), and endogenous (hypothesized to be influenced) variables (Rose & Sullivan, 1996, p. 13). The exogenous variables category consisted of three summative variables namely, Informational identity style, Normative identity style, and Diffuse-avoidant identity style.

Berzonsky (2011) says that Informational identity style (henceforth referred to as Informational) describes “individuals who are sceptical of their own self-views and they intentionally seek out, process, and utilise identity-relevant information to personally resolve identity conflicts (p. 55). Informational consisted of nine items (i.e., INFO1, INFO2, INFO3, etc.). A scale of five levels of measurement (with 1 = Not at all like me and 5 = Very much like me) was used to obtain participants’ self-reported perceptions. For the number selected by the participant, the values were: 1 = 1; 2 = 2; 3 = 3; 4 = 4; 5 = 5. In order to determine the extent to which the participants were characterized by the Informational identity style, the values of the different responses to the nine items were added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 9 to 45 points.

Berzonsky et al. (2013) say that Normative identity style (henceforth referred to as Normative) describes “individuals who tend to internalize and adhere to the goals, expectations, and standards of significant others or referent groups in a relatively more automatic manner” (2013, p. 2). Normative consisted of nine items (i.e., NORM1, NORM2, NORM3, etc.). A scale of five levels of measurement (with 1 = Not at all like me and 5 = Very much like me) was used to obtain participants’ self-reported perceptions. For the number selected by the participant, the values were: 1 = 1; 2 = 2; 3 = 3; 4 = 4; 5 = 5. In order to determine the extent to which the participants were characterized by the Normative identity style, the values of the different responses to the nine items were added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 9 to 45 points.

Berzonsky et al. (2013) say that Diffuse-avoidant identity style (henceforth referred to as Diffuse-avoidant) describes individuals who “procrastinate and try to avoid dealing with identity conflicts and decisions as long as possible. When they have to act or

make choices, their behavior is determined primarily by situational demands and consequences” (p. 2). Diffuse-avoidant consisted of nine items (i.e., DIFF1, DIFF2, DIFF3, etc.). A scale of five levels of measurement (with 1 = Not at all like me and 5 = Very much like me) was used to obtain participants’ self-reported perceptions. For the number selected by the participant, the values were: 1 = 1; 2 = 2; 3 = 3; 4 = 4; 5 = 5, except for items DIFF3, DIFF4, DIFF5, and DIFF7, which were recorded in a reverse fashion; i.e., 1 = 5; 2 = 4; 3 = 3; 4 = 2; 5 = 1. In order to determine the extent to which the participants were characterized by the diffuse-avoidant identity style, the values of the different responses to the nine items were added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 9 to 45 points.

In this research, Commitment refers to what Awan, Mahmood, and Idrees (2014) describe as the “feeling of emotional attachment with something or someone. This attachment might be mental or intellectual with a person, group or with an organization” (p. 5). Commitment consisted of nine items (i.e., COMM1, COMM2, COMM3, etc.). A scale of five levels of measurement (with 1 = Not at all like me and 5 = Very much like me) was used to obtain participants’ self-reported perceptions. For the number selected by the participant, the values were: 1 = 1; 2 = 2; 3 = 3; 4 = 4; 5 = 5. In order to determine the extent to which the participants were committed, the values of the different responses to the nine items were added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 9 to 45 points.

Syncretism in this research refers to what Koertner (2013) calls “the conscious harmonizing of different religions or individual elements thereof, and . . . the uncontrolled, organic influence of religions or religious views and practices” (p. 296).

More concretely, Syncretism in this study refers to Kasomo's (2012) African-religiosity based perception, as he sees syncretism as the "Christian involvement in occult practices such as visiting seances [sic] and fortune-tellers, playing with ones [sic] horoscopes, participation in magic of any kind, consulting mediums or spiritists in an attempt to locate some missing object(s), practice of placing curses, hexes, or a spell on someone" (p. 11).

Syncretism consisted of fourteen items (i.e., SYNC1, SYNC2, SYNC3, etc.). A scale of five levels of measurement (with 1 = Not at all like me and 5 = Very much like me) was used to obtain participants' self-reported perceptions. For the number selected by the participant, the values were: 1 = 1; 2 = 2; 3 = 3; 4 = 4; 5 = 5. In order to determine the extent to which the participants were characterized by Syncretism, the values of the different responses to the 14 items were added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 14 to 70 points.

Involvement broadly refers, in this research, to what Case (2011) describes as the extent to which "students on college campuses participate in a wide range of activities that contribute in meaningful ways to their learning and personal development" (p. 167). Involvement consisted of eight items (i.e., INVOL1, INVOL2, INVOL3, etc.). A scale of five levels of measurement (with 1 = Very rarely and 5 = Very often) was used to obtain participants' self-reported perceptions. For the number selected by the participant, the values were: 1 = 1; 2 = 2; 3 = 3; 4 = 4; 5 = 5. In order to determine the extent to which the participants were involved in campus discipleship practices, the values of the different responses to the eight items were added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 8 to 40 points.

Michaela (2014) provides a general definition of Satisfaction saying that it describes “the feeling of the consumer toward a product or service after it has been used” (p. 108). In the context of the present study, Mooney (2010) has observed a positive association between students’ satisfaction at college and religious activities on campus (p. 199). Satisfaction consisted of 13 items (i.e., SATIS1, SATIS2, SATIS3, etc.). A scale of five levels of measurement (with 1 = Not at all and 5 = extremely) was used to obtain participants’ self-reported perceptions. For the number selected by the participant, the values were: 1 = 1; 2 = 2; 3 = 3; 4 = 4; 5 = 5. In order to determine the extent to which the participants were satisfied with campus discipleship practices, the values of the different responses to the thirteen items were added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 13 to 65 points.

Concerning Social Desirability, Verardi et al. (2010) say that it describes “the tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner (p. 20). Social desirability consisted of seven items (i.e., SD1, SD2, SD3, etc.). A scale of five levels of measurement (with 1 = Not at all like me and 5 = Very much like me) was used to obtain participants’ self-reported perceptions. For the number selected by the participant, the values were: 1 = 1; 2 = 2; 3 = 3; 4 = 4; 5 = 5. In order to determine the extent to which the participants were characterized by social desirability, the values of the different responses to the seven items were added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 7 to 35 points.

Appendix D, Table 1 provides details on the sources of items used to constitute summative variables; see also Appendix D, Table 2 for more details on the conceptual/constitutive, instrumental, and operational definitions of each variable and how they were operationalized or “made amenable to some kind of measurement” (Rose

& Sullivan, 1996, p. 6). The primary relationships that were explored between the variables have been schematized earlier in Figure 1.

Instrumentation, Validity, and Reliability

The research instrument was a survey questionnaire (see Appendix C). It consisted of four main sections with a total of 86 items. The grouping of items into sections was primarily defined by the type of levels of measurement used for each scale. Thus, the first section comprised 57 items that were set to collect data about identity styles (this refers to the items under Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-Avoidant as described earlier), Commitment, and Syncretism. The section also contained seven items for Social Desirability, which served as control or test variable.

The second section of the instrument comprised eight items, and concerned itself with students' involvement in discipleship practices. The third comprised 13 items on student satisfaction vis-à-vis discipleship practices. The fourth section consisted of eight items on personal information about the participants. The items were gender, age group, level of education, religious affiliation, religious group status, academic standing, area of study, and country of origin. Completion of the research instrument (questionnaire) required a maximum of thirty minutes of a participant's time. I describe in the ensuing paragraphs each scale of the instrument.

Identity Style Inventory (ISI-5) scale.

This scale comprised the three exogenous variables (i.e., Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant), and one endogenous variable (i.e., Commitment). According to Crocetti, Rubini, Berzonsky, and Meeus (2009), the original scale initiated by Berzonsky was known as the Identity Inventory Scale (ISI-3), which was subsequently

validated (p. 246). Berzonsky et al. (2013) revised and validated it and henceforth referred to it as the revised Identity Style Inventory (ISI-5). The present study used ISI-5 for its advantage over ISI-3 in “examining identity styles from a developmental and/or cross-cultural perspective” (pp. 5, 10).

The items on identity styles required the subject to describe him or herself in relation to the options provided about the described identity-processing styles. Items on commitment required the participant to indicate the option that best described his or her self-reported level of commitment.

Social Desirability Scale

According to Tatman and Kreamer (2014), the Social Desirability Scale—mainly known as Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSDS)—was first developed by Crowne and Marlowe in 1960 (p. 123). Since then, says van de Mortel (2008), several “short forms of the scale with acceptable reliability ($r = 0.74-0.82$) that correlate ($r = 0.88-0.91$) with the original scale” have been developed (p. 41). Sârbescu, Rusu, and Costea (2012) report that the validity and reliability of both the original and short versions have also concurrently been confirmed in a single study (p. 37). Items for the present study were selected from Reynolds and Gerbasi’s (1982) short form of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSDS). Based on Johnson and Fendrich (n.d.), these items would facilitate the testing of the subject’s “tendency to project favorable images of him or herself during social interaction” (p. 1661). In other words, as Bobbie (2004) argues, these items would help facilitate the evaluation of Social Desirability bias and its possible impact on the relationships under study (p. 426).

Syncretism Scale

The Syncretism scale was set up based on some presumed common African religious beliefs as comprehensively detailed in Mbiti's (1969) *African Religions and Philosophies* (see, divinities and God's associates, spirits, and the living dead, pp. 98-118; and the medicine-men, mediums and diviners, and priests, prophets and religious founders, pp. 217-233, 245-252). Fourteen items were formulated to capture the general perceptions vis-à-vis the role of the dead among the living, the perceived connection of magicians and sorcerers with God, polytheism, and religious dual allegiance. Items on Syncretism required the participant to rate his or her degree of agreement with the descriptions of religious syncretic traits.

Satisfaction and Involvement Scales

Scales exist that relate to attitudes toward religion or religious practices, which have been used and validated in several studies and different contexts. These include the "Francis Scale of Attitude toward Christianity, the Katz-Francis Scale of Attitude toward Judaism, the Sahin-Francis Scale of Attitude toward Islam and the Santosh-Francis Scale of Attitude toward Hinduism" (Astley, Francis, & Robbins, 2012, p. 1); the Spiritual Well-Being Scale—SWBS, the Duke Religion Index, and the Religious/Spiritual Coping—RcoPE (de Vries-Schot, Pieper, & van Uden, 2012, p. 2). However, none of these refer to the specific discipleship/religious practices that are intended to motivate students at VVU for satisfaction and involvement in order to have them benefit from the University's specific discipleship and religious goals.

Consequently, similar items for satisfaction and involvement were formulated from the University's spiritual and religious goals in order to assess the actual reality

peculiar to VVU campuses rather than the general religiosity and religious satisfaction defined in existing scales. Satisfaction and Involvement scales were formulated based on the specific discipleship activities as found in the VVU Academic Bulletin, (2010, pp. 8-11).

As earlier underscored in the literature review, Mayhew and Bryant (2013) posit that students' attitudes toward religious beliefs or practices depend on whether they are coerced or not (p. 81). Onogong'a and Akaranga (2013) emphasize that these attitudes would depend on how the practices and beliefs are packaged and communicated (p. 12). It is hoped in this study that since VVU does, in principle, not coerce students into its discipleship practices, students will have positive attitudes toward the said practices. Items on Satisfaction and Involvement required the participant to relate to them in terms of his or her Satisfaction on the one hand, and his or her Involvement, on the other, by selecting a specific option closest to the participant's self-reported reality.

The levels of measurement for Satisfaction and Involvement items were formulated using the "satisfaction likert scale" (SurveyMonkey Help Center, 1999-2014). For the sake of clarity of questions and easy response, Kasunic's (2005) advice was adhered to by using easy-to-understand terminology and format (p. 48) for the activities under consideration, as found in the bulletin (VVU Academic Bulletin, 2010, p.10).

It is important to note that content validity of the research instrument was reasonably assumed owing to the following twofold argument. While part of the instrument was made up of items from already existing and validated instruments (i.e., ISI-5 & MCSDS), the other part also consisted of items that were formulated based on a literature-based description of the perceptions they intended to measure.

Before the major data collection, a pilot study was conducted to test, as Pearson (2010) recommends, the overall reliability of the instrument by examining the consistency of the responses (p. 45), and observing the Cronbach's Alpha to ascertain the internal reliability of the items for Syncretism, Satisfaction, and Involvement (p. 47). This pilot study (see Appendix B) revealed that those items were adequate with all Cronbach's Alpha, $\alpha \geq .70$ and most inter-item correlations above .02.

For the construct validity of the all the factors in the model, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted. Table 3 displays the Fit indices, while Appendix E, Table 3 presents the related squared multiple correlation coefficients (R^2), whose role, Albright (2008) explains, is to describe "the amount of variance the common factor accounted for in observed variables" (p. 12).

Notwithstanding some low loadings for the various factors, model fit was achieved for each factor. The choice of the indices reported in this study was based on Jackson, Gillaspy, and Purc-Stephenson's (2009) assessment of the current trend in indices reported in CFA-related research works (see, e.g., Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008, pp. 54-55; Nasser & Wisenbaker, 2003, p. 733). They observed that the number of indices has been on the rise as researchers reported not only the most recommended (RMSEA, SRMR, CFI, TLI, Bollen's delta 2, and CI) but also the least recommended (GFI, AGFI, NFI, and Bollen's rho1) indices in order to minimize interpretational biases (p. 16). This section of the study reports on RMSEA, χ^2 , CFI, TLI, GFI, and AGFI.

Table 3

Fit Indices for the Measurement Model

Variables	<i>GFI</i>	<i>AGFI</i>	<i>TLI</i>	<i>CFI</i>	<i>RMSEA</i>	χ^2	χ^2/df	<i>p</i>
Informational	.985	0.974	0.962	0.973	.038	53.656	2.146	.001
Normative	.989	0.979	0.918	0.948	.026	38.452	1.715	.018
Diffuse-avoidant	.993	0.988	1.003	1.000	.000	26.313	0.975	.501
Commitment	.989	0.975	0.966	0.982	.036	38.661	2.035	.005
Syncretism	.972	0.961	0.940	0.950	.038	162.246	2.135	.000
Involvement	.991	0.973	0.985	0.993	.043	29.876	2.490	.003
Satisfaction	.976	0.952	0.971	0.983	.049	134.388	2.921	.000
Desirability	.993	0.982	0.915	0.955	.033	20.514	1.865	.039

Note. GFI: Goodness of Fit Index; AGFI: Adjusted GFI; TLI: Turker—Lewis Index; CFI: Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; χ^2 : Chi-Square; χ^2/df : Ratio Chi-Square over degree of freedom; *p*: Probability associated with Chi-Square. Thresholds for good model fit are $GFI \geq .900$, $AGFI \geq .900$, $TLI \geq .900$, $CFI \geq .900$, $RMSEA \leq .07$, and non-significant χ^2 (i.e., having $p \geq .050$).

Data Collection

Under data collection I provide details on all the activities that were involved in preparing for data collection, administering the questionnaire, and retrieving the filled questionnaire. These details are grouped under six considerations: data quality control, announcement of the research activities, voluntary participation, how participants expressed their consent, how confidentiality was ensured, and distribution and retrieval of questionnaires.

Data Quality Control

Data quality control was essentially ensured firstly by carefully considering wording and response format, then by providing adequate training to the research team in

order, as Warner (2008) explains, “to reduce the issue of reactivity (the impact of the presence of observer/data collector on the respondent’s behaviour)” (p. 126), and finally, close supervision of the administration of surveys in order “to minimize the problem of social desirability bias (respondent distorting answers due to his or her personality or attitude)” (p. 126).

In order to identify and locate the prospective participants, I contacted the university’s *iSchool* unit to release to me the current enrolment statistics according to the following classification: Enrollment by program, year or level of study (i.e., 100–200–300–400), and classes registered.

This helped the research team to have details on the research population and to map out an effective mechanism for collecting reliable and adequate data. It is important to note that, due to challenges in course scheduling and students’ course registration at VVU, I was faced with potential difficulties that compelled me to take preventive measures in order to avoid duplication of data.

The first challenge was that students from different programs of study often register for the same course during the same semester, and are taught by the same lecturer in the same class at the same time. This might cause the risk of getting the same student filling the questionnaire twice or more times; that is, first in her or his department-based class, and then in subsequent mixed classes. For instance students from Banking and Finance and those from Accounting may find themselves in the same classroom offering a course like *ACCT221—Principles of Accounting I*, which is required of both majors (i.e., Banking & Finance, and Accounting).

The second challenge stemmed from the fact that each prospective participant might register for more than one course in her or his major area of study. If care was not taken, a student might fill the questionnaire in one class and—either intentionally or forgetfully—fill another copy of the questionnaire in a later class. For instance, a level-300-Banking-and-Finance student may fill the questionnaire during her/his *BKFN325 Banking Operations* class, and then later meet the research team in her or his *BSAD 325 Business Communication* class. If the student is not honest enough to inform the data collector, collected data may be only numerically but not necessarily substantially representative. Indeed, much as the research team would do well to persuade prospective respondents not to fill the questionnaire more than once, it was critical to know the details and level of risk of duplication and check it when necessary.

In order to minimize duplication of data and at the same time optimize the participant's confidentiality, the research team first analyzed the enrollment statistics by program, courses, and levels of study; then located prospective participants in classrooms according to the daily course timetable. The next step consisted of sorting out and tagging prospective participants who might be found in some classes in subsequent days after the data collectors had gone to their earlier classroom. In other words, prospective participants who were found in the first-hour class were identified in subsequent classes, tagged by their program, level of study, or their ID numbers, and eliminated from the classroom mapping for data collection. When this exercise of sorting and tagging was done, student names were removed from the data-collection map, which henceforth contained only ID numbers tied up with program indexes. This was done to ensure that

data collectors did not get to know the names of the persons to whom they were giving the questionnaire.

The disadvantage of this procedure was that a student who was a member of the first-hour class and happened to be absent on the day of data collection, did not get the chance of participating in the research in the class since her or his name had been eliminated from subsequent classes (this is why provision for such cases was made for data collection during lunch break in the auditorium).

With regard to ensuring originality and independence of the responses, students were seated exactly the same way as during the examination period. Under examination circumstances, students are spaced enough to preclude the possibility of either communication or “pirating.” This rearrangement of seats was explained in the letter written to individual lecturers.

Announcement of the Research

After obtaining permission from VVU and approval from Andrews University Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A), I proceeded with the announcement of the research in order to create awareness and maximize preparedness of the prospective participants. The announcement consisted of pasting, reading, and screen projection of notices. Notices were of two kinds. One displayed information on the research title and purpose, the voluntary participatory nature of data collection, the timetable for data collection, and the researcher’s contact information. The other consisted of the authorization documents from VVU Administration. This notice—comprising the institutional consent letter and endorsements from deans and departmental heads—helped

the community know that all the relevant units of the university had consented to the data collection for the said research.

Announcements were also either read or displayed electronically at several gatherings (classrooms, residential hall meetings, weekly interdisciplinary forums, and weekly prayer meetings) and through VVU multimedia centre throughout the week preceding data collection. Announcements continued throughout the entire data-collection period.

Final preparation for data collection was done as follows: as soon as the pilot study was done and the necessary adjustments (typographical errors, substitution of uncommon words, and reformatting of the instrument) made, I sent a reminder notice to faculty deans, heads of departments, and individual lecturers. This was followed by frequent announcements in classrooms to persuade the prospective participants regarding their voluntary participation in the survey.

Voluntary Participation

Voluntary participation was considered a critical element in the quality of this research. This stemmed from the logic that if people were somehow compelled to participate, there would be no guarantee that the data provided would be genuine. In order to ensure voluntary participation, measures were put in place as follows: all printed and electronic messages that were used for awareness and recruitment boldly emphasized the voluntary nature of participation. This means that by the time of data collection, most of the student community had had sufficient time and information to make up their minds as to whether or not they were willing to participate. That notwithstanding, the participant's consent form also boldly stated the voluntary nature of participation,

including discontinuation of participation even after starting to fill out the questionnaire. Additionally, the data collectors reminded prospective participants of their choice to participate or not.

Confidentiality and Participant Consent

In a typical African context, secrecy is a fundamental socio-psychological virtue—a way of protecting one's life's mysteries from the unknown and unfathomable stranger. Consequently, a typical African individual would hardly share her or his candid mind if there were enough reason to doubt the intentions of the inquirer. This may often lead either to providing false data in order merely to satisfy the inquirer's curiosity, or to camouflaging, by giving erroneous data that can never be later traced to her- or himself.

In light of this, the information on the research procedures ensured the following measures in order to optimize confidentiality, thereby enhancing honesty in responses:

1. Participants were seated distant enough from one another so that each of them was sure that no one was reading her or his answers.
2. No personal identifiers (such as name, identification number, e-mail, cell phone number, residential address) were required on the questionnaire or the consent form.
3. Data collectors were seriously cautioned not to be moving in the class so the participants were sure that no one knew what they were writing.
4. No roll was called in connection with data collection in order to assure participants of the quasi-absolute anonymity of the exercise.
5. No lengthy writing was required on the questionnaire in order to avoid possible identification of the participant's handwriting.

6. No identifier such as index or identity numbers was attached to the location of the participant in order to rule out the possibility of identifying respondents through seating arrangement.

7. No recording systems such as video or photographic cameras, audio-recording devices, or security cameras, were activated in the classroom or the multipurpose auditorium during data collection.

8. Participants could exercise the right to take the questionnaire outside the class to fill it out and bring it back to the data collection envelope after completion.

Data Collection in the Classroom

Data collection was planned to start simultaneously in all classes of a particular hour. However, some lecturers preferred a different time than what had been initially agreed upon. Depending on the time a specific lecturer eventually selected, the data collector reached the class five minutes before the agreed time and notified the lecturer of her or his presence.

As soon as the lecturer let the data collector in, the process of data collection started with a reminder of what the research was all about, and how long data collection would take. Then the data collector proceeded with the reading of the respondent's consent form and informing the class that the same form is attached to the questionnaire. She/he then entreated the class to fill out the questionnaire, at the same time reminding the class that participation was not compulsory, and that the exercise would last for thirty minutes.

In case some class members chose not to participate, the data collector entreated the lecturer to allow them to decide either to stay in class during data collection or to take

a break until the exercise was over. At the end of each day, the research team met to check the size (as per program and level of study) of the sample so far realized.

Data Collection in the Auditorium

Concerning data collection during lunch time, the research team liaised with the lecturers to always make announcements in the classroom a few minutes before lunch break to remind those who might have missed the opportunity in class but were willing to participate. Since participants would not gather together at the same time as in the classroom, the research team waited in the multipurpose auditorium with the questionnaires, ready for anyone who would come at any time till the data-collection period was over.

The auditorium was arranged in such a way as to allow no exchange of information among participants. Since students would not come at the same time, the team endeavored to attend to everyone who would come in, read the participant's informed consent form, and allow the prospective participants to decide to participate or not. As in the classroom, participants would be given half an hour to complete the questionnaire. However, no one came to fill the questionnaire in the auditorium, partly because data collection in the classrooms was successful throughout the week.

Data Analysis

Analysis of screened data was progressively carried out through description of participants and variables, bivariate correlations, and finally, path analysis. The reason for choosing the main analysis technique, data screening, and a brief description of the analysis process are presented hereafter.

Choice of the Main Analysis Technique

Even though variable correlations were considered, the ultimate analysis technique for the study was path analysis. It is critical to note that even though researchers such as Metler and Vannatta (2005) used to think of path analysis as a technique that “utilizes multiple regression to estimate causal relations, both direct and indirect, among several variables and to test the acceptability of the causal model” (p.14; see also Hourihan, 1984, p. 426;), others such as Streiner (2005) have demonstrated that path analysis “cannot be used to determine causality or even to determine whether a specific model is correct” (p. 115). The choice of path analysis for the present exploratory study is based on Streiner’s (2005) recommendation that “it can examine situations in which there are several final dependent variables and those in which there are ‘chains’ of influence, in that variable A influences variable B, which in turn influences variable C” (p. 115).

Data Screening

Data screening followed Warner’s (2008) recommendation by checking for errors in data coding and data entry, inconsistent responses, missing values, extreme outliers, nonlinear relations between quantitative variables (p. 125), data-entry errors and inconsistencies by correcting or deleting them, and for replacing missing data with the imputed mean (pp. 133-135). Linear regression partial plots were used to examine the linearity of variable relationships.

Screening for Participation During Data Collection

Data collection was carried out in two phases. The first phase consisted of collecting data from all the areas of study as outlined on the questionnaire. One thousand one hundred and fifteen (1115) subjects participated in this phase. A glance at the participation percentages showed a low participation (17.8%) of nursing students' total enrollment. This necessitated the second phase of data collection, which targeted only nursing students. This second phase raised the nursing students' participation from 17.8% to 44.9%, and the total student participation from 1115 to 1217. At this point, the data was ready for other aspects of pre-analysis screening.

Screening for Errors, Missing Data, Outliers, and Multicollinearity

First of all, the raw sample data were entered into SPSS version 21.0 in order to preserve the responses of every single participant. But because that huge amount of data (104,662 entries) was processed manually by a four-member team, a quick glance at the resulting frequency tables in comparison with the original scripts showed that a lot of entry mistakes had been made. However, after correcting mistakes in the entries for areas and level of study, the raw database was of value in that it helped determine the level of representativeness of the sample.

Knowing how each area and level of study were represented in the raw sample was essential for determination of the final sample in that several random sample sizes were taken until the somewhat same distribution of areas and level of study was reached. This led to a final random sample of 800 cases, which were then subjected to complete

screening. The representativeness of the subjects' levels and areas of study is shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Ideally, the percentage of each area of study in the total population should also have reflected in the composition of the final sample. However, because data collection employed convenient sampling, some areas of study were overrepresented (e.g., Education: 49%), and others underrepresented (e.g., Nursing: 27%). A paired-samples *t*-test was used to examine the significance of the possible difference between the proportions of the areas of study in both the population and the sample. Taking out the score for Education (because it constituted an outlier), the test showed no significant difference between the representativeness of areas of study in the population and each of the samples ($p = .093$ and $.063$, respectively, at $\alpha = .05$ and $df = 6$) for the raw and final samples, respectively).

Table 4

Representativeness of Levels of Study in the Overall Sample

	<i>Level of study</i>				Total
	200	300	400	Missing systems ¹	
Population	950	582	539	--	2071
Raw Sample ²	596	330	252	39	1217
Final Sample ³	374	219	172	35	800

Note. ¹Missing system here refers to subjects who did not disclose their levels of study; ²Raw sample refers to the initial sample that involved 1217 subjects representing 55.9% of the total population; ³Final Sample refers to the 800-subject sample that was randomly selected from the raw sample, representing 38.6% of the total population.

Table 5

Representativeness of Areas of Study in the Overall Sample

Areas Of Study	Total Per Area	Area % of total Population	Raw Sample	Final Sample	Sample % of total per area
Business	930	44.9	476	370	40.0
Education	247	12.0	198	121	49.0
Computer/IT	303	14.6	178	111	37.0
Nursing	314	15.2	147	84	27.0
Develop. Studies	154	7.4	102	61	40.0
Theology	114	5.5	78	40	35.0
Biomedical Equip.	9	0.4	5	2	22.0
Missing System ¹			33	11	
Overall Size	2071	100	1217	800	

Note. ¹Missing system here refers to subjects who did not disclose their areas of study.

This means that the areas of study in each sample are distributed in significantly the same way as the population. From this point onward, the study will deal only with the data contained in the sample so far designated as *final sample*, which will simply be referred to as sample.

Missing data were sorted by examining their patterns per variable, cases, and values. The outcome is presented in Tables 6 and 7. The tables categorize the data under complete and incomplete data, and provide the percentage of each data category vis-à-vis the total amount of data. Tables 6 and 7 show that respondents did not answer completely any of the variables. The number of missing values represents 2.75% and 4.75% of total values under research variables and demographics respectively.

Table 6

Overall Summary of Missing Values for Research Variables

Data category	Variables	Cases	Values
Complete Data			
<i>N</i>	0	465	60686
%	0.00	58.12	97.25
Incomplete Data			
<i>N</i>	78	335	1714
%	100.00	41.88	2.75

Table 7

Overall Summary of Missing Values for Demographic Variables

Data category	Variables	Cases	Values
Complete Data			
<i>N</i>	0	601	6094
%	0.00	75.12	95.22
Incomplete Data			
<i>N</i>	8	199	306
%	100	24.88	4.78

Roth, Switzer III, and Switzer (1999) suggest that all cases that have not answered an entire scale of the study be canceled (p. 212). In the same vein, Metler and Vannatta (2005) argue that all cases that have not answered more than 15% of the variables should be deleted Listwise (p. 64). However, I preferred Pigott's (2001) suggestion to replace missing data (except in the case of demographics) rather than deleting them in order to maximize the use of available data (p. 365). Accordingly, missing values were replaced with the mean—a technique Kline (2011) describes as “the most basic method” (p. 58).

This is arguably against the rapidly increasing moratorium being currently placed on single imputations in, as Newman (2014) remarks, “typical data-analytic applications such as regression/ANOVA and SEM,” (pp. 383, 385; see also Cheema, 2014, p. 493). For instance, Schlomer, Bauman, and Card (2010) argue against the use of means substitution by pointing out the tendency of means substitution “to reduce the variance of the variable, which also attenuates covariances that the variable has with other variables” (p. 4).

Notwithstanding the above concerns on mean substitution for missing data, I still used the technique (excluding the demographic variables), because the data of the present study aligned themselves with Scheffer’s (2002) observation that the technique can safely be used when data are missing completely at random (MCAR) and less than 10% (p. 160).

Pre-analysis screening proceeded by checking for extreme outliers and multicollinearity. The outliers in the dataset were identified, defined, and handled by following Aguinis, Gottfredson, and Joo’s (2013) classification (pp. 275-280). Accordingly, only two (i.e., error outliers and single construct outliers) out of 14 types of outliers identified by the authors were identified in the dataset. Error outliers were identified through frequency tables and handled by correcting wrong entries. As for construct outliers, Iglewicz and Banerjee (2001) recommend that they be identified through Tukey’s outlier labeling technique but by using 2.2 as multiplier ((instead of Tukey’s initial 1.5 multiplier) (pp. 2, 3). This technique is helpful in that it identifies the actual or true outliers without cutting of the tails of the distribution. The formulas used for upper and lower boundaries for outliers are: $Q3 + (2.2*[Q3-Q1])$ and $Q1 - (2.2*[Q3-Q1])$

respectively, where Q1 and Q3 are the first and third quartiles of the values distribution. Results from using these formulas showed no true single construct outliers in the data.

Multicollinearity was checked for all the sets of items under each summative independent and mediator variable, as well as the control variable using linear regression technique in SPSS. There was no multicollinearity (i.e., all $VIF < 3$) observed.

Finally, the assumptions for path analysis were assessed. Streiner (2005) has argued that “because path analysis is an extension of multiple linear regression, many of the same assumptions hold for the 2 techniques” (p. 121). These assumptions are: linear relationship among variables, uncorrelated residual terms, uncorrelated disturbance terms for endogenous variables, low or no multicollinearity, exactly identified or over-identified model, and adequate sample size. Streiner (2005) recommends a minimum sample size for path analysis as 10 cases for every parameter (p. 120). This study has 800 cases for 78 parameters, and therefore meets the recommendation. Moreover, AMOS was used to automatically assess correlations of residual terms, correlations of disturbance terms, and model identification. The advantage of using AMOS for path analysis is that, without the assumptions met, neither estimates nor model indices are displayed.

Further, linearity between exogenous and endogenous variables was assessed by examining the linear regression partial plots and bivariate correlations using SPSS. This technique revealed that linearity assumption was violated between the main endogenous variables (Satisfaction and Involvement) and the rest of the variables. However, the assumption was met between the rest of the variables in the model. As indicated earlier, there were no multicollinearity issues.

Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed at providing details on the type of research, the population, and the techniques as well as procedures undertaken to conduct the present research. The type of research was quantitative, non-experimental, correlational, and cross-sectional survey. The population consisted of the second to fourth-year undergraduate students enrolled during the second semester of 2014/2015 academic year at VVU. Five hypotheses were formulated to test the various stages of the hypothesized path model.

Two categories of variables were defined, namely exogenous and endogenous variables. Exogenous variables consisted of the three identity styles (Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant) in the study. Endogenous variables comprised the mediator (Commitment and Syncretism), control (Social Desirability), and hypothesized main dependent (Satisfaction and Involvement) variables. The research instrument comprised 27 exogenous, 23 mediator, 7 control, 21 hypothesized main dependent, and 8 demographic items. The validity and reliability of the instrument were ensured through both pilot study and confirmatory factor analysis.

The sampling technique was non-random convenient sampling. Random sampling was later applied to the raw data to obtain the final sample. Data quality was ensured by using easy-to-understand wording in the formulation of items, training the data collection team, and maximizing confidentiality as well as voluntary participation.

Data were screened for errors, inconsistencies in responses, outliers, missing values, and multicollinearity. Participants and variables were described using percentage, mean, standard deviation, maximum, minimum, skewness, and kurtosis. Data analysis was progressively carried out through general linear model, and bivariate correlation, in

preparation for path analysis. Path analysis was carried out in five stages whereby each of the five hypotheses was individually tested. Chapter four provides details on the research results.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

Introduction

This chapter aims to present details on the description of participants and variables in the study, then correlations between variables, and ultimately hypotheses testing. The description of participants provides their keys characteristics in such a way as to depict the main features of the population under study. The variables are described using their means, standard deviations, maximum and minimum, skewness, kurtosis, test of homoscedasticity, and test of equality of means. Correlation between variables was performed using bivariate correlation method to help appreciate the linear relationships between the variables. Hypotheses were tested by examining the significance of the relationships between the variables. More specifically, direct and indirect effects among variables were examined at different stages of the overall model to identify the paths that best explain the data.

Description of Participants

This study captured eight demographic characteristics, namely Level of Study, Academic Standing, Program of study, Gender, Age Group, Country of origin, Religious group, and Status in religious group. The data on these demographic characteristics are presented in Table 8. The table shows that the sample is dominated by students in level 200 (46.8%). With regard to academic standing, students within the second class

Table 8

Frequencies and Percentages of the Demographic Variables

Demographics	<i>f</i>	%
Level of study		
200	374	46.8
300	219	27.4
400	172	21.5
Total Valid	765	95.6
Missing	35	4.4
Grand Total	800	100.0
Academic standing		
0.00—2.00	12	1.5
2.10—2.50	86	10.8
2.60—3.00	208	26.0
3.10—3.50	280	35.0
3.60—4.00	115	14.4
Total Valid	701	87.6
Missing	99	12.4
Grand Total	800	100.0
Program of study		
Business	370	46.3
Computer/IT	111	13.9
Nursing	84	10.5
Theology	40	5.0
Education	121	15.1
Bio. Equipment	2	0.3
Dev. Studies	61	7.6
Total Valid	689	98.6
Missing	11	1.4
Grand Total	800	100.0
Gender		
Female	346	43.3
Male	421	52.6
Total Valid	767	95.9
Missing	33	4.1
Grand Total	800	100.0

Table 8—*Continued*

Demographics		<i>f</i>	%
Age group			
	17—19	78	9.8
	20—22	327	40.9
	23—25	249	31.1
	26—29	81	10.1
	30 or above	50	6.3
	Total Valid	785	98.1
	Missing	15	1.9
	Grand Total	800	100.0
Country of origin			
	Ghana	666	83.3
	Nigeria	86	10.8
	Cote d'Ivoire	11	1.4
	Togo	11	1.4
	Other	13	1.6
	Total Valid	787	98.4
	Missing	13	1.6
	Grand Total	800	100.0
Religious group			
	Adventist	292	36.5
	Catholic	67	8.4
	Presbyterian	81	10.1
	Anglican	16	2.0
	Baptist	13	1.6
	Pentecostal	107	13.4
	Charismatic	101	12.6
	Deeper Life	5	0.6
	Islam	34	4.3
	Other	69	8.6
	Total Valid	785	98.1
	Missing	15	1.9
	Grand Total	800	100.0
Status in religious group			
	Baptized/Initiated	599	74.9
	Bapt/Initiat. Class	47	5.9
	Just a Worshiper	69	8.6
	Total Valid	715	89.4
	Missing	85	10.6
	Grand Total	800	100.0

upper (i.e., GPA between 3:10 and 3:50) represented the highest percentage (35.0%).

Business students (46.3%) outweighed other areas of study, and this is in conformity with its dominance in the total population. Concerning age, students within the age group 20-23 accounted for 40.9% of the sample, and the next most dominant age group was 23-25 accounting for 31.1%.

It was no surprise that Ghanaian students constituted 83.3% of the sample since VVU is located in Ghana. However, it is worth noting that, though VVU is a Seventh-day Adventist institution, only 36.5% of students were Adventists. Additionally, the student population seemed to be fairly religious as 74.9% claimed to be baptized or initiated members of their religious groups, while 5.9% were preparing for baptism or initiation. With regards to gender, the percentage of male participants was higher (52.6%) than that of their female counterparts (43.3%).

At this juncture, there is the need to stress again that the various proportions of the sample so far presented are fairly reflective of the corresponding proportions in the population presented earlier in this study (see Tables 1 and 2). Furthermore, since this research attempted mainly to explore religion-related issues, it is worth examining more closely the religious-group distribution of the sample. The results displayed Pentecostals (13.4%) and Charismatics (12.6%) as the largest groups next to Adventists. Since these two groups are known for their pre-eminent advocacy for African religiosity-based Christianity (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2006, para. 2, 3; Ezenweke, 2013, pp. 100, 101; Ukah, 2007, p. 9), it was interesting to compare Adventist with Pentecostal and Charismatic students, as well as other groups, in terms of their involvement in and Satisfaction with

VVU discipleship practices, as the discipleship practices under study are characteristic of Seventh-day Adventism.

To achieve this, I used the general linear model technique to compare the mean differences of the religious groups vis-à-vis students' attitudes towards VVU's discipleship practices. With regard to Involvement in discipleship practices, the test showed significant difference with $F(9, 775) = 19.635, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .186$. Bonferroni's Post Hoc test revealed significant difference ($p \leq .001$) between Adventist students and all others groups except Baptist ($p = 1.000$) and Deeper life ($p = .507$). In the case of Satisfaction the general linear model also showed significant mean difference with $F(9, 775) = 13.316, p \leq .001, \eta^2 = .134$. Again, Bonferroni's Post Hoc test revealed significant difference ($p \leq .001$) between Adventists and all other groups except Baptist ($p = .122$) and Deeper Life ($p = 1.000$). More details of the Post Hoc Test are shown in Table 9.

Description of Variables in the Study

This section describes the summative variables that were used to assess the hypothesized predictive role of identity styles, mediated by Commitment and Syncretism, in the undergraduate students' attitudes (i.e., Satisfaction and Involvement) towards discipleship practices at VVU in 2015. The purpose of this description is to provide a summary of the nature of the data of the summative variables in terms of frequencies (f), scores (N), arithmetic means (M), standard deviations (SD), Maximum, Minimum, Skewness, and Kurtosis.

Table 9

Bonferroi's Post Hoc Test for Comparison Between Adventists and Other Religious Groups

		Dependent Variables					
		Involvement			Satisfaction		
		<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Adventist	Catholic	7.80*	0.998	.000	7.45*	1.472	.000
	Presbyterian	7.07*	0.925	.000	7.22*	1.365	.000
	Anglican	9.45*	1.891	.000	11.82*	2.790	.001
	Baptist	4.26	2.088	1.000	9.27	3.080	.122
	Pentecostal	6.61*	0.832	.000	8.38*	1.228	.000
	Charismatic	7.07*	0.850	.000	8.51*	1.254	.000
	Deeper Life	8.44	3.322	.507	6.02	4.901	1.000
	Islam	8.03*	1.335	.000	9.04*	1.969	.000
	Other	6.83*	0.986	.000	10.58*	1.455	.000

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Computation and General Characteristics of Summative Variables

Summative variables were obtained by adding scores of the corresponding items, as was explained in the previous chapter under "Variable Definition." It is these summative variables, instead of individual items, that are used for data analysis. Table 10 presents the summative variables with their means, standard deviations, maximum and minimum scores, skewness, and kurtosis. Standard error for skewness and kurtosis are the same for all variables and their values are provided in the notes under the table.

A glance at the table brings out some observations that are worth noting. Social

Table 10.

General Characteristics of Summative Variables

Variables	<i>N</i> ¹	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
Informational	800	34.84	6.594	9	45	-.622	.302
Normative	800	27.86	5.590	9	45	.028	.281
Diffuse-Avoidant	800	23.62	6.450	9	45	.318	-.177
Commitment	800	36.86	5.702	14	45	-.694	.256
Syncretism	800	26.55	9.007	14	63	1.238	1.629
Involvement	800	23.49	8.100	8	40	.097	-.741
Satisfaction	800	41.03	11.550	13	65	-.128	-.582
Social Desirability	800	20.68	4.058	7	35	.171	.300

Note. ¹*N* represents the number of scores or cases in the study. The computed standard error for skewness is .086, and standard error for kurtosis is .173.

Desirability displays the lowest standard deviation ($SD = 4.058$) while Satisfaction displays the highest ($SD = 11.550$). Among the three variables for identity style, Diffuse-avoidant records the lowest mean ($M = 23.62$) while Normative has the lowest standard deviation ($SD = 5.590$).

With regard to skewness, Syncretism is explicitly positively skewed as its value (1.238) is greater than 1. Additionally, since skewness is more than 2 values of standard error for Informational, Diffuse-avoidant, and Commitment, these variables do also have skewness issues (Brown 1997, p. 20). Concerning kurtosis, Syncretism again explicitly has issues, displaying a value of 1.629. Satisfaction and Involvement can also be said to have kurtosis issues since their corresponding kurtosis exceeds 2 values of standard errors (Brown, 1997, p. 22).

Analysis of Variance

Homogeneity of variance for the summative variables was overviewed to have a fair picture of how it might affect parameter estimates, especially during the computation of regression weights. The overview was carried out using the general linear model method, which was preferred to the One-way ANOVA for its advantage of generating the Levene's statistic, Fisher's F, and the partial Eta Squared at the same time in SPSS. It is worth noting that whenever the Fisher's F showed significance, a more robust test of equality of means (Welch) was conducted to ascertain the significance of mean differences. Furthermore, in the case where Welch's statistic also revealed significance, partial Eta Squared values were computed in order to ascertain the significance of the effect size of the mean difference. Table 11 shows the Levene's test, F-test, and their respective significance. It also provides Welch's statistic and its significance, and the Effect Size where necessary.

It is observed in the table that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met in most cases. Exceptions were Age groups on Informational ($p = .002$), Commitment ($p = .001$), and on Involvement ($p = .026$). The same exception applied to Gender on Syncretism ($p = .007$) and Country of Origin on Commitment ($p = .046$). Concerning the test of equality of means, Welch's robust test confirmed most of the significant differences that had been revealed by F-test, except in the case of Religious Group on Satisfaction ($\eta^2 = .134$) and Involvement ($\eta^2 = .186$). However, based on Ellis' (2010) recommended thresholds, the effect sizes of all the said significant differences were small (i.e., $\eta^2 \leq .20$) (p. 41).

Table 11.

Test of Homoscedasticity and Equality of Means

Variables	Fixed Factor	Levene's Test		F-test		Welch's Test		η^2
		Statistic	Sig.	Statistic	Sig.	Statistic	Sig.	
Informational	Age group	4.326	.002	.533	.711			
	Gender	.663	.416	.040	.842			
	Level of study	2.527	.081	4.197	.015	4.898	.008	.011
	Religious Group	.750	.663	.630	.772			
	Country of origin	.927	.448	.091	.985			
Normative	Age group	.816	.515	1.431	.222			
	Gender	.871	.351	.016	.899			
	Level of study	.003	.997	4.638	.011	4.528	.011	.012
	Religious Group	1.536	.131	1.052	.396			
	Country of origin	1.059	.376	.681	.605			
Diffuse-Avoidant	Age group	1.709	.146	1.243	.291			
	Gender	.075	.784	.465	.495			
	Level of study	1.469	.231	5.208	.006	5.118	.006	.013
	Religious Group	1.334	.215	2.899	.002	3.681	.001	.033
	Country of origin	.829	.507	.987	.414			
Commitment	Age group	4.438	.001	.502	.734			
	Gender	.927	.336	1.838	.176			
	Level of study	.176	.838	.123	.884			
	Religious Group	.745	.667	3.066	.001	3.316	.002	.034
	Country of origin	2.437	.046	.511	.728			
Syncretism	Age group	2.184	.069	4.025	.003	4.014	.004	.020
	Gender	7.417	.007	3.825	.051			
	Level of study	.369	.691	.685	.504			
	Religious Group	1.100	.360	3.986	.000	4.256	.000	.044
	Country of origin	.694	.597	1.867	.114			
Involvement	Age group	2.786	.026	6.237	.000	6.131	.000	.031
	Gender	2.830	.093	1.048	.306			
	Level of study	.751	.472	6.039	.002	6.264	.002	.016
	Religious Group	1.434	.169	19.635	.000	19.023	.000	.186
	Country of origin	2.349	.053	4.931	.001	5.174	.003	.025
Satisfaction	Age group	1.572	.180	5.906	.000	6.160	.000	.029
	Gender	.148	.701	4.469	.306			
	Level of study	1.959	.142	7.693	.000	6.632	.001	.017
	Religious Group	1.866	.054	13.316	.000	13.064	.000	.134
	Country of origin	1.259	.285	4.397	.002	4.052	.010	.022
Desirability	Age group	.278	.893	.952	.433			
	Gender	.377	.539	1.673	.196			
	Level of study	.694	.500	6.765	.001	6.479	.002	.016
	Religious Group	1.049	.399	1.684	.089			
	Country of origin	2.084	.081	.283	.889			

Variables Bivariate Correlations

The summative variables were correlated to examine the extent to which they related to one another on their linear progression. Table 12 displays the Pearson's r values (correlation coefficients). Looking at the correlation coefficients, some important features stand out.

First, exogenous variables correlate fairly well except for Informational and Diffuse-avoidant ($r = .084$). Second, Informational correlated significantly with all the variables. Third, though Satisfaction and Involvement were strongly correlated ($r = .694$), they did not correlate significantly with the rest of the variables, except for Informational as shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Bivariate Correlations Between Summative Variables

	Info ¹	Norm ¹	Diff ¹	Comm ¹	Sync ¹	Desir ¹	Invol ¹	Satis ¹
Info ¹	--							
Norm ¹	.281**							
Diff ¹	.084*	.437**						
Comm ¹	.508**	.080*	-.296**					
Sync ¹	-.129**	.239**	.408**	-.384**				
Desir ¹	.229**	.255**	.321**	.002	.219**			
Invol ¹	.080*	-.005	-.005	.004	.011	-.025		
Satis ¹	.120**	.021	.058	.012	.058	.000	.694**	--

Note. ¹Info: Informational; Norm: Normative; Diff: Diffuse-avoidant; Comm: Commitment; Sync: Syncretism; Desir: Desirability; Invol: Involvement; Satis: Satisfaction. **. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Lastly, while 50% of correlations with Involvement were negative, those with Satisfaction were all positive.

Hypotheses Testing

This study primarily set out to investigate the effect of self-reported identity styles (Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant), mediated by Commitment and Syncretism, on students' attitudes (Satisfaction and Involvement) toward discipleship practices among VVU undergraduate students in 2015. Social Desirability was incorporated into the path analysis to serve as a control variable, in order to ascertain the assertion that the population under study tends "to respond in a socially desirable manner" (Verardi et al., 2010, p. 20).

This section reports on the testing of the earlier-stated five hypotheses using path analysis. The overall theoretical path model was primarily premised on Soenens, Berzonsky, Dunkel, Papini, and Vansteenkiste's (2011) argument for the mediating role of commitment between identity styles and adjustment variables (p. 360). In this study, I premised that Commitment might mediate between identity styles and Satisfaction on the one hand, and Involvement, on the other. The reason for the premise is that since a majority of students are not Seventh-day Adventist, their Satisfaction and Involvement in VVU discipleship practices would require adjustment.

The additional premise of the model was Mbiti's concept (as cited in Olupona & Nyang, 1993) of *homo Africanus homo religiosus radicaliter* (the African man is radically religious) (p. 136). This premise implies that all the students would tend to be satisfied and involved in discipleship/religious practices since each one of them—being African—is presumably *religiosus radicaliter*.

Prediction of Social Desirability

The first hypothesis postulated that Informational identity style, Normative identity style, and Diffuse-avoidant identity style would have significant direct effects on Desirability among VVU undergraduate students. To test this hypothesis, a model diagram was created in AMOS with Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant identity style as exogenous variables and Desirability as endogenous variable.

Fit indices for the best model were $GFI = .997$, $AGFI = .965$, $NFI = .985$, $TLI = .923$, $CFI = .978$, $\chi^2 = 5.624$, $p = .018$, and $RMSEA = .076$. As displayed on the partial path diagram (Figure 2), Normative significantly correlated with Informational ($r = .25$; $p \leq .001$) and Diffuse-avoidant ($r = .42$). Additionally, the regression weights were significant for Informational (.18; $p \leq .001$) and Diffuse-avoidant (.27; $p \leq .001$), but non-significant for Normative (.09; $p = .022$) on Desirability.

However, the model explained only 14% of the variance of Desirability. Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant had the direct effect of .113, .062, and .169, respectively, on Desirability. The partial empirical model is illustrated in Figure 2.

Prediction of Social Desirability and Commitment

The second hypothesis asserted that Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, and Social Desirability would have significant direct and indirect effects on Commitment among VVU undergraduate students. This hypothesis was tested by creating a diagram in AMOS with Informational, Normative, Diffuse-avoidant, and Desirability as predictors of Commitment.

Fit indices for the best model were $GFI = .997$, $AGFI = .977$, $NFI = .992$, $TLI = .972$, $CFI = .994$, $\chi^2 = 6.125$, $p = .047$, and $RMSEA = .051$.

All the regression weights of the predictors (Informational = .50, $p \leq .001$; Normative = .10, $p = .001$; Diffuse-avoidant = -.38, $p \leq .001$) on Commitment were significant. The empirical model explained only 40% of the variance of Commitment. Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant had the respective total effects of .503, .103, and -.389 on Commitment. The empirical model is illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 2. Prediction of Social Desirability

Figure 3. Prediction of Social Desirability and Commitment

Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment and Syncretism

The third hypothesis postulated that Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, and Commitment would have significant direct and indirect effects on Syncretism among VVU undergraduate students.

An empirical model was created in AMOS with Informational, Normative, Diffuse-avoidant, Desirability, and Commitment as predictors of Syncretism. Fit indices for the best model were $GFI = .996$, $AGFI = .973$, $NFI = .991$, $TLI = .968$, $CFI = .994$, $\chi^2 = 9.451$, $p = .024$, and $RMSEA = .052$. The regression weights of all the predictors (Normative = .14, $p \leq .001$; Diffuse-avoidant = .21, $p \leq .001$; Desirability = -.38, $p \leq .001$, and Commitment = -.34, $p \leq .001$) were significant. The empirical model explained only 28% of variance of Syncretism. Informational, Normative, Diffuse-avoidant, Desirability, and Commitment had respective total effects size of -.149, .118, .366, .116, and -.338 on Syncretism. The partial empirical model is shown in Figure 4.

Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction

The fourth hypothesis suggested that Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism would have significant direct and indirect effects on Satisfaction among VVU undergraduate students. An empirical model was created in AMOS with Informational, Normative, Diffuse-avoidant, Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism as predictors of Satisfaction. Fit indices for the best model were $GFI = .995$, $AGFI = .980$, $NFI = .986$, $TLI = .979$, $CFI = .993$, $\chi^2 = 13.944$, $p = .052$, and $RMSEA = .035$.

Figure 4. Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism

The regression weights of Informational and Syncretism on Satisfaction were significant ($.13, p \leq .001$ and $.08, p = .033$, respectively). The empirical model explained only 2% of variance of Satisfaction. Informational, Normative, Diffuse-avoidant, Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism had respective total effects of .118, .009, .028, .009, -.025, and .075 on Satisfaction. The partial empirical model is illustrated in Figure 5.

Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, Satisfaction, and Involvement

The fifth hypothesis held that Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction would have significant direct and indirect effects on Involvement among VVU undergraduate students. An empirical model was created in AMOS with Informational, Normative, Diffuse-avoidant, Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction as predictors of Involvement.

Figure 5. Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction

Fit indices for the best model were $GFI = .994$, $AGFI = .984$, $NFI = .998$, $TLI = .992$, $CFI = .996$, $\chi^2 = 18.681$, $p = .133$, and $RMSEA = .023$. The regression weight of Satisfaction on Involvement was significant ($.69$; $p \leq .001$). The final model explained only 48% of variance of Involvement. Informational, Normative, Diffuse-avoidant, Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction had respective total effects size of .082, .006, .019, .006, -.018, .052, and .694 on Involvement. Figure 6 is the illustration of the partial empirical model of the hypothesis under study.

Figure 6. Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, Satisfaction, and Involvement

Path Model Summary

Path analysis ultimately focused on predictors of students' involvement in the discipleship practices at VVU during the spring semester 2015. The exogenous variables (Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant) and endogenous (Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, Satisfaction, and Involvement) were configured into the hypothesized model as shown in Figure 1.

AMOS was used to test systematically the various hierarchical hypotheses that were developed based on the theoretical model. The test of the first hypothesis revealed significant effects of all the predictors (Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant) on Desirability, though the corresponding partial model accounted for only 14 % of the variance in Desirability.

The test of the second hypothesis showed that only Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant had significant effects on Commitment, and the partial model explained 40% of variance in Commitment. Desirability had no significant effect on Commitment.

The test of the third hypothesis yielded significant direct and indirect effects of all predictors (Informational, Normative, Diffuse-avoidant, Desirability, and Commitment) on Syncretism, and the partial model accounted for 28% of variance in Syncretism.

The test for the fourth hypothesis revealed significant total effects of Informational, Normative, Diffuse-avoidant, Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism on Satisfaction. Only Information and Syncretism had direct effects. The model was able to explain only 2% of the variance of Syncretism.

Finally, the test for the fifth hypothesis revealed significant direct and indirect effects of all the variables on Involvement, but with only Satisfaction having significant direct effect. The overall model explained 48% of variance in Involvement.

The path model Fit indices are recapitulated in Table 13, while the coefficients for the complete model are summarized in Table 14 under direct effects. As can be seen in the table, the model was able to account for 48% of variance of students' involvement. On the other hand, the model was able to explain only 2% of the variance of Satisfaction, 28% of the variance of Syncretism, 40% of Commitment, and 14% of Desirability.

Chapter Summary

This chapter dealt with the presentation and analysis of data. Details were given on description of participants and variables, variable correlations and variances, and hypotheses testing. Based on the demographic characteristics (i.e., level of study or year group, academic standing, age, program of study, religious affiliation, religious status, and

Table 13

Fit Indices for the Empirical Path Models Based on Hierarchical Hypotheses

Model	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	χ^2	<i>p</i>
1(<i>H₀₁</i>)	.997	.965	.985	.923	.978	.076	5.624	.018
2(<i>H₀₂</i>)	.997	.977	.992	.972	.994	.051	6.125	.047
3(<i>H₀₃</i>)	.996	.973	.991	.968	.994	.052	9.451	.024
4(<i>H₀₄</i>)	.995	.980	.986	.979	.993	.035	13.944	.052
5(<i>H₀₅</i>)	.994	.984	.998	.992	.996	.023	18.681	.133

Note. (*H₀₁*): Empirical model based on the first hypothesis in the study; GFI: Goodness of fit index; AGFI: Adjusted GFI; NFI: Normed-Fit Index; TLI: Tucker—Lewis Index (also called Non-Normed Fit Index—NNFI); CFI: Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; χ^2 : Chi-Square; and *p*: Probability associated with Chi-Square. Thresholds for good model fit are GFI $\geq$ .900, AGFI $\geq$ .900, NFI $\geq$ .900, TLI $\geq$ .900, CFI $\geq$ .900, RMSEA $\leq$ .07, and non-significant χ^2 (i.e., having *p* $\geq$ .050).

country of origin) that were considered, the description of participants revealed a population dominated by sophomores (i.e., level 200), GPA between 3.10 and 3.50, Age group 20-23, Business studies, Adventists, baptized members, and Ghanaians, respectively.

The description of variables revealed mild skewness issues in Syncretism, Informational, and Commitment. There were also mild kurtosis issues in the Syncretism, Involvement, and Satisfaction. Variable description also showed that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met for most variables, while the effect sizes of the unequal means were all significantly small. Variable correlations revealed poor relationships between the main predictors and main dependent variables on the one hand, and strong correlation between the main dependent variables (Satisfaction and Involvement). Finally, path analysis resulted in bringing out the significant relationships in the re-specified empirical model, whereby all endogenous variables were significantly predicted.

Table 14.

Summary of Effects in the Hypothesized Path Model

Outcome	Determinant	Standardized Effects		
		Direct	Indirect	Total
Desirability ($R^2 = .141$)	Informational*	.184	.000	.184
	Normative*	.086	.000	.086
	Diffuse-Avoidant*	.269	.000	.269
Commitment ($R^2 = .400$)	Informational*	.503	.000	.503
	Normative*	.103	.000	.103
	Diffuse-Avoidant*	-.379	.000	-.379
Syncretism ($R^2 = .278$)	Informational	.000	-.149	-.149
	Normative*	.143	-.025	.118
	Diffuse-Avoidant*	.207	.159	.366
	Desirability*	.116	.000	.116
	Commitment*	-.338	.000	-.338
Satisfaction ($R^2 = .020$)	Informational*	.129	-.011	.118
	Normative	.000	-.009	.009
	Diffuse-avoidant	.000	.028	.028
	Desirability	.000	.009	.009
	Commitment	.000	-.025	-.025
	Syncretism*	.075	.000	.075
Involvement ($R^2 = .482$)	Informational	.000	.082	.082
	Normative	.000	.006	.006
	Diffuse-Avoidant	.000	.019	.019
	Desirability	.000	.006	.006
	Commitment	.000	-.018	-.018
	Syncretism	.000	.052	.052
	Satisfaction*	.694	.000	.694

Note. * $p \leq .05$

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The fulcrum of this study was an attempt at initiating the identification of significant predictors of satisfaction and involvement in effective discipleship among undergraduate students of Valley View University. The focus was an investigation of the possible predictive role of students' self-reported identity styles, mediated by commitment and religious syncretism, on their satisfaction and involvement in discipleship practices.

This chapter provides, succinctly, a summary of the research problem, purpose, conceptual framework, literature, methodology, and results. It then discusses the said results in light of the known realities of VVU, literature related to the university context, existing biblical perspectives as taught in curricular and extra-curricular activities, and essential implications for campus religious education and discipleship. Finally, it formulates recommendations for transformational campus discipleship practices as well as further research.

Summary of the Study

The main purpose of this research is broadly stated as an attempt to identify significant factors that influence the actualization of the goals of Seventh-day Adventist

discipleship endeavors in higher education in West Africa. More specifically, the study examined the interactions between VVU undergraduate students' identity styles and their involvement and satisfaction vis-à-vis the university's discipleship practices, and how these interactions were mediated by students' commitment and syncretic traits.

Literature

The study was motivated by a growing body of literature on college students' interest in campus religious and spiritual experiences (Finder, 2007), possibility of changing one's perception of religion on campus (Ongong'a & Akaranga, 2013, p. 12), campus religion and meaning making for life (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2010), and an attempt at reinstating Christian values in higher education (Andreasen, 2005). It was also stimulated by the expected discipleship outcomes of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's spiritual master plan for its worldwide higher education institutions, and Valley View University's effort to implement the said master plan. The significance of the study was built on the hope of pointing out significant ways of harmonizing campus discipleship practices with the students' satisfaction and involvement in light of Christ's discipleship model.

The conceptual framework of the study was primarily motivated by the increasing quest for African theology and Christianity, the presumed *religiosus-radicaliter* nature of the African person, and the possible role that identity styles may play in the way African students would involve themselves and be satisfied in Christian discipleship activities. The literature that was surveyed to articulate the hypotheses in the conceptual framework, on the one hand, and the identification of variables, on the other, was grouped under (a) elements of syncretism in African theological thoughts on Christian discipleship, (b)

Christ's discipleship model, (c) postmodern context of campus discipleship, (d) VVU discipleship context and practices, (e) identity styles, (f) students' commitment and attitudes (satisfaction and involvement), and (g) social desirability.

With regard to Syncretism in African theological thoughts on Christian discipleship, the literature revealed a rapid spreading of African-initiated churches (Omenyo, 2011, pp. 381-385) and a rising advocacy for an African realities-based Christianity. More and more, African religious thinkers are advocating a form of Christianity that would incorporate African realities such as myths and symbols (Nyamiti, 1973, p. 25), cultural values (Nketia, 1974, p. 14), theological treasures (Kalilombe, 1994, p. 93), mediating spirits and the role of ancestors (Mbiti, 2001, para. 6), and flexibility of religion to accommodate what is valuable to the prospect (Schmidt, 2006, p. 242). Strange as it may sound, some scholars have even gone to the extent of considering syncretism a part of the essence of Christian mission (Koertner, 2013, p. 298).

Concerning Christ's discipleship model, several works were examined that emphasized various aspects of the said model. These emphases included the discipler's solidarity with the disciples (Strelan, 1991, p. 31), the process and circumstances in which Jesus' first disciples were called (Bonhoeffer, 1995, p. 59), the following, and self-denial aspects of discipleship (Collinson, 2004, p. 32), discipleship recruitment and evangelistic strategies (Hinkle, 2005, pp. 25-28), and the "come and see," "come and follow me," "come and be with me," and "remain in me and go and make disciples" steps of the discipleship process (Hull, 2006, pp. 170, 175, 178, 181). Other aspects dealt with the discipler's responsibilities toward the disciple (Pinson, 2012, p. 56), the response to the call, the catechist (i.e., discipler) perceived as a soil tiller and seed sower (Candidi,

2010, p. 62), “the way baptism brings out discipleship” (Swartvagher, 2014, p. 132), and the “come-learn/practice-go-come” discipleship process (Scarone, 2014, p. 46).

Throughout the review of literature under this section, it was noted that a key element—the purpose of Jesus’ baptism in the discipleship process—was either partially or completely missing in all the models examined. And the present study has argued that Jesus’ baptism is indispensable in the processes of becoming or making disciples.

The literature on postmodernism brought out, on the one hand, the main tenets of a postmodern worldview, namely, the pursuit of social action instead of evangelism (Miller & Guthrie, 1984, p. 69), literary theories that are scanning Scriptures for socio-economic and political agendas rather than God’s revelation (Chang, 2000, p. 20), and the “collective presence” and “collective interests” (Ley, 2003, p. 537). Other tenets were the quest for freedom from dominant thoughts (Han, Kuchinke, & Boulay, 2009, p. 65), and the rejection of absolute truth (Watson, 2014, p. 33).

On the other hand, the literature also highlighted several ideas on effective discipleship and religious education in a postmodern world, especially among African students since they are perceived as ontologically more community-oriented than individualistic (Parkman & Karlton, 1986, p.93). These include the discipler’s identifying with the prospective disciples (White, 1952, p. 59), and presenting the values in such an attractive way that compel the youth to incorporate those values in their self-built value system (Dudley, 1986, p. 185). Other ideas highlighted the need to create room for experiential knowledge of God (Cress, 2000, p. 40), and emphasis on common needs, wants, discontents, and hopes for the discipler and the prospects (Rodin, 2010, p. 72).

VVU's discipleship context and practices were mainly examined through the university's statements on discipleship as a component of its holistic education. These statements include emphasis on required religious courses for every student (VVU *Academic Bulletin*, 2010, p. 10), and the recommended and required discipleship practices (Student Handbook, 5th edition, 2012, pp. 39, 40).

With regard to identity styles, the literature review first focused on the indispensability of studying the identity of people one intends to study, understand, interact with, and serve (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 13; Elmer, 2006, p. 38), and the features of identity processing styles (Berzonsky, 2011, p. 55; Berzonsky et al., 2013, p. 893). Then it explored previous research on interaction between identity styles and some religion-related attitudes.

It was discovered that "information oriented adolescents critically evaluate whether certain religious contents correspond to their personal self-definitions" (Duriez, Soenens, & Beyers, 2004, p. 898), and that "having a more informational identity style related to having stronger faith and engaging in more spiritual questing" (Gebelt, Thompson, & Miele, 2009, p. 229). Other reports said that Diffuse-avoidant individuals tend to be irregular in personal and public religious activities (Parker, 2011, p. 84), and correlated negatively with Commitment, while Normative identity style highly and positively correlated with Commitment (Reio, Portes, & Nixon, 2014, p. 37). In another study, Diffuse-avoidant was negatively associated with educational involvement (Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000, p. 94).

On college students' commitments and attitudes, a positive association between student participation and commitment to college courses has been reported (Curran &

Rosen, 2006, 135). Positive association between religious commitment and religious engagement is also known (Small & Bowman, 2011, p. 170). Religious commitment has also been identified as a predictor of life satisfaction (Fife, Adegoke, McCoy, & Brewer, 2011, p. 398). Moreover, there was the caution that coercing students into religious activities undermined their commitment (Mayhew & Bryant, 2013, p. 81), and that the nature of religious practices and healthy relationships with professors tended to boost commitment (Ongong'a & Akaranga, 2013, p. 12). Satisfaction and involvement tended most commonly to be linked with the campus treatment meted to the students and their healthy relationships with professors (Gruber et al., 2012, p. 172; McCollough & Gremler, 1999, p. 19).

Methodology

The population for this study was the second- to fourth-year undergraduate students enrolled in VVU during the second semester of the 2014/2015 academic year. Participants were selected using a non-random convenient sampling method. A sample of 800 participants, representing 38.6% of the population, was used for the study.

The research would rightly be described as a quantitative, non-experimental, correlational, and cross-sectional survey. The survey instrument consisted of five scales, namely the Identity Style Inventory (ISI-5), the Social Desirability scale (MCSDS), Syncretism scale, Involvement scale, and Satisfaction scale. There were 86 items including eight items identifying demographic information. Thirty-five of the research items were generated specifically for the study. A pilot study was conducted to validate the items generated specifically for the study. Confirmatory factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha attested to the validity and reliability of items.

The study followed the procedures as required by Andrews University. In other words, the research proposal was first submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for evaluation and approval. VVU also granted permission for the data collection on its two campuses according to the IRB-approved research design. A five-member research team was formed for data collection at the main (Oyibi) campus, while a three-member team was formed for the Techiman campus. The university administration, school deans, heads of departments, and lecturers participated in the announcement as well as the facilitation of data collection in the classrooms.

Results

Demographic Information

The demographic information revealed a sample dominated by students in level 200 (46.8%), students within the second class upper (i.e., GPA between 3.10 and 3.50 constituted 35.00% of the sample), business students (46.30%), age group 20-23 (40.90%), Ghanaians (83.30%), Seventh-day Adventists (36.50%), males (52.60%), and baptized/initiated (74.90%). The comparison of means in attitudes of religious groups using the general linear model showed significant difference between Seventh-day Adventists participants and other religious groups except Baptist and Deeper Life.

Distribution and Dispersion of Scores

Selected descriptive statistics (*M*, *SD*, *Minimum*, *Maximum*, *Skewness*, and *Kurtosis*) were used to examine the dispersion and distribution of the responses. These statistics revealed a normally distributed and dispersed dataset with the exception of Syncretism (and slightly Informational identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, and Commitment)—which was significantly skewed and peaked.

Bivariate Correlations

Pearson bivariate correlations were computed to appreciate the degree of linear relationships between the variables under study. Results showed that exogenous variables correlated significantly well among themselves, though the correlation between Informational and Diffuse-avoidant was weak ($r = .084$). Moreover, Informational significantly correlated with all the variables. Again, though Satisfaction and Involvement were strongly correlated ($r = .694$), they did not significantly correlate with the rest of the variables, except for Informational. Finally, while 50% of correlations with Involvement were negative, those with Satisfaction were all positive.

Hypothesis Testing

With regard to hypothesis testing through path analysis, the study first of all ensured that all the assumptions (i.e., linear relationships among variables, uncorrelated residual terms, uncorrelated disturbance terms for endogenous variables, low or no multicollinearity, exactly identified or over-identified model, and adequate sample size) for path analysis were assessed and found favourable for the application of the technique to the data. Subsequently, path analysis was carried out by systematically testing the five hierarchical hypotheses of the study. The results showed that the general hypothesized path model did not fit the data. However, the analysis resulted in significant prediction of all the endogenous variables in the path model as summarized per hypothesis below.

H₀₁: Prediction of social desirability

This first hypothesis specifically stated that “Informational identity style, Normative identity style, and Diffuse-avoidant identity style have significant direct effects on Social Desirability among VVU undergraduate students.” Based on the hypothesis, the empirical path model fitted the data whereby Desirability was significantly predicted by the three identity styles (i.e., Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant) with $GFI = .997$, $AGFI = .965$, $NFI = .985$, $TLI = .923$, $CFI = .978$, and $\chi^2 (df = 1, p = .018) = 5.624$. The $RMSEA$ was however found higher than the ideal ($RMSEA = .076$). The model accounted for only 14% of variance in Social Desirability.

H₀₂: Prediction of social desirability and commitment

The second hypothesis stated that “Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, and Social Desirability have significant direct and indirect effects on Commitment among VVU undergraduate students.” The computation of indices in the corresponding empirical path model resulted in Good Fit with $GFI = .997$, $AGFI = .997$, $NFI = .992$, $TLI = .972$, $CFI = .994$, with an improved $\chi^2 (df = 2, p = .047) = 6.125$, which was close to non-significant, and an $RMSEA$ slightly higher than the ideal (.051). The model accounted for 40% of variance in Commitment.

H₀₃: Prediction of social desirability, commitment, and syncretism

The third hypothesis stated that, “Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, and Commitment have significant direct and indirect effects on Syncretism among VVU undergraduate

students.” Besides the indices attesting to Good Fit of the model ($GFI = .996$, $AGFI = .973$, $NFI = .991$, $TLI = .968$, $CFI = .994$, $\chi^2 [df = 3, p = .024] = 9.451$, and $RMSEA = .052$), the outstanding results that are worth mentioning are the negative total effects of Informational and Commitment on Syncretism, the absence of significant direct effect of Informational on Syncretism, the high positive total effect of Diffuse-avoidant on Syncretism, and the relatively low amount (28%) of variance of Syncretism explained by the model.

H₀₄: Prediction of social desirability, commitment, syncretism, and satisfaction

The fourth hypothesis postulated that “Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism have significant direct and indirect effects on Satisfaction among VVU undergraduate students.” The corresponding empirical model fitted the data with $GFI = .995$, $AGFI = .980$, $NFI = .986$, $TLI = .979$, $CFI = .993$, $RMSEA = .035$, and $\chi^2 (df = 7, p = .052) = 13.944$. It is worth noting that despite these Fit indices, only two regression weights (Informational— $p \leq .001$ and Syncretism— $p = .033$) on Satisfaction were significant. Additionally, this model accounted for only 2% of the variance in Satisfaction.

H₀₅: Prediction of social desirability, commitment, syncretism, satisfaction, and involvement

The fifth hypothesis stated that, “Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction have significant direct and indirect effects on Involvement among VVU

undergraduate students.” All indices attested to Good Fit of the model χ^2 ($df = 13$, $p = .133$) = 18.680, but only one predictor (Satisfaction) had significant direct effect on Involvement. Though the model explained a relatively good amount (48%) of variance in Involvement, much of it is obviously attributable to the total effect (.694) of Satisfaction, which outweighs by far the absolute sum of total effects (i.e., $|.082| + |.006| + |.019| + |.006| + |-.018| + |.052| = .183$) of all other predictors.

Discussion of Results

Participants’ Characteristics

The proportions observed in the sample in regard to demographics were reflective of the population’s characteristics (compare Tables 5 and 9). In other words, just as the sample displayed, the population had more students aged between 20 and 22, and more Ghanaians than other nationalities, more males than females, more baptized/initiated than non-baptized/non-initiated, more level 200 than other levels, and, finally, more business students than students from any other single program (see Tables 1 and 2). However, the reason for more students with GPAs between 3.10 and 3.50 was not established because the population mean GPA was not available to the research team.

The observed difference between Adventists and other religious affiliations could be attributed to the distinctive teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The similarities observed between Adventists and Baptists as well as Deeper Life could be attributed to the Baptist roots of Seventh-day Adventism through William Miller (Knight, 1994, p. 10), and a high regard for Scripture demonstrated by a conservative hermeneutic by both denominations. On the other hand, the strong socio-spiritual culture of the Deeper Life Church—a West-Africa born and bred church (Falaye, 2015, p. 22)—may be

a shared characteristic of the participants since most of them (over 96%, see Table 8) were West Africans.

Bivariate Correlations

The study sought to examine the way identity styles correlated with both the mediator and dependent variables. The following observations stood out in relation to what has already been established in previous research works. Concerning identity styles and commitment, Reio, Portes, and Nixon's (2014) report of negative correlation between Diffuse-avoidant and Commitment, and the positive correlation between Normative identity style and Commitment were confirmed. Informational identity style was the only style that significantly correlated with Satisfaction. This may be linked to Gebelt, Thompson, and Miele's (2009) finding that "having a more informational identity style related to having more faith and engaging in more spiritual questing" (p. 229).

The non-significant negative correlation that was observed between Diffuse-avoidant and Involvement could be a confirmation of Parker's (2011) observation that Diffuse-avoidant tend to be irregular in personal and public religious activities. Small and Bowman's (2011) report of a positive association between Commitment and religious engagement was confirmed, though it was non-significant. Commitment as a predictor of Satisfaction (Fife, Adegoke, McCoy, & Brewer, 2011, p. 398) was not confirmed by the study.

The negative correlations of Syncretism with Informational and Commitment are worth noting. It could be reasonably argued that syncretic traits would likely lead to multiple allegiance—a situation that is inversely related to the segregating nature of Commitment and the deciphering nature of Informational identity style. Finally, poor

correlation of Satisfaction and Involvement with all their would-be predictors could mean that the two variables may not necessarily be “adjustment” variables that can be predicted by identity styles in the population under study (Soenens et al., 2011, p. 360).

Hypotheses Testing

H₀₁: Prediction of Social Desirability

As mentioned earlier, the empirical path model fitted the data whereby Desirability was significantly predicted by the three identity styles (i.e., Informational, Normative, and Diffuse-avoidant). The interpretation of the significant χ^2 ($df = 1, p = .018$) = 5.624 and the relatively high *RMSEA* value (.076) should take into account the fact that the sample size is large ($N = 800$). However, these two indices are improved, as seen in subsequent models, with increase in the number of parameters to be estimated. The regression weights of the identity styles on Desirability also follow a logical gradient with Diffuse-avoidant having the heaviest and Normative having the lightest weight.

Reasonably, Diffuse-avoidant identity style would, per its conceptual definition (see appendix B, Table 16) and more than the other styles, readily align itself with any circumstance that tends to be favorable (Verardi et al., 2010). Normative identity style usually tends to stick to status quo without enquiring or wavering (Berzonsky et al., 2013). There was therefore no surprise that its regression weight on Desirability was lowest. The general predictive role of identity styles on Social Desirability was positive and significant. The model accounted for only 14% of the variance of Desirability.

H₀₂: Prediction of Desirability and Commitment

It has already been stated that the empirical path model for the predictive role of identity styles on Desirability and Commitment resulted in Good Fit with improved $\chi^2 (2) = 6.125$, which was close to non-significant ($p = .047$) and *RMSEA* slightly higher than the ideal (.051). Comparatively, identity styles showed greater effects on Commitment than on Desirability. The results confirmed the strong relationship between identity styles and Commitment reported in earlier studies (Soenens et al., 2011).

Desirability was not significantly associated with Commitment. This seems to follow the logic behind the conceptual definition of social desirability: an individual whose behaviour is determined by present circumstances (He et al., 2014) or strives to please his or her current interlocutor (Freeman, Schumacher, & Coffey, 2015) would not consistently make significant commitments. It is worth noting the significant but negative effect ($-.389, p \leq .001$) of Diffuse-avoidant on Commitment. As other studies have shown (Arefi & Joshoghani, 2014, p. 682; Reio, Portes, & Nixon, 2014), the higher the level of diffusion-avoidance the lower the level of commitment.

H₀₃: Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism

The third hypothesis built on the second to assess the predictive role of identity styles, Desirability and Commitment on Syncretism. The computed indices attested to Good Fit, and the model explained (28%) of variance of Syncretism. The negative effect of Informational on Syncretism ($-.149$) is in line with an earlier study finding that “information oriented adolescents critically evaluate whether certain religious contents correspond to their personal self-definitions” (Duriez, Soenens, Beyers, 2004, p. 898).

The strong negative effect of Commitment (-.338) on Syncretism failed to reconcile the heralded African man's radical religiosity or religious commitment (Mbiti, 1993) with the increasing African quest for religious syncretism especially in the latter part of the 20th century (Bujo, 1992; Kalilombe, 1994; Mbiti, 2001; Nyamiti, 1973; Parratt, 1995; Young, 1993).

The high positive effect (.366) of Diffuse-avoidant identity style on Syncretism may suggest that participants with this identity style would readily accommodate syncretic perspectives in their approach to discipleship and religious education experiences, as Syncretism, like diffusion-avoidance, inherently tends to embrace whatever seems to work for the given moment (Fortunak, 2008).

H₀₄: Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction

The empirical model for the fourth hypothesis fitted the data, but only two regression weights (Informational, $p \leq .001$ and Syncretism, $p = .033$) on Satisfaction were significant. Additionally, this model accounted for only 2% of the variance of Satisfaction. Remarkably, this segment of the overall model is the core bond between main predictors (i.e., Informational identity style, Normative identity style, and Diffuse-avoidant identity style) and the ultimate dependent variables (i.e., attitudes—Satisfaction and Involvement).

Surprisingly, this segment also displays the weakest relationship in the overall path model as it offers the lowest explanation of variance of the stage in the model. This suggests a poor or insignificant predictive role of identity styles on participants' (VVU undergraduate students in 2015) attitudes toward discipleship practices as implemented by the university. This further suggests that Satisfaction may not be considered as one of

the “adjustment” variables that are predicted by identity styles with Commitment as a mediator (Soenens et al., 2011).

Literature has shown that students’ attitudes towards religious life depend more on professors who sustained human interface with learning environment (McCollough & Gremler, 1999; Gruber et al., 2012), whether they were coerced or not (Mayhew & Bryant, 2013), and on congregational support (Kim, Miles-Mason, Kim, & Esquivel, 2013, p. 37). These stimuli for student attitude toward religious practices will soon, in this study, be emphasized in the implications of the study for campus discipleship.

H₀₅: Prediction of Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, Satisfaction, and Involvement

The fifth hypothesis was the last stage of the overall model and considered the predictive role of Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction on Involvement. As noted earlier in the results, all indices attested to Good Fit of the model, but only one predictor (Satisfaction) had direct effect on Involvement. It was also emphasized in this study that, though the model explained a relatively good amount (48%) of variance in Involvement, much of it is obviously attributable to the total effect (.694) of Satisfaction, which outweighs by far the absolute sum of total effects (i.e., $|.082| + |.006| + |.019| + |.006| + |-.018| + |.052| = .183$) of all other predictors.

The strong relationships between religious involvement and satisfaction have actually been established in previous studies. These include significant relationships between religiosity and life satisfaction (Dorahy et al., 1998, p. 41), religious service attendance and life satisfaction (Leornardi & Gialamas, 2009, p. 241; Lim & Putnam,

2010, p. 928), and participation in religious activities and wellbeing (Eryilmaz, 2015, p. 439; Mooney, 2010).

There is the need to stress that the strength of this model is technically biased and can therefore not be used to claim a significant predictive role of identity styles (except Informational) on Satisfaction and Involvement vis-a-vis discipleship practices in the population under study. Notwithstanding the bias, each of the segments (i.e., the five hierarchical models) of the overall model has revealed important relationships that are relevant to VVU and probably to Christian higher education in West Africa in terms of campus ministries. The ensuing section highlights the main concluding remarks about the findings of the study.

Conclusions

This study revolved around five research questions. Answers to the questions are obvious conclusions logically drawn from appropriately collected and analysed data, and adequately discussed results. From the preceding section of this research, the following major conclusions are drawn in response to the research questions.

The first research question asked: Is the hypothesized path model—which describes the direct effects of Informational identity style, Normative identity style, and Diffuse-avoidant identity style on Social Desirability—consistent with observed correlations among these variables? The results of the study as discussed earlier confirmed the consistency of the model with the observed correlations. In other words, identity styles significantly predicted Social Desirability among VVU undergraduate students in 2015.

The second research question asked: Is the hypothesized model—which describes the direct and indirect effects of Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant, and Desirability on Commitment—consistent with observed correlations among these variables? Results have shown that the path model was consistent with the observed correlations. However, only identity styles predicted Commitment; Desirability did not. This means that Commitment among VVU undergraduates in 2015 was significantly associated with their identity styles, but not with their Social Desirability tendencies.

The third question asked: Is the hypothesized model—which describes the direct and indirect effects of Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant, Desirability, and Commitment on Syncretism—consistent with observed correlations among these variables? The study has revealed congruence between the path model and the observed correlations. In other words, Syncretism was significantly predicted. However, only Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, and Commitment were significant predictors; Informational was not. More concretely, Syncretism among VVU undergraduate students in 2015 was found to be significantly associated with their identity styles (except those with Informational identity style), Desirability, and Commitment.

The fourth question asked: Is the hypothesized model—which describes the direct and indirect effects of Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant, Social Desirability, Commitment, and Syncretism on Satisfaction—consistent with observed correlations among these variables? There was no significant consistency

between the model and the observed correlations, except in the case of Informational and Syncretism.

In other words, though Satisfaction was significantly predicted, only Informational identity style and Syncretism were significant predictors while Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant identity style, Social Desirability, and Commitment were not. Satisfaction, which was one of the two attitudes under consideration, was the least predicted in the overall model. This may be understood as meaning that VVU undergraduate students' satisfaction in campus discipleship practices was not predicted by any of the variables except, weakly, by Informational identity style and Syncretism. This may rightly lead to an additional conclusion, that identity styles were not significant predictors of VVU undergraduate students' satisfaction in 2015.

The fifth question enquired: Is the hypothesized model—which describes the direct and indirect effects of Informational identity style, Normative identity style, Diffuse-avoidant, Social Desirability, Commitment, Syncretism, and Satisfaction on Involvement—consistent with observed correlations among these variables? The results of the study led to the conclusion that the model was not consistent with observed correlations in that Satisfaction (which was not actually part of the hypothesized primary predictors) was the only significant predictor of Involvement. In other words, identity styles (the actual hypothesized primary predictors) did not significantly predict Involvement.

An overall conclusion may be drawn saying that identity styles, except Informational identity style on Satisfaction, were not found to have a significant predictive role in VVU's undergraduate students' attitude toward discipleship practices in

2015. However, the study revealed important dynamics between predictor, mediator, and dependent variables which may be critical to discipleship/religious education models if considered from different perspectives as elaborated under implications for religious education and recommendations for VVU campus ministries and further research.

Implications for Religious Education

From a practical standpoint, discipleship can be perceived as taking place through a complex network of transformational exercises that include relationship activities, religious experiences, and spiritual and mental exercises (Abolarin, 2013, p. 218). Satisfaction and involvement of prospective disciples would arguably grow from a harmonious interplay of the various facets of the said network as they synergistically mold the same mind as that of Christ Jesus (Phil 2:5), stimulate thirst and hunger for heavenly things (Phil 2:7-11), bring about faith that is “sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see” (Heb 11:1, NIV). Such an interplay would lead the disciples to Him who satisfies the weary ones and refreshes the languishing (Jer 31:25; Ps 17:15; 103:5; Isa 58:11), and make the disciples rejoice even in moments of trial (1 Pet 4:13-14). VVU’s list of discipleship practices as reproduced below seems to cover a wide range of what discipleship would entail.

Along with at least, 9 credit hours of mandatory religion courses, students participate in various religious activities including worship seminars, religious convocations, camp meetings, mid-week prayer meetings, weekend services, youth fellowships. These provide opportunities for internalizing Christian values and ideas. The University Chaplaincy ensures that pastoral counselling and spiritual guidance are always available to any who may need help. Integration of faith and learning in the classroom further helps students appreciate and acknowledge God as the ultimate source of all wisdom and understanding. (Valley View University *Bulletin* [2010], p.10)

The question that arises is whether the content and implementation of those activities are engaging and contextualized enough as to cause Christian transformation that results in satisfaction and to lead to wilful involvement, especially among college students. The findings of the present study have clearly shown that VVU undergraduate students' satisfaction and involvement in discipleship practices are not significantly dependent upon identity styles. This is not foreign to biblical teachings which, instead of self-preservation and sufficiency, rather emphasize that the would-be disciples forsake all (Luke 14:33), take their cross (Matt 16:24), accept the yoke of Christ (Matt 11:29, 30), and even die to self (Gal 2:20). But the processes of forsaking all, taking up the cross, accepting Christ's yoke, and dying to self require more than merely taking religious courses, participating in religious activities, and attending counseling sessions.

As noted in chapter 2, pp. 37-43 of this study, Jesus Christ demonstrated practical steps of transformational discipleship when he underwent what he expected his disciples to experience. Scarone's (2014) "COME-LEARN-GO" model provides a good basis for building Christ's complete model, especially as it emphasizes the integration of learning theories and praxis. It must be noted, however, that though Scarone's model predominantly tilts toward the disciple-becoming perspective while my suggested model stems from the disciple-making perspective, both perspectives require the demonstrative learning/teaching or role-modeling element. The Jesus' *disciple-becoming* process would be: COME and SEE (hear and behold the role model)-LEARN (concepts and theories)—LEARN (practical skills)—GO (witness)—CALL (make disciples).

On the other hand, the Jesus' *disciple-making* process would be: CALL (witness)—BE (i.e., exhibit Christlikeness/disciple's life/role modeling/testimony)—

TEACH (concepts and theories)—TEACH (witnessing and disciple-making skills)—SEND (for witnessing and disciple making)—CALL (witness to new prospects and debrief the returning missionaries). These two perspectives of discipleship put together result in a complete model whereby the caller (discipler/religious educator) has first responded to the call and has become an object lesson for those he/she is calling. The prospective disciples get the meaning of the call by beholding what it has wrought in the life of the caller/discipler/ religious educator.

This object lesson predisposes and gives assurance to the prospective disciples toward receiving both theoretical and practical teachings in order to become and do like the caller is and does. As the new disciple is gradually weaned by becoming like the caller and going out to call others, the caller is ready again to go call new prospects even as he/she keeps debriefing the growing disciples. This complete discipleship model is illustrated in Figure 7 below. The model improves upon Scarone's (2014, pp. 97, 98) *4MAT—Rabbi-Witness Discipleship Model* by emphasizing the indispensability of role modeling before the teaching of concepts, as highlighted in Jesus' approach in Mark 1. Just as Jesus would expect his followers to respond and follow the voice crying in the wilderness (Isa 40:3), submit to God's biddings and undergo the baptism of repentance (Mark 1:4-5), receive the Holy Spirit (John 14:16), be adopted by the Father (John 1:12), and be prepared for witnessing (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4), he himself followed the voice, submitted and was baptized, received the Holy Spirit, was acknowledged as Son by the Father, and was prepared for witnessing (Mark 1:9-15).

Elsewhere in the Bible, other active and engaging words and expressions are used to illustrate the practicality of the various stages of the process of discipleship.

Figure 7. Christ's Discipleship/Religious Education Model

1. For the CALL stage, the Bible invites the prospective disciple to: hearing God's voice (John 10:27), seeking God (Jer 29:13), and following God (Mark 1:17).

2. For the BE/COME-and-SEE stage, the Bible invites the prospects to: tasting God (Ps 34:8), buying from the Lord (Rev 3:18), drinking God's water (John 4:14; 7:37-39), seeing God (John 14: 9), asking God (Matt 7:7), touching God's vessels (Lev 6:27), and being grafted in Christ (Rom 11:17).

3. Concerning the TEACH/LEARN-concept stage, the prospective disciples are invited to: feeding on God's word (John 6:35), meditating on God's Word (Ps 119:97), and writing God's Word in their lives (Deut 6:9).

4. With regard to the TEACH/LEARN-skills stage, the Bible uses expressions such as putting on God's full armor (Eph 6:11), praying without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17), adding goodness to faith, knowledge to goodness, self-control to knowledge, perseverance to self-control, godliness to perseverance, brotherly kindness to godliness, and love to brotherly kindness (2 Pet 1:5-7). Other examples are: calling upon God (Ps 50:15), conversing with God (Gen 18:24), reasoning with God (Isa 1:18), walking with God (Gen 5:24), and testing God (Mal 3:10).

5. For the SEND/GO-witness stage, the Bible uses active words such as preach, teach, and baptize (Matt 28:19-20). This stage brings both the initial CALLER and the CALLED back to the starting point of the cycle.

This style of discipleship and religious education is in tandem with the purpose of redemption which acknowledges the original formation of God's image in man (Gen 1:26-27), the subsequent deformation of God's image because of sin (Gen 3), the reformation of God's image through Christ's blood (Isa 53), and adoption and affirmation

as God's child through the merits of Christ's sacrifice (John 1:12). This process is arguably in favor of character transformation instead of the significance and preservation of the identity style of an individual. In this perspective, students' satisfaction and involvement in discipleship practices are indeed more likely to depend on encounter with God and life-changing experiences than on mere mechanistic interactions between the individual self and statutory religious or discipleship activities.

Jesus' discipleship style was more of role modeling than indoctrination, more experiential than intellectualistic, more ministerial than lecturing, and more transformational than ceremonious. He aimed at not necessarily changing people's skills and occupation but purposes (Matt 4:19; Exod 3:1-10), not settling them into their comfort zone or empathizing with them in their discomfort zone, but demonstrating submission and entreating people to imitate Him so He could lift them to their place of calling (Acts 22:7-10; Gen 32:22-29), not only building on people's strength and might or worth and wealth, but leading them to surrender to God's will (Zech 4:6; Phil 4:12-13). Jesus called people representing "widely varied types of character (White, 1952, p. 85) since he has the power and will to attune them to what they ought to be (Ezek 36: 25-36).

His model was more about leading people to becoming like him and depending on him than establishing and affirming them into what they were (Matt 11:29; 12:30). This means that the identity styles may not necessarily be the determining factors or predictors of discipleship, but God's transforming power and love during discipleship experiences. And Christ—the prototypic disciple, demonstrated this reality. The present study seems to support this reality, in that the results did not support the hypothesis that identity styles

would have significant effect on students' satisfaction and involvement in discipleship practices.

Again, the popularization by some African thinkers of the would-be Africanization of Christianity through religious syncretism (Koertner, 2013; Mbiti, 2001; Omenyo, 2011) did not imposingly relate to participants' satisfaction and involvement in discipleship experiences. The lesson this study offers is that for VVU, satisfaction and involvement in discipleship activities would not necessarily stem from who the participants themselves were, but probably how they would be led to encounter Christ through religious educators who "sustain the human interface within the learning environment and who get along with them" (Gruber et al., 2012, p. 172). Further investigation should lead to discovering not only the predictors of satisfaction and involvement in students but also the role models of effective encounter between prospective disciples and Jesus—the embodiment of discipleship and religious education.

White (1952), describing "the most complete illustration of Christ's methods as a teacher" (p. 84), emphasized "personal association," "communion of mind with mind, and heart with heart, of the human with the divine," fellowship "in the house, . . . at the table, . . . in the closet, . . . in the field, . . . on the mountainside, . . . beside the sea, . . . as they walked by the way" (p. 84, 85). Arguably, Jesus' demonstration (through baptism) of becoming a disciple before calling his first disciples must be the starting point and foundation of any set of discipleship or religious education practices.

With Christian witnessing becoming increasingly challenged by dual allegiance in West Africa (Fortunak, 2008, para. 2), "disciplers" or religious educators on university campuses have no better alternative than seeking to exemplify the life they expect in

prospective disciples (Matt 20:25-28), being the embodiment of their teachings (John 13:13-16), and being true ambassadors (1 Cor 11:1; 2 Cor 5: 20) of Christ—the role model par excellence (Mark 1: 7-20). In this regard, there is a compelling task to identify the actual predictors of satisfaction and involvement in discipleship practices and experiences, not only in the prospective disciples but also in the “disciplers,” as well as the nature of discipleship practices in light of socio-spiritual context.

Fortunately, both the postmodern worldview and Africa cultural heritage seem to favor Christ’s discipleship method. The postmodern world is striving for community rather than individualism (Karlton & Parkman, 1986, p. 93); self-built value system (Dudley, 1986, p. 185); experiential knowledge (Cress, 200, p. 40); “collective presence” and “collective interests” (Ley, 2003, p. 537); freedom from dominant thoughts (Han, Kuchinke, & Boulay, 2009, p. 65); “a philosophy of solidarity, not the solidarity of the same but precisely the solidarity of the different, of strangers, of those who are other to one another” (Min, 2005, p. 847); and emphasis on common needs (Rodin, 2010, p. 72). This may be because, as Min (2005) observed, “we do not as yet live in a world where the category of the other has become irrelevant” (p. 847). These longings of the postmodern people should inform the content, context, and methodology for transformational discipleship.

Truth be said, this is a tedious task as “there are many applications and outcomes of God’s desires that are uniquely realized in one’s specific calling and setting” (Estep, White, & Estep, 2012, p. 171). And that is why it is critical to know that “the process begins by discovering and embracing God’s most fundamental intentions” (p. 171) on the part of the discipler or religious educator, and then it continues by experientially directing

the prospective disciples “to the sources of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation” rather than confining “their study to that which men have spoken or written” (White, 1952, p. 17).

Finally, it is worth noting that the present study has confirmed Abolarin’s (2013) study of VVU and Babcock University students, especially the observation that students would readily embrace Seventh-day Adventist spirituality if the campus became a positive community where workers (referred to in the present study as disciplers or religious educators) interact with students, and provide care and encouragement (p. 209). The role modeling, as Christ did through his baptism (Mark1: 7-15), is a significant key to discipleship on West African Christian campuses.

Limitations

The present study was faced with some limitations that are worth highlighting. Firstly, the scale used to assess the predictive role of identity styles on students’ attitudes was from an instrument developed and validated in the West. Even though the instrument displayed the commonly observed results in terms of intrinsic correlations (i.e., correlations between the identity styles), there was no strong premise to confirm the predicting role of identity styles in Africa.

Furthermore, the scales for religious syncretism, discipleship satisfaction, and discipleship involvement were developed in order to relate specifically to the realities of the population under study. The validity and reliability of these scales may require, through further research, more confirmation than what this study has established. Again, prediction of attitudes may best be appreciated through longitudinal studies. Therefore, the present study is, at best, a spur for more extensive and longitudinal studies on

discipleship in Christian higher education in West Africa. Finally, the lack of adequate literature on campus discipleship in West Africa has limited the generalization of the findings.

Recommendations

Valley View University's discipleship goals are in harmony with the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church's spiritual master plan for institutions of higher learning. The practices put in place to accomplish these goals also follow the general traditions of the church in terms of religious teaching and experiences for spiritual growth.

Notwithstanding VVU's orthodox compliance with the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church's praxis, there is the need to further understand the dynamics of Christian discipleship in order to lead students to a satisfying and involved experience of the Christian life. Otherwise, even though Seventh-day Adventist higher education at VVU and even in West Africa may not lose its Christian mission through secularization as at Harvard (Kullberg, 2007), or through non-contextualized practices (Kanitz, 2005), this may happen through coercive practices that lack role modelling (Mayhew & Bryandt, 2013). The results of the present research inspire the following recommendations for VVU campus ministries, on the one hand, and for further research, on the other.

Recommendations for VVU Campus Ministries

1. The university needs to embark on a thorough biblical exposé on the purpose, requirements, illustrations, and assessments of discipleship in order to appreciate the indicators of satisfied and involved Christian life.

2. The university's discipleship practices should be designed in a manner that is assessable and evaluable for the sake of measuring discipleship and spiritual growth.

3. The university needs to place higher premium on role modeling in its discipleship endeavors rather than expecting desired results from sets of statutory and required practices.

4. Discipleship practices that focus on the campus issues affecting student life are likely to bring students to Jesus more than ready-made institutionalized religious activities.

5. Based on the emphasis on communal identity by postmodernism and African culture, community building through small group ministries may be a more effective tool for discipleship than wholesale congregational ministries, individual counseling, or Bible study sessions.

6. The university should take advantage of strong religious ties between Adventist, Baptist, and Deeper Life students as a bridge to reaching the non-Adventist student body.

7. Intentional strategies should be in place to increase student satisfaction, as this greatly predicts student involvement in discipleship activities.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Further research should be conducted in an attempt to identify more predictors of students' satisfaction and involvement in discipleship practices and related experiences.

2. Principal component analysis (not reported in this study) failed to group the ISI-5 items into their expected specific identity style categories. There is the need for further research to ascertain the validity of the scale for West African student populations.

3. Further research should be conducted to improve and affirm the validity and reliability of an African religious syncretism inventory scale.

4. Further research should be conducted on the relationship between syncretism, religiosity, and spirituality in the West African university setting in order to evaluate the claims of *homo Africanus homo religiosus radicaliter* and the quest for Africanization of Christianity.

5. Social desirability is an often-reported trait among African people, but no instrument has yet been validated to carry out reliable research toward confirming this claim. Research should be conducted toward the development of an Africa-contextualized valid and reliable Social Desirability Scale.

6. There is the need for further study on student discipleship preferences on Christian campuses in West Africa.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

LETTERS

Research Authorization From VVU

September 22, 2014

Institutional Review Board

Andrews University
4150 Administrative Drive, Room 322
Berrien Springs, MI 49104
USA

Dear Sir/Madam,

INSTITUTIONAL CONSENT LETTER

Greetings in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ

I write to inform you that the University Administration has consented to allow one of your graduate students, Juvénal Balisasa, to use our undergraduate students as his doctoral research population. fbotah@vvu.edu.gh

As per his application letter, the University is aware that the research topic is "**Identity Styles, Mediated by Commitment and Syncretism, as Predictors of Students' Attitudes Toward Selected Discipleship Practices at Valley View University In 2014: Implications for Religious Education.**" The University Administration agrees to have this research carried out as requested.

Please be assured that your student, Juvénal Balisasa, will be given the needed cooperation and support during his data collection, by allowing him to advertise his research, administer his instrument, and retrieve responses from our students on the University's two main campuses—Oyibi and Techiman—as would be specified by his approved research protocol.

Hoping this consent letter will be accorded the needed credibility.

Yours cordially,

Daniel Bediako, PhD
(Ag. Pro-Vice Chancellor)
(+233)548256670
dbediako@vvu.edu.gh

Phone: 030 7011832 e-mail: info@vvu.edu.gh Website: www.vvu.edu.gh
Location: Mile 19, Accra-Dodowa Road P. O. Box KIA 9358, Accra, Ghana, West Africa

Research Authorization From Andrews University's
Institutional Review Board

January 15, 2015

Juvenal Balisasa

Tel: +233244844753

Email: halisasa@icloud.com

RE: APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS
IRB Protocol #: 14-120 **Application Type:** Original **Dept.:** Discipleship & Religious Education
Review Category: Expedited **Action Taken:** Approved **Advisor:** John Matthews
Title: Identity styles, mediated by commitment and syncretism, as predictors of undergraduate students' attitudes towards selected discipleship practices at Valley View University in Ghana: Implications for religious education.

This letter is to advise you that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed and approved your IRB application of research involving human subjects entitled: *"Identity styles, mediated by commitment and syncretism, as predictors of undergraduate students' attitudes towards selected discipleship practices at Valley View University in Ghana: Implications for religious education"* IRB protocol number 14-120 under Expedited category. This approval is valid until January 15, 2016. If your research is not completed by the end of this period you must apply for an extension at least four weeks prior to the expiration date. We ask that you inform IRB whenever you complete your research. Please reference the protocol number in future correspondence regarding this study.

Any future changes made to the study design and/or consent form require prior approval from the IRB before such changes can be implemented. Please use the attached report form to request for modifications, extension and completion of your study.

While there appears to be no more than minimum risk with your study, should an incidence occur that results in a research-related adverse reaction and/or physical injury, this must be reported immediately in writing to the IRB. Any project-related physical injury must also be reported immediately to the University physician, Dr. Reichert, by calling (269) 473-2222. Please feel free to contact our office if you have questions.

Best wishes in your research.

Sincerely

Mordekai Ongo

Research Integrity & Compliance Officer

Institutional Review Board - 4150 Administration Dr Room 322 - Berrien Springs, MI 49104-0355

Tel: (269) 471-6361 Fax: (269) 471-6543 E-mail: irb@andrews.edu

APPENDIX B

PILOT STUDY RESULTS

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

PILOT STUDY RESULTS:

**“Identity Styles, Mediated By Commitment And Syncretism, As
Predictors Of Undergraduate Students’ Attitudes Toward
Selected Discipleship Practices At Valley View
University In Ghana In 2015: Implications
For Religious Education”**

by

Juvénal Balisasa

Submitted to Dr. John V. G. Matthews
In partial fulfillment of the requirement for RLED 887—Applied Research.

At Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, USA

January 2015

PILOT STUDY RESULTS

Introduction

This pilot study is a prelude to the impending dissertation research on “Identity Styles, mediated by Commitment and Syncretism, as Predictors of Undergraduate Students’ Attitudes (i.e., Involvement and Satisfaction) Toward Selected Discipleship Practices at Valley View University in Ghana in 2015: Implications for Religious Education.” As a pilot study, its primary aim is to ascertain the clarity of the instrument; the amount of time respondents would spend to cover the questionnaire, and the reliability of the items of the research instrument.

Research Design and Procedures

Research Design

This pilot research employed a quantitative survey design as it sought to describe, quantitatively, the “relationships that may exist among naturally occurring phenomena, without trying in any way to alter these phenomena” (Grajales, 2013, p.127). The primary aim of this research is not only to observe how respondents related to all the items in terms of clarity and amount of time required, but also to examine the reliability of self-generated items.

Research Instrument

The research instrument for this pilot study was the tentative questionnaire for the impending study on “Identity Styles, Mediated by Commitment and Syncretism, as Predictors of Undergraduate Students’ Attitudes Toward Selected Discipleship Practices at Valley View University in Ghana in 2015: Implications for Religious Education.” It comprises four main sections, namely, research design and procedure, description of participants, demographic data presentation, reliability test, and concluding remarks on the improvement of the research instrument in light of the findings from the pilot study.

Self-generated items that were examined comprised eight (Invol1...Invol8) items on involvement in discipleship practices, thirteen (Sat1...Sat13) on satisfaction from discipleship practices, and fourteen (S1...S14) items on syncretism. The rest of items (relating to Identity Styles, Commitment, and Social Desirability) were not examined in this wise, because they have been taken from already validated instruments.

Participants

Data for this pilot study was collected through non-random convenience sampling from resident students on the Oyibi Campus of Valley View University. Non-random convenient sampling has the advantage of being fast, inexpensive, and easy because the subjects are readily available. Data was collected from willing participants in the Halls that were visited by the data collection team members.

Before data was collected, I reminded the Halls Administration of the permission the university had already granted me to collect data on campus and asked for permission to carry out my pilot study on willing students in the halls. Hall Administrators readily allowed me to proceed and availed their senior hall assistants to assist my data collection

team members who were shortly dispatched to the four Halls on campus. The team spent fifty minutes to collect data for the study; that is, ten minutes for the preliminary interaction with the prospective respondents, thirty for the filling of the questionnaire, and ten minutes for gathering the filled questionnaires and casual interaction with the respondents.

After distributing the questionnaire to 100 volunteers, thirteen respondents decided to drop the questionnaire without attempting to answer. The remaining eighty-seven participants worked through the questionnaire till they decided to return it before or at the end of the thirty-minute period. In all seventy-eight (i.e., 89.65%) of the eighty-seven respondents answered all the eighty-six questions of the instrument, and nine (i.e., 10.34%) respondents missed between one and four questions. Though all the filled questionnaires were considered in calculating the various percentages on the number of questions respondents answered, I only present in this report data on thirty questionnaires that are picked randomly from the lot of 87.

Results

In this section, I first present the demographic data of the respondents to provide a fair profile of those who participated in the pilot study. The data on demographic categories helps appreciate the potential variety of perceptions from respondents, which would in turn constitute a solid scrutiny basis for reliability testing.

After presenting the demographic data, I proceed with the reliability of the instrument by examining the internal consistency of the self-generated items. Finally, I provide a concluding statement by highlighting the role the pilot study has played in fine-tuning the final instrument for my dissertation research.

Demographic Data

Demographic data is provided on the respondents' age group, level of study, program of study, religious group, and cumulative point average. The tables that follow display, for each variable, the frequencies as well the percentages of respondents per level of measurement.

Table 1

Respondents' Age Groups

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	17-19	5	16.7	16.7	16.7
	20-22	9	30.0	30.0	46.7
	23-25	12	40.0	40.0	86.7
	26-29	1	3.3	3.3	90.0
	30 or above	3	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 2

Respondents' Level of Study

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	200	17	56.7	58.6	58.6
	300	6	20.0	20.7	79.3
	400	6	20.0	20.7	100.0
	Total	29	96.7	100.0	
Missing System		1	3.3		
Total		30	100.0		

Table 3

Respondents' Program of Study

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Business	10	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Computer	6	20.0	20.0	53.3
	Nursing	4	13.3	13.3	66.7
	Theology	7	23.3	23.3	90.0
	Education	1	3.3	3.3	93.3
	Develop. Study	2	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 4

Respondents' Religious Groups

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Adventist	13	43.3	44.8	44.8
	Presbyterian	2	6.7	6.9	51.7
	Baptist	1	3.3	3.4	55.2
	Pentecostal	5	16.7	17.2	72.4
	Charismatic	2	6.7	6.9	79.3
	Deeper Life	1	3.3	3.4	82.8
	Islam	1	3.3	3.4	86.2
	Methodist	2	6.7	6.9	93.1
	Other	2	6.7	6.9	100.0
	Total	29	96.7	100.0	
Missing System		1	3.3		
Total		30	100.0	100.0	

Table 5

Respondents' Cumulative Point Average (GPA)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0.00—2.00	5	16.7	17.2	17.2
	2.10—2.50	3	10.0	10.3	27.6
	2.60—3.00	8	26.7	27.6	55.6
	3.10—3.50	12	40.0	41.4	96.6
	3.60—4.00	1	3.3	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	96.7	100.0	
Missing System		1	3.3		
Total		30	100.0		

Reliability Test

Under this section I assess the reliability of the instrument by examining the internal consistency of items under the three variable clusters, namely Involvement, Satisfaction, and Syncretism. To do this, I provide a case processing summary to show the number of participants in the study, Cronbach's alpha (overall and partial coefficients) to bring out the strength of internal consistency, and inter-item correlations which are especially useful and more reliable than Cronbach's alpha whenever the number of items to be assessed is less than or equal to 10 (Pearson, 2010, p. 88).

Overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient is obtained when all the variables are involved in the computation. Partial Cronbach's alpha coefficients are obtained any time a variable is removed from the computation in order to observe its effect on the overall coefficient. Cronbach's alpha of .70 is a generally accepted minimum standard (Pearson, 2010, p. 8). Concerning inter-items correlations, Pearson (2010, p. 88)

Table 6

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	29	96.7
	Excluded ¹	1	3.3
	Total	30	100.0

Note. ¹Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure

Table 7

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items	N of items
.895	.893	8

quotes Briggs and Cheek as suggesting, “interitem correlations of .2 to .04 justify the combination of items into a scale of fewer than 10 items.” Below are the outputs of the reliability test for the three variable clusters.

Reliability Test for Involvement

Since the overall Cronbach alpha (.895) is above the minimum standard of .70, we can safely say that all the eight items proposed to measure involvement in discipleship practices are appropriate. In fact, even when an item is removed one at a time (Table 8 displays the various Cronbach's alpha coefficients when each item is removed) the partial coefficients are still higher than the minimum standard of .70.

Table 8

Cronbach's Alpha if Items Deleted

	Invol1	Invol2	Invol3	Invol4	Invol5	Invol6	Invol7	Invol8
Cronbach's Alpha	.879	.901	.881	.863	.874	.882	.875	.893

Table 9

Inter-Item Correlations

	Invol1	Invol2	Invol3	Invol4	Invol5	Invol6	Invol7	Invol8
Invol1	--							
Invol2	.349	--						
Invol3	.446	.262	--					
Invol4	.716	.392	.734	--				
Invol5	.629	.236	.604	.685	--			
Invol6	.511	.362	.559	.722	.602	--		
Invol7	.594	.361	.559	.634	.703	.632	--	
Invol8	.447	.537	.441	.510	.490	.137	.445	--

Table 10

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	29	96.7
	Excluded ¹	1	3.3
	Total	30	100.0

Note. ¹Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure

We can therefore say that as far as the study of involvement in discipleship practices is concerned, the related items are sufficiently related and congruent to be combined in one scale. Moreover, all the inter-item correlation coefficients are above, implying that the items are sufficiently related enough to be used together for the study of involvement.

Reliability Test for Satisfaction

Thirteen self-generated items that have been earmarked under Satisfaction with discipleship practices for the impending research are used for reliability test. As in the case of involvement, the overall Cronbach's alpha (.925) is above the minimum standard of .70. This implies that the relationship between the items is good enough for them to constitute a scale. Besides, all partial coefficients are above .70 as shown in Table 12. Moreover, only three inter-item correlations are found to be below .20. This also confirms the consistency of the instrument, as far as items on satisfaction are concerned. Tables 10, 11, 12, and 13 provide details of the reliability of the said items.

Table 11

Reliability Statistics for Satisfaction Items

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items	N of items
.925	.926	13

Table 12

Cronbach's Alpha if Items Deleted

	Sat1	Sat2	Sat3	Sat4	Sat5	Sat6	Sat7	Sat8	Sat9	Sat10	Sat11	Sat12	Sat13
Cronbach's Alpha	.919	.922	.923	.920	.918	.918	.916	.919	.922	.919	.918	.919	.918

Table 13

Satisfaction Inter-Item Correlations

	Sat1	Sat2	Sat3	Sat4	Sat5	Sat6	Sat7	Sat8	Sat9	Sat10	Sat11	Sat12	Sat13
Sat1	----												
Sat2	.536	----											
Sat3	.426	.317	----										
Sat4	.577	.350	.725	----									
Sat5	.677	.176	.625	.689	----								
Sat6	.712	.358	.406	.669	.670	----							
Sat7	.573	.387	.718	.662	.748	.735	----						
Sat8	.459	.525	.519	.297	.523	.333	.623	----					
Sat9	.396	.696	.180	.251	.189	.297	.236	.594	----				
Sat10	.422	.582	.251	.342	.292	.418	.345	.492	.669	----			
Sat11	.406	.553	.203	.316	.397	.530	.366	.502	.660	.902	----		
Sat12	.264	.264	.345	.494	.516	.505	.515	.494	.465	.715	.738	----	
Sat13	.382	.451	.306	.373	.438	.510	.508	.599	.637	.711	.703	.672	----

Table 14

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	27	90.0
	Excluded ¹	3	10.0
	Total	30	100.0

Note: ¹Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure

Reliability Test for Syncretism

Fourteen items under Syncretism were also examined through computation of Cronbach's alpha and inter-item correlations. The results are presented in Tables 14, 15, 16, and 17. The overall coefficient is .764 and all partial coefficients (those computed each time an item is removed) are greater than the minimum standard of .70. This shows that the items under Syncretism are well related and meaningfully attest to the consistency of the reliability of the instrument.

It is however important to remark that some of the inter-item correlations coefficients are very low. However, this does not indicate inconsistency of the instrument because the number of items is far above 10. Inter-item correlations are critical when the number of items is less than or equal to 10, but they are superseded by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient when the number of items exceeds 10.

Table 15

Reliability Statistics for Syncretism Items

Cronbach's	Cronbach's Alpha Alpha based on standardized items	N of items
.764	.780	14

Table 16

Cronbach's Alpha if Syncretism Items Deleted

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14
Cronbach's Alpha	.753	.749	.721	.778	.726	.737	.754	.766	.756	.773	.729	.764	.733	.733

Table 17

Inter-Syncretism Item Correlations

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14
S1	----													
S2	.350	----												
S3	.419	.201	---											
S4	-.044	.062	-.147	----										
S5	.494	.256	.745	.002	---									
S6	.384	.116	.713	-.069	.794	----								
S7	-.028	.204	.132	.483	.206	.215	----							
S8	.084	.006	.397	.215	.130	.046	.174	---						
S9	.253	-.036	.354	-.179	.336	.421	.025	-.072	---					
S10	-.107	.354	.000	.093	-.004	-.215	.148	.028	.078	----				
S11	.272	.279	.575	.027	.645	.877	.404	-.046	.409	.019	----			
S12	.065	.100	.109	.196	.193	.257	.159	-.046	-.025	.136	.254	----		
S13	.228	.339	.550	.156	.319	.262	.044	.498	.221	.299	.297	.071	----	
S14	.142	.288	.251	-.122	.161	.220	.091	-.081	.429	.321	.206	.219	.185	--

Conclusion

Observations Relating to the Nature of the
Instrument and Data Collection

1. The data collectors spent ten minutes interacting with the prospective respondents who had volunteered to participate, and ten minutes to gather the filled

questionnaires. This means that data collection in the classroom is likely to take 50 minutes. In this regard, the lecturers will be notified accordingly.

2. Almost all the respondents were able to return the filled questionnaire to the data collectors before the end of the thirty-minute period.

3. In general, respondents related to the questionnaire with ease, except for the minor remarks they made as highlighted in the ensuing points.

4. Item 50 was found to be a mere repetition of item 45. It has now been removed from the final instrument, thereby cutting down the total number of items from 87 to 86.

5. The expressions “to get even” in item 9 and “irked” in item 19 of the instrument were found unfamiliar to most respondents. I have now opted, in the final research instrument, for their closest equivalent—“to revenge” and “annoyed,” respectively—that are more familiar to respondents.

6. Due to the large number of items in the first section of the instrument (from items 1 to 57) respondents reported to have found it a bit uneasy to identify the boundaries of the items. I have decided to use a table for that section in order to clearly bring out the boundaries of the items as shown in the attached fine-tuned research instrument.

7. Based on findings from the pilot study, it is obvious that the instrument is appropriate for impending dissertation research.

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Identity Styles and Attitudes Questionnaire:

Instructions

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to assess the relationship between identity processing styles and attitudes toward discipleship practices.

Risk:

I understand that by participating in this study, I will neither suffer any consequence whatsoever, nor receive any benefit, apart from contributing data to understanding the research issues under study. I also understand that **I have the right to not participate at all or to discontinue my participation** from the study without any risk or consequence. I further understand that the information collected in this study will be included in a doctoral dissertation at Andrews University, Michigan, USA, and may be presented at professional meetings or published in journals.

Participant Consent:

I have carefully read the consent form, and by completing this questionnaire I thereby express my consent to participate as a subject in this study.

A. How do the following statements represent you?

You will find a number of statements about beliefs, attitudes, and/or ways of dealing with issues. Read each carefully and use it to describe yourself. On the answer sheet, tick (✓) under the number which indicates the extent to which you think the statement represents you. There are no right or wrong answers. For instance, if the statement is very much like you, tick under 5; if it is not like you at all, tick under 1. Use the 1 to 5 point scale to indicate the degree to which you think each statement is uncharacteristic (1) or characteristic (5) of yourself.

		1: Not at all like me...5: Very Much Like Me				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	I know basically what I believe and don't believe					
2	I know the spirits of the ancestors are really active in our world today					
3	I automatically adopt and follow the values I was brought up with.					
4	I see Christianity as it is today in Africa as a white Man's religion.					
5	I'm not sure where I'm heading in my life; I guess things will work themselves out.					
6	I combine practices from different religions for better spiritual results.					
7	Talking to others helps me explore my personal beliefs.					
8	I know what I want to do with my future.					
9	I sometimes try to revenge rather than forgive and forget					
10	I strive to achieve the goals that my family and friends hold for me.					
11	To me, pouring libation does not affect a person's Christian faith.					
12	It doesn't pay to worry about values in advance; I decide things as they happen.					
13	When facing a life decision, I take into account different points of view before making a choice.					

14	I believe ancestral worship should be included in Christianity					
15	I am not really sure what I believe.					
16	I have always known what I believe and don't believe; I never have doubts about my beliefs.					
17	I perform some rituals to communicate with the ancestors					
18	I am not really thinking about my future now, it is still a long way off.					
19	I have never been annoyed when people expressed ideas very different from my own.					
20	I spend a lot of time reading or talking to others trying to develop a set of values that makes sense to me.					
21	I am not sure which values I really hold.					
22	I believe Maalams and traditional priests are also God's agents.					
23	I never question what I want to do with my life because I tend to follow what important people expect me to do.					
24	When I have to make an important life decision, I try to wait as long as possible in order to see what will happen.					
25	I see nothing wrong in a Christian wearing talisman.					
26	When facing a life decision, I try to analyze the situation in order to understand it.					
27	I am not sure what I want to do in the future.					
28	I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable					

29	I think it is better to adopt a firm set of beliefs than to be open-minded.					
30	In my extended family, the ancestors are worshiped					
31	I try not to think about or deal with personal problems as long as I can.					
32	When making important life decisions, I like to spend time thinking about my options.					
33	I have clear and definite life goals.					
34	During some parts of my life, I have consulted a medium.					
35	I think it's better to hold on to fixed values rather than to consider alternative value systems.					
36	I try to avoid personal situations that require me to think a lot and deal with them on my own.					
37	There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.					
38	When making important life decisions, I like to have as much information as possible.					
39	I am not sure what I want out of life.					
40	I have had a personal encounter with ancestral spirits					
41	When I make a decision about my future, I automatically follow what close friends or relatives expect from me.					
42	I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.					
43	My life plans tend to change whenever I talk to different people.					
44	I handle problems in my life by actively reflecting on them.					

45	I have benefited from the activities of the ancestors					
46	I have a definite set of values that I use to make personal decisions.					
47	When others say something that challenges my personal values or beliefs, I automatically disregard what they have to say.					
48	There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.					
49	Who I am changes from situation to situation.					
50	I periodically think about and examine the logical consistency between my life goals.					
51	I am emotionally involved and committed to specific values and ideals.					
52	I pray through other beings, besides Jesus, for safety					
53	I prefer to deal with situations in which I can rely on social norms and standards.					
54	No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener					
55	When personal problems arise, I try to delay acting as long as possible.					
56	God uses angels and saints to minister to me					
57	It is important for me to obtain and evaluate information from a variety of sources before I make important life decisions.					

B. How often do you involve yourself in the following practices on campus?
(Please, bubble in the number which indicates the extent of your involvement)

1	2	3	4	5			
Very Rarely	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often			
58.	Week of spiritual emphasis		1	2	3	4	5
59.	Personal Meditation		1	2	3	4	5
60.	Sunday Bible study		1	2	3	4	5
61.	Mid-week prayer meetings		1	2	3	4	5
62.	Friday youth activities		1	2	3	4	5
63.	Sabbath worship		1	2	3	4	5
64.	Sabbath afternoon activities		1	2	3	4	5
65.	Community services		1	2	3	4	5

C. On the average how satisfied have you been through the following practices on campus?
(Please, bubble in the number which indicates the extent of your involvement)

	2	3	4	5			
Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Very	Extremely			
66.	Week of spiritual emphasis		1	2	3	4	5
67.	Personal Mediation		1	2	3	4	5
68.	Sunday Bible study		1	2	3	4	5
69.	Mid-week prayer meetings		1	2	3	4	5
70.	Friday youth activities		1	2	3	4	5
71.	Sabbath worship		1	2	3	4	5
72.	Sabbath afternoon activities		1	2	3	4	5
73.	Community services		1	2	3	4	5
74.	“Jesus and The Gospel,” “Principles of Christian Faith, & “Ethics” Courses		1	2	3	4	5
75.	Lecturers’ integration of faith and teaching		1	2	3	4	5
76.	Staff’s integration of faith and service		1	2	3	4	5

77.	Administrators' integration of faith and administration	1	2	3	4	5
78.	Personal interaction with Chaplains/Pastors	1	2	3	4	5

D. About Yourself (*Please, underline your choice*):

79.	Age:	17-19; 20-22; 23-25; 26-29; 30 or above
80.	Gender:	Female; Male
81.	Level of Study:	200 300 400
82.	Program of study:	Business; Computer/IT; Nursing; Theology; Education; Biomedical Equipment; Development Studies; Other (Specify).....
83.	Religious Group:	Adventist; Catholic; Presbyterian; Anglican; Baptist; Pentecostal; Charismatic; Deeper Life; Islam; Other (Specify): .....
84.	Status in Your Religious Group:	Baptized/Initiated; Baptismal/Initiation class member; Just a worshiper
85.	Your (GPA):	0.00—2.00; 2.10—2.50; 2.60—3.00; 3.10—3.50; 3.60—4.00
86.	Your Country of Origin:	Ghana; Nigeria; Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, Other (Specify):.....

APPENDIX D

SOURCES AND DEFINITIONS
OF VARIABLES

Table 1

Sources of the Items of the Research Instrument

Summative Variables (Equal the sum of corresponding items)	Items from ISI-5	Self-generated Items	Items from MCSDS
Independent Variables			
Identity Style			
Informational	7, 13, 20, 26, 32, 38, 44, 50, 57		
Normative	3, 10, 16, 23, 29, 35, 41, 47, 53		
Diffuse-Avoidant	12, 15, 18, 24, 31, 36, 43, 49, 55		
Dependent Variables			
Involvement		8, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65	
Satisfaction		66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78	
Mediating Variables			
Commitment	1, 5, 8, 13, 21, 27, 33, 39, 46		
Syncretism		2, 4, 6, 11, 14, 17, 22, 25, 30, 34, 40, 45, 51, 52, 56	
Control Variable			
Desirability			9, 19, 28, 37, 42, 48, 54

Table 2

Conceptual, Instrumental, and Operational Definition of Variables

Variable Name	Conceptual Definition	Instrumental Definition	Operational Definition
Involvement	This refers to participation in terms of being physically present at an event	The activities listed below refer to selected events that regularly take place on campus in which you are expected to be involved. For each item, you are kindly requested to indicate the frequency of your involvement by choosing the appropriate numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 on a scale that goes from 1 to 5 where 1 = Not at all and 5 = very much. 1. Week of spiritual emphasis (INVOL1). 2. Personal Mediation (INVOL2). 3. Sunday Bible studies (INVOL3). 4. Mid-week prayer meetings (INVOL4). 5. Friday Youth Activities (INVOL5). 6. Sabbath Worship (INVOL6). 7. Sabbath afternoon Activities (INVOL7). 8. Community Services (INVOL8)	For the number selected by the participant the values are: 1=1; 2=2; 3= 3; 4= 4; 5= 5, In order to determine the degree of involvement, the values of the different responses are added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 8 to 40 points.

Table 2—*Continued*

Satisfaction	“Customer level of approval when comparing a product’s received performance with his or her expectations” (www.businessdictionary.com)	The activities listed below refer to selected events that are part of campus life. For each item, you are kindly requested to indicate how much satisfied you are with what goes on in each event by choosing the appropriate numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 on a scale that goes from 1 to 5 where 1 = Not at all and 5 = very much. 1. Week of spiritual emphasis (SATIS₁). 2. Personal Mediation (SATIS₂). 3. Sunday Bible studies (SATIS₃). 4. Mid-week prayer meetings (SATIS₄). 5. Friday Youth Activities (SATIS₅). 6. Sabbath Worship (SATIS₆). 7. Sabbath afternoon Activities (SATIS₇). 8. Community Services (SATIS₈). 9. Bible-based courses (SATIS₉). 10. Lecturers’ integration of faith and teaching (SATIS₁₀). 11. Staff’s integration of faith and service (SATIS₁₁). 12. Administrators’ integration of faith and administration (SATIS₁₂). 13. Personal interaction with Chaplains/Pastors (SATIS₁₃)	For the number selected by the participant the values are: 1=1; 2=2; 3= 3; 4= 4; 5= 5, In order to determine the degree of satisfaction, the values of the different responses are added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 12 to 65 points.

Table 2—Continued

Syncretism	Christianity mixed with practices pertaining to African traditional religions that are regarded as acceptable before God (1969, pp. 98-118; 217-233; 245-252) though the Bible refer to them as idol worship practices	The statements listed below are some common African religious beliefs. For each statement, you are kindly requested to indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement by using the following scale: 1: Strongly Disagree; 2: Disagree; 3: Undecided; 4: Agree; 5: Strongly Agree 1. I know the spirits of the ancestors are really active in our world today 2. I see Christianity as it is today in Africa as a white Man's religion. 3. I combine practices from different religions for better spirit results 4. To me, pouring libation does not affect a person's Christian faith. 5. I believe ancestral worship should be included in Christianity 6. I perform some rituals to communicate with the ancestors 7. I believe Maalams and traditional priests are also God's agents. 8. I see nothing wrong in a Christian wearing talisman 9. In my extended family, the ancestors are worshiped 10. During some parts of my life, I have consulted a medium. 11. I have had a personal encounter with ancestral spirits 12. I have benefited from the activities of the ancestors	For the answer selected by the participant the values are: Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Undecided = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5 In order to determine the level of syncretism of each respondent, the values of the different responses are added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 14 to 70 points.

Table 2—Continued

178	Commitment	“Commitment is It has also been defined as “loyalty, identification, and involvement with some appropriate object” (Buchanan, 1974, pp. 287-289).	13. I pray through other beings, besides Jesus, for safety 14. God uses angels and saints to minister to me.	For the number selected by the participant the values are: 1=1; 2= 2; 3= 3; 4= 4; 5= 5, except for items COMM₃, COMM₄, COMM₅, COMM₇ which are scored in reverse fashion (i.e., 1=5; 2=4; 3=3; 4=2; 5=1) In order to determine the extent of the subjects’ commitment, the values of the different responses are added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 9 to 45 points.
			For each item, you are kindly requested to indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 on a scale that goes from 1 to 5 where 1 = Not at all like me and 5 = very much like me. 1. I know basically what I believe and don’t believe (COM1). 2. I know what I want to do with my future (COMM2). 3. I am not really sure what I believe (COMM3). 4. I am not sure which values I really hold (COM4). 5. I am not sure what I want to do in the future (COMM5). 6. I have clear and definite life goals (COMM6). 7. I am not sure what I want out of life (COMM7). 8. I have a definite set of values that I use to make personal decisions (COMM8). 9. I am emotionally involved and committed to specific values and ideals (COMM9).	

Table 2—Continued

Social Desirability	“A tendency to respond to self-report items in a manner that makes the respondent look good rather than to respond in an accurate and truthful manner” (Holtgraves, 2004, p. 161)	The statements below inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, you are kindly requested to indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 on a scale that goes from 1 to 5 where 1 = Not at all like me and 5 = very much like me. 1. I sometimes try to revenge rather than forgive and forget 2. I have never been annoyed when people expressed ideas very different from my own. 3. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable 4. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone. 5. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone’s feelings. 6. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right. 7. No matter who I’m talking to, I’m always a good listener.	For the number selected by the participant the values are: 1=1; 2=2; 3= 3; 4= 4; 5= 5 In order to determine the extent to which the subjects are characterized by social desirability tendencies, the values of the different responses are added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 7 to 35 points.

Table 2—Continued

Diffuse-avoidant

This is one of the three identity-processing orientation of styles which describes individuals who “procrastinate and try to avoid dealing with identity conflicts and decisions as long as possible. When they have to act or make choices, their behavior is determined primarily by situational demands and consequences. How they act depends to a large extent on where they are and who they are with” (Berzonsky et al., 2013, p. 2)

The statements below inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, you are kindly requested to indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 on a scale that goes from 1 to 5 where 1 = Not at all like me and 5 = very much like me.

1. I’m not sure where I’m heading in my life; I guess things will work themselves out (DIFF₁).
2. It doesn’t pay to worry about values in advance; I decide things as they happen (DIFF₂).
3. I am not really thinking about my future now; it is still a long way off (DIFF₃).
4. When I have to make an important life decision, I try to wait as long as possible in order to see what will happen (DIFF₄).
5. I try not to think about or deal with personal problems as long as I can (DIFF₅).
6. I try to avoid personal situations that require me to think a lot and deal with them on my own (DIFF₆).
7. My life plans tend to change whenever I talk to different people (DIFF₇).
8. Who I am changes from situation to situation (DIFF₈).
9. When personal problems arise, I try to delay acting as long as possible (DIFF₉).

For the number selected by the participant the values are: 1=1; 2=2; 3= 3; 4= 4; 5= 5

In order to determine the extent to which the subjects are characterized by the diffuse-avoidant identity style, the values of the different responses are added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 9 to 45 points.

Table 2—Continued

Normative
Identity style

This is one of the three identity-processing orientation of styles which describes individuals who “tend to internalize and adhere to the goals, expectations, and standards of significant others or referent groups in a relatively more automatic manner” (Berzonsky et al., 2013, p. 2)

The statements below inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, you are kindly requested to indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 on a scale that goes from 1 to 5 where 1 = Not at all like me and 5 = very much like me.

1. I automatically adopt and follow the values I was brought up with (NORM₁).
2. I strive to achieve the goals that my family and friends hold for me (NORM₂).
3. I have always known what I believe and don't believe; I never really have doubts about my beliefs (NORM₃).
4. I never question what I want to do with my life because I tend to follow what important people expect me to do (NORM₄).
5. I think it is better to adopt a firm set of beliefs than to be open-minded (NORM₅).
6. I think it's better to hold on to fixed values rather than to consider alternative value systems (NORM₆).
7. When I make a decision about my future, I automatically follow what my close friends or relatives expect from me (NORM₇).
8. When others say something that challenges my personal values or beliefs, I automatically disregard what they have to say (NORM₈).
9. I prefer to deal with situations in which I can rely on social norms and standards (NORM₉).

For the number selected by the participant the values are: 1= 1; 2= 2; 3= 3; 4= 4; 5= 5

In order to determine the extent to which the subjects are characterized by the normative identity style, the values of the different responses are added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 9 to 45 points.

Table 2—Continued

Informational
Identity Style

This is one of the three identity-processing orientation of styles which describes individuals who are sceptical of their own self-views and they intentionally seek out, process, and utilise identity-relevant information to personally resolve identity conflicts (Berzonsky, 2011, p. 55)

The statements below inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, you are kindly requested to indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 on a scale that goes from 1 to 5 where 1 = Not at all like me and 5 = very much like me.

1. Talking to others helps me explore my personal beliefs (INFO₁)
2. When facing a life decision, I take into account different points of view before making a choice (INFO₂).
3. I spend a lot of time reading or talking to others trying to develop a set of values that makes sense to me (INFO₃).
4. When facing a life decision, I try to analyse the situation. (INFO₄)
5. When making important life decisions, I like to spend time thinking about my options (INFO₅).
6. When making important life decisions, I like to have as much information as possible (INFO₆).
7. I handle problems in my life by actively reflecting on them (INFO₇).
8. I periodically think about and examine the logical consistency between my life goals (INFO₈).
9. It is important for me to obtain and evaluate information from a variety of sources before I make important life decisions (INFO₉).

For the number selected by the participant the values are: 1= 1; 2= 2; 3= 3; 4= 4; 5= 5

In order to determine the extent to which the subjects are characterized by the informational identity style, the values of the different responses are added creating an exact interval scale with a range from 9 to 45 points.

Table 2—Continued

Age group	The age of the subject or respondent as at the time of study	Under the item labelled “Age Group,” please select the interval within which your actual age falls. 17-19; 20-22; 23-25; 26-29; 30 or above	The number of participants will be computed by age group
Gender	The gender of the subject or respondent	Under the item labelled “Gender,” please indicate whether you are Female or Male	The number of participants will be computed by Gender
Academic level	The year group of the subject or respondent	The numbers listed below represent the academic levels of undergraduate studies. Please, identify your level. 1. 100: first year of undergraduate studies 2. 200: second year of undergraduate studies 3. 300: third year of undergraduate studies 400: fourth year of undergraduate studies	The number of participants will be computed by academic level
GPA	The grade point average of the participant as of the semester prior to the study	The intervals listed below represent the brackets for student GPA ranging from 0.00 to 4.00. Please identify the interval within which your GPA falls. 1) 0.00—2.00; 2) 2.10—2.50; 3) 2.60—3.00; 4) 3.10—3.50; 5) 3.60—4.00	The number of participants will be computed by GPA

Table 2—*Continued*

Program of study	The academic program where the participant is taking his or her major	Under the items labelled “program of study,” please indicate which of the following is the area of your major: Business; Computer/IT; Nursing; Theology; Education; Biomedical Equipment; Development Studies; Other (specify):.....	The number of participants will be computed by Program
Religious group	Religious affiliation to which the participant belongs	Under the items labelled “Religious Group,” please indicate which of the following is you’re your affiliation: Adventist; Catholic; Presbyterian; Anglican; Baptist; Pentecostal; Charismatic; Deeper Life; Islam; Other (Specify):	The number of participants will be computed by Religious group
Status in religious group	This refers to whether the participant is a full-fledged member of the group or not.	Under the items labelled “Status in religious group,” please, indicate whether you are: baptized/initiate, in the baptismal/initiation class, or just a worshiper	The number of participants will be computed by religious-group status
Country of origin	This refers to the country where the participant holds his or her original citizenship.	Under the items labelled “Country of origin,” please indicate the country of your original Citizenship: Ghana, Nigeria, Cote d’Ivoire, Togo, Other (specify):	The number of participants will be computed by Country of origin

APPENDIX E

MULTIPLE CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS

FOR RESEARCH VARIABLES

Table 3

Multiple Correlation Coefficients (R^2) for Research Variables

Variable	R^2	Variable	R^2
INFO1	.144	SYNC1	.095
INFO2	.300	SYNC2	.120
INFO3	.180	SYNC3	.116
INFO4	.373	SYNC4	.146
INFO5	.474	SYNC5	.459
INFO6	.275	SYNC6	.426
INFO7	.172	SYNC7	.295
INFO8	.161	SYNC8	.246
INFO9	.219	SYNC9	.107
NORM1	.034	SYNC10	.129
NORM2	.114	SYNC11	.333
NORM3	.008	SYNC12	.258
NORM4	.178	SYNC13	.314
NORM5	.058	SYNC14	.008
NORM6	.033	INVOL1	.439
NORM7	.278	INVOL2	.156
NORM8	.036	INVOL3	.360
NORM9	.156	INVOL4	.714
DIFF1	.202	INVOL5	.662
DIFF2	.196	INVOL6	.456
DIFF3	.115	INVOL7	.549
DIFF4	.159	INVOL8	.287
DIFF5	.082	SATIS1	.432
DIFF6	.105	SATIS2	.210
DIFF7	.131	SATIS3	.442
DIFF8	.133	SATIS4	.599
DIFF9	.153	SATIS5	.558
COMM1	.023	SATIS6	.467
COMM2	.052	SATIS7	.552
COMM3	.424	SATIS8	.321
COMM4	.429	SATIS9	.173
COMM5	.516	SATIS10	.366
COMM6	.082	SATIS11	.464
COMM7	.458	SATIS12	.440
COMM8	.025	SATIS13	.288
COMM9	.018		

REFERENCE LIST

REFERENCE LIST

- Abbott, W. (1999). Discipleship in Mark: Two unlikely models. *Landas*, 13, 59-80.
- Abelman, R., & Malessandro, A. (2009). Institutional vision in Christian higher education: A comparison of ACCU, ELCA, and CCCU institutions. *Journal of Research and Christian Education*, 18, 84-119.
doi.10.1080/10656210902751792.
- Abolarin, I. (2013). *The influence of university personnel on students' spirituality at selected Adventist universities in West Africa* (Doctoral dissertation). Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI. Retrieved from *ProQuest Digital Dissertation* (UMI 3588202).
- Adaboh, S. (2014). *Evaluation of the bachelor degree in accounting program in a Ghanaian private university* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.
- Aguinis, H., Gottfredson, R. K., & Joo, H. (2013). Best-practice recommendations for defining, identifying, and handling outliers. *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(2), 270-301. doi: 10.1177/1094428112470848.
- Albright, J. J. (2008). Confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS, LISREL, and Mplus © 2006-2008. *The Trustees of Indiana University* Retrieved July 26, 2015, from <http://www.iu.edu/~statmath/stat/all/cfa/cfa2008.pdf>
- Andreasen, N. (2005). Is God coming to campus too? Thoughts on distinctive features of Adventist higher education. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 14(2), 121-128.
- Appiah-Kubi, K. (1979). Preface. In Kofi Appiah-Kubi & Sergio Torres (Eds.), *African Theology en Route*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Arefi, M., & Joshoghani, A. A. (2014). The Relationship between identity styles and romantic attachment with identity commitment among college students in Iran. *International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences*, 8(7), 858-864.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, K. (2006). African Pentecostal/charismatic Christianity: An overview. Retrieved July 29, 2015, from <http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles-php/464/08-2006>

- Astin, W. A., Astin, S. H., & Lindholm, A. J. (2004). Spirituality in higher education: A national study of college students' search for meaning and purpose. Retrieved March 22, 2016, from capabilities.templeton.org/2004/pdfSPIRITUALITY_HIGHER_ED.pdf
- Astin, W. A., Astin, S. H., & Lindholm, A. J. (2010). *Cultivating the spirit: How college can enhance students' inner lives*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Astley, J., Francis, J. L., & Robbins, M. (2012). Assessing attitude towards religion: The Astley-Francis scale of attitude towards theistic faith. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 34(2), 183-193.
- Awan, R. M., Mahmood, K., & Idrees, H. (2014). Leadership style, culture and commitment: An analytical study of university libraries in Pakistan. [Electronic journal]. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, paper 1053. Retrieved March 23, 2016, from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2566&context=libphilprac>
- Bakeman, R. (1992). *Understanding social science statistics: A spreadsheet approach*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Balisasa, J. (2014). Interaction between campus practices and students' faith preferences: Self-reported perceptions of Valley View University. *Asia-Africa Journal of Missions & Ministry*, 10, 109-124.
- Beagles, K. (2009). The validity of the growing disciples in community model among adolescents in Seventh-day Adventist schools in North America (Doctoral dissertation). Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI, USA. Retrieved from *ProQuest Digital Dissertation* (UMI3458391).
- Bedford, N. E. (2012). The beauty of God: The senses, liturgy, and Christian discipleship. *Latin American theology: Christian reflections from Latino South*, 7(2), 37-59.
- Bediako, K. (1999). *Theology and identity: The impact of culture upon Christian thought in the second century and in modern era*. Bletchley, UK: Regnum Books.
- Benda, M. R. (2012). *The test of faith: Christians and Muslims in the Rwandan genocide* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Manchester. Oxford Road, Manchester, UK. Retrieved March 23, 2016, from www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/api/datastream?publicationPid=uk-ac-man-scw:189285&datastreamId=FULL-TEXT.PD

- Berzonsky, M. D. (1989). Identity style: Conceptualization and measurement. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 4*, 267-281.
- Berzonsky, M. D. & Sullivan, C. (1992). Social-cognitive aspects of identity style: Need for cognition, experiential openness, and introspection. *Journal of Adolescence Research, 7*, 140-155.
- Berzonsky, D. M. & Kuk, S. L. (2000). Identity status, identity processing style, and the transition to university. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 15*, 81-98
- Berzonsky, D. M. (2011). A social-cognitive perspective on identity construction. In Schwartz, S. J., Luyckx, K., & Vignoles, V. L. (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 55-76). New York, NY: Springer.
- Berzonsky, M. D., Luyckx, K., Smits, I., Goossens, L., Soenens, B., & Papini, D. R. (2013). Development and validation of the revised identity style inventory (ISI-5): Factor structure, reliability, and validity. *Psychological Assessment, 25*(3), 893-904. doi: 10.1037/a0032642.
- Beyer, P. (2005). Au croisement de l'identité et de la difference: Les syncrétismes culturo-religieux dans le context de la mondialisation. *Social Compass, 52*(4), 417-429.
- Bobbie, E. (2004). *The practice of social research* (10th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Learning.
- Bonhoeffer, D. (1995). *The cost of discipleship*. New York, NY: Simons & Schuster.
- Boring, M. E. (1990). Mark 1:1-15 and the beginning of the gospel. *Semeia, 52*, 43-81.
- Brainy Quotes. (n.d.). 30 Quotations of Marcus Tullius Cicero. Retrieved July 4, 2014, from http://www.special-dictionary.com/quotes/authors/m/marcus_tullius_cicero/
- Brittian, A. S., Lewin, N., & Norris, S. A. (2013). "You must know where we come from": South African youths' perceptions of religion in time of social change. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 28*(6), 642-663. doi: 10.1177/0743558413480834.
- Brown, J. D. (1997). Skewness and kurtosis. *Shiken: JALT testing & evaluation SIG newsletter, 1*(1), 20-23. Retrieved August 30, 2015, from <http://jalt.org/test/PDF/Brown1.pdf>

- Bryant, N. S. (2007). The effect of involvement in campus religious communities on college student adjustment and development. *Journal of College & Character*, 8(3), 1940-1639. doi: 10.2202/1940-1639.1178.
- Bujo, B. (1992). *African theology in its social context*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Burke, P. J. (2006). Identity change. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 69(1), 81-96.
- Burke, P. J. & Stets, J. E. (2009). *Identity theory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Candidi, M. J. (2010). Adult discipleship through vocation catechesis: Teaching with a vocation frame of reference (Doctoral dissertation). Wickliffe, OH, USA. Retrieved from *ProQuest Digital Dissertation* (UMI 3411322).
- Case, F. K. (2011). A gendered perspective on student involvement in collegiate clubs and organizations in Christian higher education. *Christian Higher Education*, 10, 166-195.
- Chang, C. (2000). *Engaging unbelief*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Cheema, J. R. (2014). A review of missing data handling methods in education research. *Review of Educational Research*, 84(4), 487-508. doi: 10.3102/0034654314532697.
- Clarke, J. (2010). *Examining spiritual development in collegiate athletes participating in individual and team sports* (Doctoral dissertation). Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA. Retrieved March 23, 2016, from <http://etd.lsu.edu/docs/available/etd-04192010-085808/unrestricted/Clarkediss.pdf>
- Coetsee, L. (1999). From resistance to commitment. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 23(2), 204-222.
- Collinson, S. W. (2004). *Making disciples: The significance of Jesus' educational methods for today's church*. Eugene, OR: Wifit & Stock.
- Courey, M. & Pare, P. (2013). A closer look at the relationship between low self-control and delinquency: The effects of identity styles. *Crime & Delinquency*, 20(10), 1-29. doi: 10.1177/0011128713501033.
- Cress, A. J. (2000). *You can keep them if you care: Helping new members to stay on board*. Old Columbia Pike, MD: Ministerial association resource centre of the general conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

- Crocetti, E., Rubini, M., Berzonsky, M. D., & Meeus, W. (2009). Brief report: The identity style inventory: Validation in Italian adolescents and college students. *Journal of Adolescence*, 32, 425–433.
- Curran, M. J. & Rosen, E. D. (2006). Student attitudes toward college courses: An examination of influences and intentions. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 28(2), 135-148. doi: 10.1177/0273475306288401.
- Dalton, J. C., Eberhardt, D., Bracken, J., & Echols, K. (2006). Inward journeys: Forms and patterns of college student spirituality. *Journal of College and Character*, 7(8), 1–21.
- Dennis, L. D., Cox, W., Black, A., & Muller, S. (2009). The influence of religiosity and spirituality on drinking behaviors: Differences between students attending two southern universities. *Journal of Drug Education*, 39(1), 95-112.
- de Vries-Schot, R. M., Pieper, T. Z. J., & van Uden, F. H. M. (2012). Mature religiosity scale: Validity of a new questionnaire. *European Journal of Mental Health*, 7, 57-71. doi: 10.5708/EJMH.7.2012.1.3.
- Dorahy, M. J., Lewis, C. A., Schumaker, J. F., Akuamoah-Boateng, R., Dube, M. C., & Sibiya, T. E. (1998). A cross-cultural analysis of religion and life satisfaction. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, 1, 37-43.
- Drury, J. (1985). Mark 1:1-15: An interpretation. In A. E. Harvey (Ed.), *Alternative Approaches to New Testament Study* (pp. 25-36). London, UK: SPCK.
- Dudley, L. R. (1986). *Passing on the torch: How to pass your spiritual values on to children and teens*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association.
- Duriez, B., Soenens, B., & Beyers, W. (2004). Personality, identity styles, and religiosity: An integrative study among late adolescents in Flanders (Belgium). *Journal of Personality*, 72, 877-908.
- Elmer, D. (1993). *Cross-cultural conflict*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Elmer, D. (2006). *Cross-cultural servanthood: Serving the world in Christlike humility*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Ellis, D. P. (2010). *The essential guide to effect sizes: Statistical power, meta-analysis, and interpretation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Encyclopedia Britannica. *Postmodernism*. Retrieved March 24, 2016, from www.britannica.com/topic/postmodernism-philosophy

- Eryilmaz, A. (2015). Investigation of the relations between religious activities and subjective well-being of high school students. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 15(2), 433-444. doi: 10.12738/estp.2015.2.2327.
- Estep, J., White, R., & Estep, K. (2012). *Mapping out curriculum in your church: Cartography for Christian pilgrims*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing.
- Explorable.com. (2009). *Convenience sampling*. Retrieved June 27, 2014, from Explorable.com: <https://explorable.com/convenience-sampling>
- Ezenweke, E. O. (2013). Pentecostalism and the culture of fear on contemporary African communities: A paradigm shift. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 3(5), 99-103.
- Falaye, A. T. (2015). The history and practices of Deeper Life Bible Church (Nigeria). *Journal of Philosophy, Culture and Religion*, 8, 22-26.
- Farrell, F. (2001). Postmodernism and educational marketing. *Educational Management & Administration*, 29(2), 169–179.
- Fee, G. D. (2002). *New Testament exegesis* (3rd ed.). Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Fife, J., Adegoke, A., McCoy, J., & Brewer, T. (2011). Religious commitment, social support and life satisfaction among college students. *College Student Journal*, 45(2), 393-400.
- Finder, A. (2007, May 2). Matters of faith find a new prominence on campus. *The New York Times*. Retrieved March 23, 2016, from www.nytimes.com/2007/05/02/education/02spirituality.html?_r=0
- Fortunak, L. (2008). Dual allegiance. Retrieved July 3, 2014, from <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2008/august/8.16.html?paging=off>
- Fox, A. M., Jackson, S. S., Hansen, N. B., Gasa, N., Crewe, M., & Sikkema, K. J. (2007). In their own voices: A quantitative study of women's risk for intimate partner violence and HIV in South Africa. *Violence Against Women*, 13(6), 583-602. doi: 10.1177/1077801207299209.
- Freeman, J. A., Schumacher, A. J., & Coffey, F. S. (2015). Social desirability and partner agreement of men's reporting of intimate partner violence in substance abuse treatment settings. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 30(4), 565-579.
- Gebelt, J. L., Thompson, S. K., & Miele, K. A. (2009). Identity style and spirituality in a college context. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 9, 219-232, doi: 10.1080/15283480903344539.

- Gehrz, C. (2011). Recovering a pietist understanding of Christian education: Carl H. Lundquist and Karl A. Olsson. *Christian Scholar's Review*, 40(2), 139-154.
- Geiger, E., Kelley, M., & Nation, P. (2012). *Transformational discipleship: How people really grow*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing.
- Grajales, T. (2013). *Dissertation development handbook: How to write a dissertation proposal in education and psychology*. Berrien Springs, MI: Centro Hispano para el Diálogo Teológico.
- Gregory, E., Volk, D., & Long, S. (2013). Guest editors' introduction: Syncretism and syncretic literacies. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 13(3), 309-321.
- Grenz, J. S. (1996). *A primer of postmodernism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing.
- Griffioen, S. (2002). Christian higher education in Europe: A Catholic view. *Christian Higher Education*, 1(23), 281-301. doi: 10.1080/15363750290040014.
- Gruber, T., Lowrie, A., Brodowsky, G. H., Reppel, A. E., Voss, R., & Chowdhury, I. N. (2012). Investigating the influence of professor characteristics on student satisfaction and dissatisfaction: A comparative study. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 34(2) 165-178. doi: 10.1177/0273475312450385.
- Guelich, R. A. (1982). The beginning of the gospel: Mark 1:1-15. *Biblical Research*, 2, 5-15.
- Han, H., Kuchinke, K. P., & Boulay, D. A. (2009). Postmodernism and HRD theory: Current status and prospects. *Human Resource Development Review*, 8(1), 54-67. doi: 10.1177/1534484308330021.
- Harrington, W. J. (1996). *Mark: Realistic theologian. The Jesus of Mark*. Dublin: Columbia.
- Havener, I. (1988). Taking up one's cross: Mark's gospel of discipleship. *Bible Today*, 26, 41-47.
- He, J., Bartram, D., Inceoglu, I., & van de Vijver, R. J. F. (2014). Response style and personality traits: A multilevel analysis. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology*, 45(7), 1028-1045. doi: 10.1177/0022022114534773.

- Heideman, E. S. (1997). Syncretism, contextualization, orthodoxy, and heresy. *Missiology: An International Review*, 25, 37. doi: 10.1177/009182969702500104.
- Henderson, S. J. (2003). *The impact of student religion and college affiliation on student religiosity* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR. Retrieved March 22, 2016 from <http://www.christianconsulting.net/statistics/Dissertation.pdf>
- Henderson, S. W. (2006). *Christology and discipleship in the gospel of Mark*. Cambridge: Cambridge, UK University Press.
- Henderson, S. W. (2012). Discipleship after the resurrection: Scribal hermeneutics in the longer ending of Mark. *The Journal of Theological Studies*, NS, 63, pt 1
- Hengehold, L. (2013). Interrupting the economy of miracles: African sovereignty in/and empire. *Philosophy and social criticism*, 39, 99. doi: 10.1177/0191453712467314.
- Hill, P. L., Allemand, M., & Burrow, A. L. (2010). Identity development and forgivingness: Tests of basic relations and mediational pathways. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 49(5), 497-501. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2020.05.011.
- Hinkle, B. N. (2005). Discipleship in the age of whatever: Becoming disciples of Christ while living in a postmodern world (Doctoral dissertation). Anderson University, IN. Retrieved from *ProQuest Digital Dissertation* (UMI 3164864).
- Hittenberger, J. (2004). Globalization, "Marketization," and the mission of the Pentecostal higher education in Africa. *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, 26(2), 182-215.
- Holtgraves, T. (2004). Testing models of socially desirable responding. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30(2), 61-172. doi: 10.1177/0146167203259930.
- Hooker, M. D. (1983). *The message of Mark*. London, UK: Epworth.
- Hooper, D., Coughlan, J., & Mullen, R. M. (2008). Structural equation modeling: Guidelines for determining model fit. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 6(1), 53-60. Retrieved November 23, 2015 from www.ejbrm.com
- Houriham, K. (1984). Residential satisfaction, neighbourhood attributes, and personal characteristics: An exploratory path analysis in Cork, Ireland. *Environment and Planning A*, 16, 425-436.

- Huang, C. (2006). *Postmodernism and historiography: A critical study*. Taipei: San-min Publishing.
- Hull, B. (2006). *The complete book of discipleship: On being and making followers of Christ*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.
- Hur, W. & Kang, S. (2012). Interaction effects of the three commitment components on customer loyalty behaviors. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 40(9), 1537-1542.
- Hurd, W. R. (1998). Postmodernism. Retrieved March 24, 2016, from msc.gutenberg.edu/2001/02/postmodernism/
- Hurtado, L.W. (1996). Following Jesus in the gospel of Mark – and beyond. In R.N. Longenecker (Ed.), *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing.
- Iglewicz, B. & Sharmila Banerjee, S. (2001, August 5-9). A simple univariate outlier identification procedure. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the American Statistical Association*. Retrieved July 20, 2015 from <http://www.amstat.org/sections/srms/proceedings/y2001/proceed/00523.pdf>
- Imasogie, O. (1983). *Guideline for Christian theology in Africa*. Achimota, Ghana: African Christian Press.
- Jackson, D. L., Gillaspay, Jr. J. A., & Purc-Stephenson, R. (2009). Reporting practices in confirmatory factor analysis: An overview and some recommendations. *Psychological Methods*, 14(1), 6-23. doi: 10.1037/a0014694.
- Jackson, J. F. (1982). *Education for discipleship: An experiential adult curriculum based on the gospel of Mark* (Doctoral dissertation). San Francisco Theological Seminary. San Francisco, CA.
- Jacobsen, D., & Jacobsen, R. H. (2004). *Scholarship & Christian faith: Enlarging the conversation*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Jaeger, R. M. (1984). *Sampling in education and social sciences*. New York: Longman.
- Johnson, P. T., & Fendrich, M. (n.d.). A validity of Crowne-Marlowe social desirability scale. Retrieved May 13, 2014, from www.srl.uic.edu/publist/Conference/crownemarlowe.pdf
- Johnston, G. (2001). *Preaching to a postmodern world*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press.

- Just, F. (n.d.). The gospel according to Mark: Literary features & thematic emphases. Retrieved July 29, 2012, from <http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Mark-Literary.htm>
- Kalilombe, P. A. (1994). Spirituality in the African perspective. In Gibellini, R. (Ed.), *Paths of African Theology*. Maryknoll, New York, NY: Orbis Books.
- Kanitz, L. (2005). Improving Christian worldview pedagogy: Going beyond mere Christianity. *Christian Higher Education*, 4, 99-108. doi:10.1080/15363750590923101.
- Kasomo, D. (2012). An assessment of religious syncretism. A case study in Africa. *International Journal of Applied Sociology*, 2(3), 10-15. doi: 10.5923/j.ijas.20120203.01.
- Kasunic, M. (2005). Designing an effective survey. Retrieved March 26, 2016, from www.sei.cmu.edu/reports/05hb004.pdf
- Kato, B. H. (1975). *Theological pitfalls in Africa*. Kisumu, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House.
- Kazanjian, V. (2005). Religion, spirituality, and intellectual development. *Journal of Cognitive Affective Learning*, 1, 1-7
- Kelley, K., Maxwell, S. E., & Rausch, J. R. (2003). Obtaining power or obtaining accuracy precision: Delineating methods of sample-size planning. *Evaluation & the Health Professions*, 26(3), 258-287. doi: 10.1177/0163278703255242.
- Kim, S., Miles-Mason, E., Kim, Y. C., & Esquivel, B. G. (2013). Religiosity/spirituality and life satisfaction in Korean American adolescents. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, 5(1), 33-40.
- Kirchhevel, G. D. (1994). He that cometh in Mark 1:7 and Matt 24:30. *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, 105-111.
- Kline, B. R. (2011). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Knight, R. G. (1994). William Miller and the rise of Adventism. Retrieved March 22, 2016 from https://www.andrews.edu/library/car/cardigital/Periodicals/Journal_of_Adventist_Education/1994/jae199457011004.pdf
- Koertner, U. H. J. (2013). Syncretism and the construction of a personal spirituality. *Theology Today*, 70(3) 295-310. doi: 10.1177/0040573613495228.

- Kowalski, W. (2000). The call to discipleship: A challenge to personal commitment. *African Ecclesiastical Review*, 42, 120-132.
- Kraus, N. C. (2012, Fall). From radical to missional discipleship. *Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology*, 13(2), 6-15.
- Krejcie, R. V. & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30, 607-670.
- Kullberg, K. M. (Ed.). (2007). *Finding God at Harvard: Spiritual journeys of thinking Christian*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press.
- Kwan, S. S. (2005). From indigenization to contextualization: A change in discursive practice rather than a shift in paradigm. *Studies in World Christianity*, 11(2), 236-250. Retrieved September 4, 2015 from <http://www.eupublishing.com/doi/pdfplus/10.3366/swc.2005.11.2.236>
- LaVerdiere. (1999). *The beginning of the gospel. Introducing the gospel according to Mark (Vol.1), Mark 1—8:21*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.
- Leedy, R. (2005). Greek New Testament diagrams: Mark 1: 1-9, 10-14. *BibleWorks, LLC. n.p.: n.p.* <BibleWorks, v.8.>.
- Leonardi, A. & Gialamas, V. (2009). Religiosity and psychological well-being. *International Journal of Psychology*, 44(4), 241-248.
- Ley, D. (2003). Forgetting postmodernism? Recuperating a social history of local knowledge. *The Progress in Human Geography Lecture*, 27(5), 537–560.
- Lim, C., & Putnam, D. R. (2010). Religion, social networks, and life satisfaction. *American Sociological Review*, 75(6), 914–933. doi: 10.1177/0003122410386686.
- Lindegger, G., Quayle, M., & Ndlovu, M. (2007). Local knowledge and experiences of vaccination: Implications for HIV-preventive vaccine trials in South Africa. *Health Education & Behavior*, 34(1), 108-123. doi: 10.1177/1090198105277852.
- Lindholm, J. A., Millora, M. L., Schwartz, L. M., & Spinoza, H. S. (2011). *A guidebook of promising practices: Facilitating college students' spiritual development*. Regents of the University of California. Retrieved December 16, 2015, from http://spirituality.ucla.edu/docs/promising-practices/Promising_Practices_web.pdf
- Lynch, C. (2000). Dogma, praxis, and religious perspectives on multiculturalism. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 29(3), 741-759.

- Ma, Y. S. (2003). The Christian college experience and the development of spirituality among students. *Christian Higher Education*, 2, 321-339.
- Maina, W. M. (2009). *Historical and social dimensions in African Christian theology: A contemporary approach*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.
- Marcus, J. (2000). *Mark 1-8*. New York, NY: Doubleday.
- Marques, S. C., Lopez, S. J., & Mitchell, J. (2013). The role of hope, spirituality and religious practice in adolescents' life satisfaction: Longitudinal findings. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 14, 251-261. doi: 10.1007/s10902-012-9329-3.
- Marsden, M. G. (1994). *The soul of the American university: From Protestant establishment to established nonbelief*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mashau, T. D. & Frederiks, M. T. (2008). Coming of age in African theology: The quest for authentic theology in African soil. *Exchange*, 37, 109-123.
- Matera, F. J. (1995). The prologue as the interpretive key to Mark's gospel. In W. R. Telford (ed.), *The Interpretation of Mark*, 289-306. Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark.
- Mattes, M. (2012). Discipleship in Lutheran perspective. *Lutheran Quarterly*, 26, 142-163.
- Maxwell, S. E., Kelley, K., & Rausch, J. R. (2008). Sample size planning for statistical power and accuracy in parameter estimation. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 59, 537-563.
- Mayhew, M. J., Alyssa N., & Bryant, A. N. (2013). Achievement or arrest? The influence of the collegiate religious and spiritual climate on students' worldview commitment. *Research in Higher Education*, 54, 63-84. doi: 10.1007/s11162-012-9262-7.
- Mayrl, D., & Freeden Oeur, F. (2009). Religion and higher education: Current knowledge and directions for future research. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 48(2), 260-275.
- Mbiti, S. J. (1970). *African religions and philosophies*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.
- Mbiti S. J., Olupona, K. J., & Nyang, S. S. (1993). *Religious plurality in Africa: Essays in honour of John S. Mbiti*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co.

- Mbiti, S. J. (2001). Report on "The contributions of Africa to the religious heritage of The world." Divine Love Retreat and Conference Centre, Enugu, Nigeria. Retrieved July 8, 2014 from <http://wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/interreligious/cd37-14.html>
- McBride, D. (1996). *The gospel of Mark: A reflective commentary*. Dublin: Dominican Publications.
- McCallum, C. R., Browne, W. M., & Sugawara, M. H. (1996). Power analysis and determination of sample size for covariance structure modeling. *Psychological Methods*, 1(2), 130-149.
- McCollough, M. A., & Gremler, D. D. (1999). Guaranteeing student satisfaction: An exercise in treating students as customers. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 21(2), 118-130.
- Melin, J. L. (2015). *Being or becoming: An exploration of student spirituality in the second year of college* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Minnesota, MN Retrieved March 26, 2016 from https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/171449/Melin_umn_0130E_15811.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
- Mertler, C. A., & Vannatta, R. A. (2005). *Advanced multivariate statistical methods: Practical applications and interpretations*. Los Angeles, CA: Pyrczak.
- Michaela, B. (2014). Students' satisfaction as a competitive advantage in the financial product market: A comparative study. *Journal of Competitiveness*, 6(1), 104-123. doi: 10.7441/joc.2014.01.07.
- Miller, L. D., & Guthrie, S. (1984). *Disciplining nations: The power of truth to transform cultures*. Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing.
- Min, A. K. (2005). From difference to the solidarity of others: Sublating postmodernism. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 31(7), 823-849. doi: 10.1177/0191453705057305.
- Mishra, P. D., & Min, J. (2010). Analyzing the relationship between dependent and independent variables in marketing: a comparison of multiple regression with path analysis. *Innovative Marketing*, 6(3), 113-120.
- Mooney, M. (2010). Religion, college grades, and satisfaction among students at elite colleges and universities. *Sociology of Religion*, 71(2), 197-215. doi: 10.1093/socrel/srq035.
- Muzorewa, G. H. (1985). *Origins and development of Africa theology*. Maryknoll, New York, NY: Orbis Books.

- Nasser F., & Wisenbaker, J. (2003). A Monte Carlo study investigating the impact of item parceling on measures of Fit in confirmatory factor analysis. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 63(5), 729-757.
doi: 10.1177/0013164403258228.
- Nath, S. (2014). The concept of reality from postmodern perspectives. *Journal of Business Management and Social Science Research*, 3(5), 26-30.
- Newman, D. A. (2014). Missing data: Five practical guidelines. *Organizational Research Methods*, 17(4), 372-411.
- Nketia, H. J. K. (1974). *The Music of Africa*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Co.
- Ntarangwui, M. (Ed.). (2011). *Jesus and Ubuntu: Exploring the impact of Christianity in Africa*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Nyamiti, C. (1973). *The scope of African theology*. Kampala, Uganda: Gaba Publications.
- Ojo, M. A. (1988). The contextual significance of the charismatic movements in independent Nigeria. *Africa*, 58(2), 175-193.
- Olupona, J. & Nyang, S. S. (1993). *Essays in honour of John S. Mbiti*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Omenyo, N. C. (2011). Agenda for a discussion of African initiatives in Christianity: The West African/Ghanaian case. *Missiology: An International Review*, 34(3), 374-390.
- Ong, A. S. J., & Ward, C. (2005). The construction and validation of a social support measure for sojourners: The index of sojourner social support (ISSS) scale. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology*, 36(6), 637-661.
doi: 10.1177/0022022105280508.
- Ongong'a, J. J., & Akaranga, S. I. (2013). The phenomenon of religious switching among university students: The case of Nairobi and Kenyatta Universities, Kenya. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 1(5), 1-18.
- Orcher, L. T. (2007). *Conducting a survey: Techniques for a term project*. Glendale, CA: Pyrczak.
- Palmer, D. G. (1998). *The Markan Matrix: A Literary-structural analysis of the gospel of Mark* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Glasgow, UK.
Retrieved April 20, 2014, from <http://theses.gla.ac.uk/1969/1/1998palmerphd.pdf>

- Palmer, T. (2008). Jesus Christ: Our ancestor? *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*, 21(1), 65-75.
- Parachuvattil, J. (2002). "He Saw." The Significance of Jesus' Seeing Denoted by the Verb εἶδεν in the Gospel of Mark. *Tesi Gregoriana, Serie Teologia*, 84
- Paredes-Collins, K., & Collins, S. C. (2011) The intersection of race and spirituality: Underrepresented students' spiritual development at predominantly white evangelical colleges. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 20(1), 73-100. doi: 10.1080/10656219.2011.557586.
- Parker, I. (1998). Against postmodernism: Psychology in cultural context. *Theory & Psychology*, 8(5), 601-627.
- Parker, J. R. (2011). *Influences of openness and identity style on orientations of religious beliefs: A proposed integrative model* (Doctoral dissertation). Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI. Retrieved March 23, 2016, from commons.emich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1337&context=theses
- Parkman, L., & Karlton, S. (1986). Black consciousness and black theology. In John S. Pobee, J. S. & Carl F. Hallencreutz (Eds.), *Variations in Christian Theology in Africa*. Nairobi, Kenya: Uzim Press.
- Parratt, J. (1995). *Reinventing Christianity: African theology today*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Pascarella, T. E., & Terenzini, T. P. (2005). *How college affects students* (vol.2). San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Pearson, W. R. (2010). *Statistical persuasion: How to collect, analyse, and present data accurately, honestly, and persuasively*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Petratis, S. P., Dunham, E. A., & Niewiarowski, H. P. (1996). Inferring multiple causality: The limitations of path analysis. *Functional Ecology*, 10, 421-431.
- Petrenko, K. I., & Glanzer, P. L. (2005). The recent emergence of private Christian colleges and universities in Russia: Historical reasons and contemporary developments. *Christian Higher Education*, 4, 81-97. doi: 10.1080/153637590898970.
- Pigott, D. T. (2001). A review of methods for missing data. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 7(4), 353-383.

- Pinson, P. W. (2012). A qualitative collective case-study of discipleship ministry to students of the millennial generation in the southern Baptist mega-churches in South Carolina (Doctoral dissertation). Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Wake Forest, NC. Retrieved from *ProQuest Digital Dissertation* (UMI 3528126).
- Pitcher, D. M. (1990). *Data analysis for the helping professions: A practical guide*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Pobee, J. S. (1979). *Toward an African theology*. Nashville, TN: Parthenon Press.
- Pratt, D. (2009). Christian discipleship and interfaith engagement. *Pacifica*, 22, 317-333.
- Reed, R., & Mtukwa, G. (n.d.). Christ our ancestor: An African vision of Christology and its moral and social implications and the dangers of contextualization. Retrieved March 26, 2016, from http://wesley.nnu.edu/fileadmin/imported_site/wts/44_annual_meeting/papers/Christ_Our_Ancestor_by_Reed_and_Mtukwa.pdf
- Reio, Jr., G. T., Portes, P. R., & Nixon, B. C. (2014). Differences in identity style and process: Can less be more? *New Horizons in Adult education & Human Resource Development*, 26(4), 26-40.
- Reynolds, M. W. & Gerbasi, C. K. (1982). Development of reliable & valid short forms of the MCSDS. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 38, 119-125.
- Richard, L. H. (2014). Religious syncretism as a syncretistic concept: The inadequacy of the “World Religion” paradigm in cross-cultural encounter. *International Journal of Frontier Missiology*, 31(4), 209-215.
- Robinson, M. A., & Pierpont, G. W. (Eds.). (2005). The New Testament in the original Greek: Byzantine textform (BYZ). Southborough, MA: Chilton. *BibleWorks*, v. 9.
- Rodin, R. S. (2010). *The steward leader: Transforming people, organizations and communities*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
- Rose, D., & Sullivan, O. (1996). *Introducing data analysis for social scientists* (2nd ed.). Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Roth, L. P., Switzer III, S. F., Switzer, M. D. (1999). Missing data in multiple item scales: A Monte Carlo analysis of missing data techniques. *Organizational Research Methods*, 2(3), 211-232.
- Ryder, A. S. C. J. (1999). *Following Christ: Models of discipleship in the New Testament*. Franklin, WI: Sheed & Ward.

- Samuel, S. (2002). The beginning of Mark: A colonial/postcolonial conundrum. *Biblical Interpretation*, 10, 405-419.
- Sankey, P. J. (1994). Promise and fulfillment: Reader-response to Mark 1:1-15. *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 58, 3-18.
- Santos, N. F. (1994). The paradox of authority and servanthood in the gospel of Mark. *Biblioteca Sacra*, 154, 452-460.
- Sârbescu, P., Rusu, S., & Costea, I. (2012). The Marlowe-Crowne social desirability scale in Romania. *Romania Journal of Experimental Applied Psychology*, 3(2), 37-44.
- Scarone, D. (2014). Understanding and practice of discipleship among the members of the Michigan conference of Seventh-day Adventists in light of a biblical model (Doctoral dissertation). Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI. Retrieved from *ProQuest Digital Dissertation* (UMI 3668679).
- Scheffer, J. (2002). Dealing with missing data. *Research Letters in the Information and Mathematical Sciences*, 3, 153-160. Retrieved July 19, 2015 from https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/fms/Colleges/College%20of%20Sciences/IIMS/RLIMS/Volume03/Dealing_with_Missing_Data.pdf
- Schlomer, L. G., Bauman, S., & Card, A. N. (2010). Best practices for missing data management in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 57(1), 1-10. doi: 10.1037/a0018082. Retrieved July 19, 2015 from <http://myweb.brooklyn.liu.edu/cortiz/PDF%20Files/Best%20practices%20for%20missing%20data%20management.pdf>
- Schmidt, B. E. (2006). The creation of Afro-Caribbean religions and their incorporation of Christian elements: A critique against syncretism. *Transformation*, 23(4), 236-243. doi: 10.1177/026537880602300407
- Schultheis, M. (2005). Heads in the clouds and feet in the mud: The role of private universities in the integration of Christian mission and transformational development. *Transformation*, 22(2), 97-105.
- Schwartz, J. S., Luyckx, K., & Vignoles, V. L. (eds.) (2011). *Handbook of identity theory and research* (vol. 1). New York: Springer Science & Business Media.
- Semporé, S. (2003). Barthélemy Adoukonou: A pioneer of inculturation in West Africa. In Bénédet Bujo, B., & Muya, J. (Eds.), *The African Theology: The Contribution of the Pioneers*. Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa.

- Seventh-day Adventist Church. (2001). Statement of Seventh-day Adventist educational philosophy. Retrieved July 15, 2014, from www.education.gc.adventist.org/publications.html
- Shadrach, S. (2003). *The fuel and the flame: Ten keys to ignite your campus for Jesus Christ*. Atlanta, GA: Authentic Publishing.
- Sire, W. J. (2007). *The universe next door* (5th ed.). Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
- Small, L. J., & Bowman, A. N. (2011). Religious commitment, skepticism, and struggle among U.S. college students: The impact of majority/minority religious affiliation and institutional type. *Journal of Scientific Study of Religion*, 50(1), 154-174.
- Soenens, B., Berzonsky, D. M., Dunkel, C. S., Papini, D. R., & Vansteenkiste, M. (2011). Are all identity commitments created equally? The importance of motives for commitment for late adolescents' personal adjustment. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 35(4) 358–369.
- Song, M. (2006). Contextualization and discipleship: Closing the gap between theory and practice. *Evangelical Review Theology*, 30(3), 249-263.
- Streiner, L. D. (2005). Finding our way: An introduction to path analysis. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 50(2), 115-122.
- Strelan, R. (1991). *Crossing the boundaries: A commentary on Mark*. Adelaide, Southern Australia: Lutheran.
- Suh, J. S. (1991). Discipleship and community. Mark's gospel in sociological perspective. *Nexus Monograph Series*, 1. Claremont, CA: Center for Asian-American Ministries, School of Theology at Claremont.
- SurveyMonkey Help Center. (n.d.). Likert Scale. Retrieved June 26, 2014, from http://help.surveymonkey.com/articles/en_US/kb/
- Swartvagher, E. M. (2014). *Responsible discipleship: The case of a new rite of confirmation* (Doctoral dissertation). S. T. L. Pontifical University of Saint Anselm, Romek. Retrieved from *ProQuest Digital Dissertation* (UMI 3630498).
- Sweetland, D. M. (1987). *Our journey with Jesus. Discipleship according to Mark*. *Good News Studies*. Wilmington, DE: Glazier.
- Takyi, E. H. (2010). *Presenting the Adventist message in a winsome way to Pentecostal students at Valley View University* (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

- Tatman, W. A., & Kraemer, S. (2014). Psychometric properties of the social desirability scale-17 with individuals on probation and parole in the United States. *International Journal of Criminal Justice*, 9(1), 122-130.
- Telford, W. R. (1999). *The theology of the gospel of Mark. New Testament theology*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Thomas, S. J. (1999). *Designing surveys that work*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Tiénou, T. (1997). Authentic Africa Christianity. In Parratt, J. (Ed.), *A Reader in African Christian Theology*. London, UK: SPCK.
- Ukah, A. (2007). African Christianities: Features, Promises and Problems. Retrieved November 29, 2015, from <http://www.ifeas.uni-mainz.de/Dateien/AP79.pdf>
- Valley View University Academic Bulletin [2010].
- Valley View University Student Handbook [2012].
- van de Mortel, F. T. (2008). Faking it: social desirability response bias in self-report research. *Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 25(4), 40-48.
- van der Walt, B. J. (2002). The challenges of Christian higher education on the African continent in the twenty-first century. *Christian Higher Education*, 1(23), 195–227. doi: 10.1080/15363750290039962.
- Van Gelder, C. (2002). Postmodernism and evangelicals: A unique missiological challenge at the beginning of the twenty-first century. *Missiology*, 30, 491-504. doi: 10.1177/009182960203000404.
- van Iersel, B.M., & Bas M. F. (1998). *Mark: A reader-response commentary*. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Verardi, S. Dahourou, D., Ah-Kion, J., Bhowon, U., Tseung, N. C., . . . , & Rossier, J. (2010). Psychometric properties of the Marlowe-Crowne social desirability scale in eight African countries and Switzerland. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology*, 41(1) 19-34. doi: 10.1177/0022022109348918.
- Vikner, D. W. (2003). Challenges to Christian higher education. *Christian Higher Education in Asia*, 2(1), 1-13. doi: 10.1080/153637503390175609.
- Vischers, J., Jaspaert, E., & Vervaeke, G. (2015). Social desirability in intimate partner violence and relationship satisfaction reports: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 1-20, doi: 10.1177/0886260515588922.

- Wallace, D. B. (2000). *The basics of New Testament syntax: An intermediate Greek grammar*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Wan-Tatah, V. (1989). *Emancipation in African theology: An inquiry on the relevance of Latin American liberation theology to Africa*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Wardley, L. J., Bélanger, C. H., & Leonard, V. M. (2013). Institutional commitment of traditional and non-traditional-aged students: a potential brand measurement? *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 23(1), 90–112. doi: 10.1080/0841241.2013.810691.
- Warner, R. M. (2008). *Applied statistics: From bivariate through multivariate techniques*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Waterman, A. S. (1999). Issues of identity formation revisited: United States and The Netherlands. *Developmental Review*, 19, 462–479.
- Watson, P. J. (2014). Transition beyond postmodernism: Pluralistic culture, incommensurable rationalities, and future objectivity. *Review and Expositor*, 111(1), 33–40.
- West, G. (2002). Negotiating with the white man's book: Early foundations for liberation hermeneutics in southern Africa. In Katongole, E. (Ed.) 2002, *African Theology Today*. Scranton, PA: The University of Scranton Press.
- White, E. G. (1915). Gospel workers. Retrieved July 9, 2014, from www.WhiteEstate.org
- White, E. G. (1930). Messages to young people. Retrieved July 9, 2014, from www.WhiteEstate.org
- White, G. E. (1952). Education. Oshawa, Ontario: Pacific Press Publishing Association.
- White, E. G. (1952). *Welfare ministry*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association.
- White, J. M., & Jones, R. M. (1996). Identity styles of male inmates. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 23, 490-504. doi: 10.1177/0093854896023003005.
- Wood, L. J. & Hilton, A. A. (2012). Spirituality and academic success: Perceptions of African American males in the community college. *Religion & Education*, 39, 28–47, 2012. doi: 10.1080/15507394.2012.648576.

- Woodrow, J. (2005). Institutional mission: The soul of Christian higher education. *Christian Higher Education*, 5, 313-327. doi: 10.1080/15363750600860778.
- Woosley, S. A., & Miller, A. L. (2009). Integration and institutional commitment as predictors of college student transition: Are this week indicators significant? *College Student Journal*, 43(4). Retrieved July 22, 2014, from <http://www.freepatentsonline.com/article/College-Student-Journal/217511787.html>
- World Council of Churches. (2014). Evangelism today: New ways for authentic discipleship. *International Review of Mission*, 103(1), 129-134.
- Wright, E. R. B., Zozula, C., & Wilcox, B. W. (2012). Bad new about the good news: The construction of the Christian-failure narrative. *Journal of Religion and Society*, 14, 1-18.
- Wubs, A. G., Aarø, L. E., Flisher, A. J., Bastien, S., Onya, H. E., Kaaya, S., and Matthews, C. (2009). Dating violence among school students in Tanzania and South Africa: Prevalence and socio-demographic variations. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 37(2), 75-86.
- Young III, J. U. (1993). *African theology: A critical analysis and annotated bibliography*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

VITA

VITA

NAME: Juvénal Balisasa
DATE OF BIRTH: January 30, 1968
PLACE OF BIRTH: Butaro, Rwanda
EDUCATION: 2016 PhD Religious Education
Andrews University
1999 Master in Religion
Andrews University
1994 Ingénieur d'Etat en Agronomie
Université Mouloud Mammeri Tizi-Ouzou

ORDINATION TO
PASTORAL MINISTRY: 2002

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

2015—DATE	Education Director West-Central Africa Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
2015—DATE	Visiting Lecturer, Adventist University of Africa, Kenya
2011—2015	Chaplain, Valley View University, Ghana
2004—2011	Associate Chaplain, Valley View University
2004—DATE	Lecturer, School of Theology and Missions Valley View University
2001—2004	Chaplain and Integrated Science Teacher, Bekwai SDA Senior High School, Ghana Associate District Pastor, Bekwai District, Ghana Associate Conference Project Director, South-central Ghana Conference, Ghana

1998—2001	Mathematics and Integrated Science Teacher, Senior Housemaster, Assistant Chaplain, Adventist Secondary Technical School, Techiman, Ghana
1997—1998	Integrated Science Teacher, Sansama SDA Preparatory School, Ghana

SOME PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

2006	Journal Article—Toward Reconciliation between 1 Peter 3:1 and the Current Quest for Gender Equality. <i>VVU Integrator</i>
2008	GABES Conference Paper—Vashti’s Deposition: A Critical Reflection on Woman’s Dignity in the Bible and African Society
2010	Book—Witnessing for Christ: A Key to Personal Spiritual Growth
2011	Journal Article—Elements of Continental Shift in Genesis 1:9, 10 and 7: 11. <i>VVUJT</i> .
2011	ICHEWA Conference Paper—Impact of Evolutionary Thought on Morality in Education: A Reflection on Christian Higher Education in West Africa
2012	Journal Article—Mysticism and the Christian Experience. <i>Psychology Research</i>
2012	Article—Transphrastic Analysis of Genesis 1 & 3: Theological Implications for 21 st Century Ecological Models. <i>CSP 2012 ECOTHEE Book</i> (pp. 142-148).
2012	BMTE Annual Meeting Paper—Ordination of Women as Deaconesses: Pastors’ Perceptions in West-Central Africa Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
2014	Journal Article—Interaction between campus practices and students’ faith preferences: Self-reported perceptions of Valley View University. <i>AAMM</i> , 10, 109-124
2014	Book—Sugardaddism: The Mystery of Bitter Sugar Book—Change Your World
2015	Book—Whom Shall Marry? Quick Tips for Unmistaken Love