

Integrating African Spiritual Formation Values with Christian Values in the Religious
Formation of African Men and Women in Nairobi - Kenya

Petronilla Lumati Muteshi, SSND

In partial fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree of
Masters of Arts
Maryknoll Institute of African Studies
of Saint Mary's University
Nairobi and Winona, Minnesota

May 2015

MARYKNOLL INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES

OF SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY
NAIROBI AND WINONA, MN

As members of the Mary knoll Institute of African Studies of Saint Mary's University,
MN faculty, we have evaluated the COLLOQUIUM PRESENTATION:

“Integrating African Spiritual Formation Values with Christian Values in the Religious
Formation of African Men and Women in Nairobi - Kenya”

by

Petronilla Lumati Muteshi, SSND

and recommend that the degree of Master of African Studies be conferred upon the
candidate.

(Name of Thesis Advisor)

(Name of Thesis Reader)

(Name of Program Director)

Date

MARYKNOLL INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES OF SAINT MARY'S
UNIVERSITY NAIROBI AND WINONA, MN

As members of the Maryknoll Institute of African Studies of Saint Mary's University,
MN faculty, we have evaluated the MASTER OF AFRICAN STUDIES THESIS:

“Integrating African Spiritual Formation Values with Christian Values in the Religious
Formation of African Men and Women in Nairobi - Kenya”

by

Petronilla Lumati Muteshi, SSND

and recommend that the degree of Master of African Studies be conferred upon the
candidate.

(Name of Thesis Advisor)

(Name of Thesis Reader)

(Name of Program Director)

Date

Dedication

This piece of academic work is dedicated to my beloved deceased parents who are now recognized as living-dead; Joseph Lumati Muteshi and Juliana Kunyanyi Lumati through whom God loved me into life. To my mother especially; who inculcated in me the African values that have helped shape and mold my on-going formation as an African Woman Religious.

Finally, I dedicate this work to all Religious Men and Women, especially those living and ministering in Africa, that they may appreciate, articulate and integrate African spiritual formation values in their on-going formation so as to find meaning in their own religious life.

Acknowledgement

I express my very profound gratitude to Our Creator God, Source of all being who has been faithful to me throughout this academic endeavor up to the successful completion of this thesis.

I also owe my special thanks to my Provincial Leader Sr. Mary Kerber, (Province of Africa) from whose invitation and encouragement I was inspired to pursue these studies and to the entire Provincial Council for their encouragement and for subsidizing my financial expenses. I thank the entire Faculty of Maryknoll Institute of African Studies-Nairobi, Prof. Micheal Kirwen and the entire staff for their support whenever I was almost giving up. I owe my deepest appreciation to my Supervisor Prof. Mary Getui, for her academic advice, patience and encouragement that motivated me to work toward completing my studies. To my reader Prof. Rev. Laurent Magesa, I thank you for your technical advice. My deep gratitude to the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers for substantially financing my studies.

My whole endeavor would not have been possible without the support and presence of my able Field Assistant Mr. Johnstone Shisanya. To all my SSND Sisters in Nairobi community for providing accommodation and my community, Kisumu Formation House, the Sisters and postulants for their encouragement and understanding spirit whenever I had to be away from the community to attend to my studies. And finally to Sr. Masicha Carolyne, SSND, who, as a Maryknoll Institute of African Studies (MIASMU) student and a companion in Formation ministry provided the handy computer skills and editing of my work. Lastly, I thank each and every one who assisted me in one way or another throughout my long journey to the completion of my studies.

Abstract

The study explores whether there has been any integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values in the religious formation of African men and women in the many religious houses in Nairobi. This comes out of the call from the African Synod of Bishops on inculturation in 1994. The task of exploring this out was done among congregations of men and women; thus the indigenous and the international congregations. The focus was on how much is being done to embrace some of these African spiritual formation values in the formation of these African men and women so as to enable them to find their own identity within the church in the true spirit of inculturation.

The study reveals that the majority of African religious men and women feel uncomfortable to express and fully radiate who they are as African religious. They remain in a state of identity loss, and tend to feel uncomfortable in embracing their core values from African cultures which form part and parcel of who they are. The result of which, as it was found out, is the cause of an identity crisis among African religious men and women.

It was ironical and surprising to learn that the integration of African spiritual formation values has not taken root in religious congregations founded within Africa. One would have expected that these congregations would set the pace in the implementation of the integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values among their members. This shows how the apparent slow integration of African spiritual formation values in formation of African religious men and women cannot be blamed on congregations of foreign origin alone.

The study also found out that there are differing interpretations and expressions of African spiritual formation values by Africans and non-African men and women

religious; for example, whereas the African value of hospitality is given strong emphasis by Africans, the same is still a value but perceived and expressed differently by non-Africans. Even among Africans, the manner in which the older members understand hospitality is different from the younger ones, requiring more dialogue that may foster a common understanding.

In conclusion, the study therefore, points to the need to foster a solid foundation in both initial and on-going formation of African men and women with an integrated and holistic understanding of religious life. This goal can only be achieved through the integration of African spiritual formation values of family built on love, forgiveness and solidarity, spontaneous prayers, self-reliance and hard work, respect for elders and authority, hospitality, other-centeredness and service. Religious men and women in Africa are part of the global church and in order to experience an atmosphere of feeling at home, the call to inculturation cannot be over-emphasized. This call needs to be deepened and nurtured for religious life to take root on the African continent.

Table of Contents

Title page	1
Colloquium Approval Form	2
Master of Arts Approval Form	3
Dedication	4
Acknowledgement	5
Abstract	6
Table of contents	8
List of figures.....	12
List of Tables.....	13
Chapter One.....	14
Introduction	14
1.0 Background of the study.....	14
1.1 Academic Discipline.....	17
1.2 Problem Statement.....	19
1.3 Hypothesis	24
1.4 Research Questions.....	26
1.5 Significance of the study	28
1.6 Assumptions of Study.....	30
1.7 Limitation and scope	32
1.8 Definition of terms.....	33
1.9 Description of the remainder of the thesis.....	34
Chapter Two.....	37
Methodology.....	37
2.0 Introduction	37

2.1 Research Process	37
2.2 Field Assistant	42
2.3 Research Instruments used in Data Collection	44
2.4 Research Methodology	45
2.4.1 Populations	46
2.4.2 Sampling Procedures	48
2.4.3 Criteria for Inclusion	49
2.4.4 Description of the Variables included	54
2.5 Data Analysis.....	55
Chapter Three.....	57
Results	57
3.0 Introduction	57
3.1 Conceptual framework	58
3.2 Findings related to the Thesis Topic.....	60
3.3 Findings related to the Problem Statement.....	64
3.4 Findings related to the Hypothesis	73
3.5 Findings related to the Significance of the Thesis.....	75
3.6 Research Questions.....	77
3.6.1 Research Question One	77
3.6.2 Research Question Two.....	81
3.6.3 Research Question Three.....	84
3.6.4 Research Question Four.....	87
3.6.5 Research Question Five	91
3.6.6 Research Question Six.....	93
3.7 Findings Related to the Assumptions of the Thesis	100

3.7.1 Assumption One	100
3.7.2 Assumption Two.....	103
3.7. Assumption Three.....	106
3.7. Assumption Four	108
3.7.5 Assumption Five.....	112
3.7.6 Assumption Six.....	115
3.8 Findings related to Limitation and Scope.....	118
Chapter Four.....	122
Literature review.....	121
4.0 Introduction	121
4.1 Thesis Topic	121
4.2 Problem Statement.....	125
4.3 Hypothesis	127
4.4 Significance of the Thesis.....	128
4.5 Literature related to the Research Questions	132
4.5.1 Research Question One	132
4.5.2 Research Question Two.....	133
4.5.3 Research Question Three.....	136
4.5.4 Research Question Four.....	137
4.5.5 Research Question Five	139
4.5.6 Research Question Six.....	143
4.6 Literature related to Assumptions.....	145
4.6.1 Assumption One	145
4.6.2 Literature related to Assumption Two.....	146
4.6.3 Assumption Three.....	152

4.6.4 Assumption Four	154
4.6.5 Assumption Five.....	156
4.6.6 Assumption Six.....	157
4.7 Literature related to the Limitation and Scope	159
Chapter Five	160
Discussion.....	160
5.0 Introduction	160
5.1 Discussion of Thesis topic.....	162
5.2 Discussion of the Problem Statement.....	164
5.3 Discussion of the Hypothesis	167
5.4 Discussion of the Significance of the Thesis.....	169
5.5 Discussion of Research Questions.....	170
5.6 Discussion on Assumptions.....	193
5.7 Discussion of Limitation and Scope.....	210
5.8 Conclusion.....	211
5.9 Summary.....	212
5.10 Recommendations	213 <u>4</u>
References	218
Bibliography.....	224
Appendix A: Research questions	232
Appendix B: Interview guide.....	238
Appendix C: Respondents interview summary	239
Appendix D: Thesis Proposal Approval.....	244
Appendix E: Research Method Approval	245
Appendix F: Permission to Schedule Colloquium.....	246

List of figures

Figure 1.....	46
Figure 2	48
Figure 3	70
Figure 4	83

List of Tables

Table 1	61
Table 2	62
Table 3	63
Table 4	68
Table 5	71
Table 6	77
Table 7	87
Table 8	88
Table 9	98
Table 10.....	105

Chapter One

Introduction

1.0 Background of the study

The topic “Integrating African Spiritual Formation Values with Christian values in the Religious Formation of African Men and Women in Nairobi, Kenya” was born out of the course, “Toward the Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa” by Joan Burke, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (from here onwards referred to as SND) class of 28/5/09) and also as an author in her book, Burke (2001), Toward the Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa, in which she approaches religious formation from what she calls “the bottom up model” of formation, and also challenges formators in Africa to adopt the same (p. 20). Another inspiration came from the researcher’s own course paper “The contribution of African Values and Practices Toward Building Viable Religious Community Life in Africa”. This was a paper undertaken by the researcher in MIASMU (May-June, 2009). The course paper focused on how to integrate African spiritual formation values into religious community living with an effort to bring more meaning to the religious life of African men and women. The course paper pointed out the need to explore more aspects of contextualizing African spiritual formation values in religious life, a need that emerged with zeal and interest for more exploration.

The researcher, being a religious formator, was challenged to begin to review and reflect on her own lived experiences, something that later created in her an emptiness and a feeling of alienation from her African spiritual formation values. She noted that evangelization of the African continent brought with it the dawning of religious life which has introduced diverse ways of living community life under vows. Religious life, however, poses great challenges that many African men and women joining and living the life feel uneasy and isolated from their cultural values that formed part of who they

are. This challenged her to a point of resolving to carry out a deeper study to find out whether her feelings of insufficient integration of African values particularly those drawn from the African spiritual life was really something being experienced among various religious men and women in Africa.

The main understanding of the researcher is that long before Christianity came to the African continent, Africans were already spiritually rooted with a deep sense of God; a foundation that missionaries would have appreciated and build upon these already grounded African spiritual values among Africans, and allow Christianity to find expression in these spiritual values. This would have made a basis to familiarize African men and women joining religious life with religious values that in essence dovetail with those from their cultural backgrounds. On the contrary, for over a century now, since Christianity was brought to the African continent, religious life has seemingly remained alien to many African men and women who have embraced it. The majority of religious men and women in Africa feel uncomfortable to express and fully radiate who they are as African religious. They remain in a state of identity loss, and tend to feel uncomfortable with their core values from African cultures which form part and parcel of who they are. The result of this, as the researcher sees, can be a cause of an identity crisis unless it is well addressed.

The researcher attributes this state of confusion of African religious men and women as that which has arisen from the missionary negative attitude toward African values. The African spiritual formation values are viewed as outdated, primitive and backward and therefore deserving exclusion from formation programs. The seemingly superior impact of Christian values over African values remains unchallenged within religious life. The researcher desires to see a situation where Christian values embraced in religious life as those needing meaningful expression from an African perspective.

Her MIASMU course paper which was carried out as a research, too, pointed out that there were some concerns among Africans and non-African religious men and women over the non-existence of African values in religious formation as something that is of grave concern. Some of the central values to an African that were raised by religious men and women during the course paper study as needing inclusion and strong emphasis were values of prayer, self-reliance and hard work, hospitality, solidarity, the sacredness in prayer, sharing, forgiveness, respect for elders and authority, other-centeredness and service, family bond and communal life. These values were evidently on decline due to little emphasis of African spiritual formation values which were pillars within an African community and if deliberately incorporated and emphasized could contribute tremendously to a holistic formation of African men and women.

The course paper propelled the researcher to shape her thesis topic in such a way that it focused on how African spiritual formation values are being incorporated in religious formation of young men and women in Africa today and what the impact is in their ongoing religious life. Her focus was then to look at religious men and women in religious congregations of indigenous and international groups within Nairobi.

The researcher sensed that by carrying out a more focused research in this area of study, it will not only enrich her religious life, but also provide insights in her current role as a formator in her congregation. Again, the study will assist in placing her in a better position to outline some of the negative aspects that require to be challenged in the process of religious formation that contribute to what could be referred to as 'living double standards.' The researcher saw this as necessary in modeling religious life to what Jesus spoke about as inner conversion and not only concentrate on the outer values of religion. This compares to how Jesus challenged the Pharisees from paying attention to the cleanliness of the outside of a cup and ignoring the inside (Lk. 11:39-40). African

values are indeed deeply embedded within an individual; these may be described as those values that are ingrained in the attitudes, beliefs and practices of individuals as they have received them from their families of origin and various cultural communities at large. These implicit values need to be explicitly embraced and find expression in religious life. This is the call that the researcher aims at finding out in this study.

Through this inspirational background, the researcher developed her research design with her focus on the topic “Integrating African Spiritual Formation Values with Christian Values in the Religious Formation of African Men and Women in Nairobi”. After the approval of the research design the researcher then proceeded to developing research questionnaires which she further pre-tested among sixteen men and women, eight from each gender from indigenous and international religious men and women who study at Tangaza College, situated in Nairobi.

After the pilot study, the researcher made necessary amendments and resubmitted the copy of the questionnaire for approval, which then gave her a go ahead to comfortably begin her data collection.

This study focusses on religious men and women who are professed or ordained, belonging to indigenous and international congregations. The sample of the study has included religious congregations founded locally in Africa (indigenous) and those founded outside Africa (international).

1.1 Academic Discipline

The study is in the inter-disciplinary academic area in that it focuses on theological aspects of religious life in formation and also the social-cultural aspects of those in religious life. The study therefore employs social science methods to investigate pertinent issues in religious formation as understood in the Catholic Church teaching and the call of discipleship to carry out the mission of Christ.

The study addresses the need for the integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values among African men and women in religious life today.

The inter-disciplinary methods were employed focusing on integrated formation in order to bring the true meaning of inculturation which is the embodiment of African values in dialogue with the Gospel. The need to embrace African spiritual formation values does not give room for leniency to any areas from African perspective that would otherwise conflict with the Gospel values. The Gospel has been received in different parts of the world and adapted to the local soil giving it shape and meaning to those influenced by it. In other words, the Gospel has to find expression in the cultural setting of a people among whom it has been planted. This is the researchers' main thrust in this study; that the formation of African men and women finds root within African spiritual formation values drawn from their cultural world- view and integrated with Christian values.

The integration aspect of the study comes into play because the researcher is focusing on harmonizing Christian values and the African spiritual formation values. Wirba (2010) reminds us that African religious men and women need a type of formation which will safeguard the anthropological values of their own culture while translating them into different modalities of believing, living and of expression in concrete behaviors (p. 284). We cannot deny the fact that people joining religious life have interacted with their environment, socialized and are imbued with values that have formed their spiritual being. Even those religious with a greater urban influence in socialization have, to some extent, not completely lost their African identity. Bishop Mathew Gyamfi of Sunyani, Ghana, in his one week workshop to the School Sisters of Notre Dame (henceforth referred to as SSND), novices to be, referred to this process of integration in formation as a step toward forming 'African Christians' and the absence

of which will only raise ‘Africans and Christians’ (Workshop notes-August 2011) who have dualistic life.

1.2 Problem Statement

There is very little emphasis on the importance of incorporating African spiritual formation values into religious formation of African men and women today; a situation that leads to the religious men and women living dualistic life that compromises both the African and Christian values.

The 1994 Synod of African Bishops focused on the debate on inculturation, and by now one would expect that this will have yielded more fruits, where African religious men and women become fully African Christians who live and appreciate their African spiritual formation values in authentic Christian religious life. In as much as the researcher appreciates the effort done by the Catholic bishops’ call for truly planting Christian values into Africa and making the African church rooted in its culture, she observes that there is little effort being done toward inculturation. The researcher observes that more deliberate efforts and tireless commitment towards inculturation, particularly in religious formation, is needed by all involved in formation process and even in ongoing formation. Formation, as the researcher understands, is a life-long process requiring commitment by men and women who respond to this divine calling.

The researcher realizes that more focus and emphasis has been placed in the area of Eucharistic celebration in response to inculturation as if African values can be expressed only in the use of African music tunes, drumming, African garments as vestments and African models of Jesus and Mary. However, the understanding and facilitation of true inculturation need to go beyond the Eucharistic celebration and influence the individual’s inner way of life which is characterized by values, beliefs and

practices that make one a fully African religious Christian. This is what would be considered as conversion from within.

From the example already mentioned of Bishop Mathew Gymfi, Sunyani Diocese, Ghana (Workshop notes -August, 2011) to the SSND postulants, before their reception into the novitiate, the bishop also raised a concern on what he referred to as 'duality' which results from partial inculturation process. He observed that there is still a big challenge of how the African spiritual formation values can be integrated into religious formation programs to bring about an understanding of who 'African Christians' are and not 'Africans and Christians'. The implication is that there is a scenario of Africans and Christians as opposed to 'African Christians'. This problem of having Africans and Christians existing in the Catholic Church today, and more so in religious life, is evident and raises a lot of questions on the authenticity of religious life in Africa. There are instances when some African religious men and women encounter any suffering or calamity, incurable illnesses or complex situations, and they are torn between allegiance to Christian faith or African beliefs. More often than not, they resort to their familiar African approaches which speak to them deeply. Most get trapped in a dilemma of two realities, to be fully Christian and truly African; the later taking preference over the former because of the security and fulfillment that it offers.

The researcher further acknowledges the work of the church in its effort to invite more and more Africans to religious life, which, no doubt, has thriving vocations as compared to the diminishment she experiences in western countries. However, there is still a question of how much African spiritual formation values are being integrated in the formation of the African young men and women. The lack of integration of African spiritual formation values in the formation process could deprive the formees the

opportunities of growing as true followers of Christ in a more radical manner in order to live and reflect their true identity as African Christians.

There is also a concern from some domains of the Catholic Church that religious life today is losing its direction and meaning. This is indicated by the fact that we have begun to witness a decline in vocations among young men and women in African countries today. This apparent decline in vocation is a clear sign that there is something missing that religious life is not offering to attract young people. In the traditional African set up the religious leader was an inspirational model and could always display an inspiring and attractive character that many would be attracted to. This is supposed to be the case in religious life today. However, the reality is showing a witness that contradicts the essence of a religious person. Africa has a vast wealth of values which need to be reflected in religious life today. This, according to the researcher, is not happening as it should. Some of the values she addresses that have strong African origin and need to be embraced in religious life today include: the value of prayer, spirit of service and other-centeredness, value of family, hospitality, forgiveness, sharing and solidarity, respect for authority and elderly, self-reliance and service, hard work and responsibility and community life. These values, though good, seem to be diminishing at a fast rate in the present secular society and yet not emphasized in religious formation. This, therefore, is an area of concern to the researcher.

The researcher's observation which propelled her into this study was to see what the case on the ground really is, what gaps are evident that there is need of integrating African spiritual formation values with Christian values in the religious formation of African men and women.

The researcher's findings not only inform her to become a better African religious woman that can be equated to other African married women who serve their

families in marriage with utmost dedication but also that this can be helpful to those in formation to adopt some of its positive findings to better their formation programs. This means scaling up formation programs of religious men and women to focus on ‘conversion from within and not without’, in other words formation of individuals from within should be given priority. Formation should nurture an individual’s inner encounter with God within a given cultural context with respect to what good one brings to religious life. This should form the foundation upon which all formation begins. The strict emphasis on rules and laws in religious life only breeds a phobia- filled life culminating in hypocrites, pretending to be “Holy Angels”, whose true colors unravel after final profession or ordination. The African rites of passage formed individuals with mature, responsible, spiritual, service oriented with a community heart ready to foster the common good.

The researcher argues that most religious congregations today form African men and women from a foreign perspective of life than what they would receive through socialization in their own African homes. This resonates with Waruta’s comment in Wubbel (2012) Celibate Tensions in African Reality that many Africans feel like guests in a religious tradition in which they lack ownership of the faith and yet have commitment to it with dedication and zeal (Foreword p. x). Probably, this lack of ownership emanates from the fact that these African religious have invested nothing of their own in the very life they claim to live. The researcher wonders if this seeming alienation of Africans from their very faith comes from an experience of a lack of their ‘treasure’ (African spiritual formation values) in their formation.

Hillman (1993) perceives what he calls ‘a historical dated and culture specific’ approach that fails to address the task of inculturation in religious formation (p. 14). According to Hillman, there persist problems of historical perception that were linked to

the African cultures that could pose an obstacle in religious congregations from integrating some of the African spiritual formation values into formation of their members. For instance, this problem was confirmed during the pilot study where most of the respondents indicated that African spiritual formation values are regarded as barbaric, satanic and inferior and therefore obsolete to be considered as worthy relating with Christian values. This is a historical problem that was introduced by the early missionaries in condemning African spiritual formation values. According to the researcher this remains a question of concern in realizing the meaning and actualization of inculturation process in Africa today and needs an urgent dialogue. It is in the view of the researcher that attitudes that lack respect and demean the host culture may not help nurture the spirit of dialogue between Christian values and African spiritual formation values in the formation process of African religious men and women today.

In the late 19th century when Africans started receiving missionaries from Europe and later in the early 20th century from America, there was ridicule of the African view of the universe as Magesa indicates in his reflection in Getui et al (2008), 'Spirituality For Another Possible World: Reclaiming our African heritage'. He observes that the "African perception of the pervasive divine power in all of creation and the mutual relatedness of all creation which could not be scientifically verified was totally regarded as pre-scientific and primitive," (p. 108). One wonders why presently there has evolved a 'Theology of Ecology' and the human relationship to creation as a whole. This is nothing new to African spirituality and yet, ironically, a lot of African beliefs concerning the connectedness of human being and the entire creation were dismissed earlier by missionaries. Could this be a pointer that there is a lot that may be borrowed by the modern Christian church from the African spirituality to make African Christians and religious men and women of today 'feel' more at home in the church?

In a nutshell, there is slow adaptation of an approach to formation of African men and women with the deliberate inclusion of what entails a holistic spiritual formation which includes Christian values and African spiritual formation values. On one hand, the church calls the African Christians to embrace inculturation but on the other hand the researcher experiences little effort in the actual implementation especially when, apparently, very little is being done to realize this in the formation of African religious men and women. The church has been alive in Africa South of the Sahara for over a centuries but to date, the gospel message is threatened especially when African religious are confronted with problems of sickness or pains and discouragement. The outcome poses a question of whether to pledge allegiance to unwarranted cultural demands like belief in witchcraft and fear of getting bewitched, among others, or to offer total self-dedication to following Christ.

As Nwagu (1997) asserts, this divided loyalty will sooner or later crumble exposing duplicity (p. 134). Another way of asking the question could be who is not doing what to move this 'wheel' forward? These were questions that gave the researcher the impetus and curiosity in moving forward with this study to find out how much is being done towards the implementation of inculturation from within especially in relation to religious formation of African men and women called to respond to the message of Christ in a more radical way in the present world.

1.3 Hypothesis

There is urgent need for the integration of African spiritual formation values in the formation programs of religious congregations with African men and women so as to enhance and make the programs holistic and more meaningful in Africa today .The result may contribute tremendously to the formation of African men and women who have a

deeper identity and appreciation of their contribution to religious life and ownership of the Christian faith.

This hypothesis comes from the researcher's observation that African spiritual formation values are already embedded in the psyches of the young African men and women by the time they discern and join religious communities. They already have background information drawn from the various rich cultural spiritual preparations. Since African cultural socialization has formed them into who they are, their spiritual cultural values could be incorporated in the religious formation to make them feel at home and live their Christian life in a more meaningful manner. Their African socialization has a lot to offer because they already have a foundation upon which religious formation could build on. Evidently, they come with an African spirituality rooted in sacredness and prayer, hard work and responsibility, hospitality, sharing and solidarity, importance of self-reliance, value for family and community life, understanding of forgiveness, other centeredness and service, respect for elders and authority. Religious life is rooted in prayer and an individual with an already rich background in the same as most Africans are, may foster an authentic prayer life in religious life. The spirit and strong bond of family and community life from an African perspective, no doubt, is of valuable contribution to the life of the religious congregations here in Africa especially those with African membership.

When a close look is taken on the cited African spiritual formation values, one realizes that they do not contradict Christian values. Therefore, there should be no problem in the integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values in the religious formation of African men and women.

1.4 Research Questions

The study had six research questions outlined as follows:

- 1) Which African spiritual formation values do you know from your up-bringing as an African or from your lived experience here in Africa as non-African?

This research question was intended to find out if religious men and women know the African spiritual formation values from their socialization or from studies. This was to unveil whether there is knowledge of such values among the religious men and women. This knowledge and identification would be a step to the discovery of any values understood by these religious men and women and would further enable them to point out whether the values are included in their religious formation or not.

- 2) Do you use spontaneous prayers coming from the heart in your daily community prayers?

This research question was to explore the possibilities of using African spiritual formation value of spontaneity and directness in addressing God in prayer in the religious formation and to what extent this value has been incorporated into formation programs. The question was to further help in finding out how spontaneity of prayer and creativity is valued in contrast to written or rote prayers as is the case in printed prayer books used by religious communities as ‘ The Prayer of the Church’ and other forms of prayers used in religious communities. The question was to see whether there is an African sense of personal inner connectedness to the Creator and how this is expressed through spontaneous prayer in religious communities.

- 3) What activities or projects has your religious community emphasized to enhance the African value of self-reliance in the spirit of hard work?

The aim of this research question was to find out how the elements of hard work and responsibility are encouraged in religious life to enable the continuity of a vibrant

community life with a spirit of self-reliance, void of laziness and dependence. By use of this question the researcher found out how the religious communities tap these pertinent values of hard work and take responsibility and become good stewards of the congregations' resources by forming members who contribute to the life of the congregation. Knowing that most African formees come with unique and different talents of hard work, the researcher wanted to know how hard work is encouraged and made meaningful in religious life.

- 4) How is the aspect of community as family built on love and forgiveness emphasized in your religious communities?

The understanding, integration and practice of African spiritual formation value of community that is fostered by love and forgiveness in religious formation programs in various congregations was described. This research question unveiled the approaches used in the integration of these African spiritual formation value in building communities of 'one heart and one mind' at the center of which is the value of love and forgiveness.

- 5) What are some of the gifts and challenges experienced in your religious community in relation to respect to elders and authority?

This question went deeper to find out the gifts and challenges experienced in living in religious communities in relation to respect of elders and authority. This further helped in finding out the root causes of challenges especially in those communities with religious from diverse cultural backgrounds and their perception of 'old'. This was made clear in relation to varied beliefs over old age, either, understood as diminishment or gracefully accepted as becoming resourceful in wisdom for the wellbeing of community living. This also helped in the understanding of how religious men and women dialogue and appreciate the diversity in values as an enrichment of their community life. The awareness created is a guiding principle that difference in values does not mean disunity

in community but an enrichment of community life. This understanding therefore, fosters respect of one another's values.

- 6) In which ways are the values of hospitality, other centeredness, service and solidarity reflected in your religious community?

This question explored the presence of African values of hospitality, other-centeredness, service and solidarity in religious communities as aspects which help form a united African family moving from 'I' to 'we' mentality in the true spirit of inculcating a spirit of ministry- approach and a readiness to serve God's people. The question further explored how the mentioned values are lived out in the day to day life in communities of religious men and women in Africa today.

1.5 Significance of the study

The study is important because it is addressing the question of how far the integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values is being done among Africa religious men and women, especially in the spirit of the African Synod of inculturation. This integration is essential to the African religious because they, probably, come to community with a certain level of socialization which has imbued them with values from their diverse backgrounds. Amongst them are the deep sense of a spirit of service, solidarity, other-centeredness, value for forgiveness, hospitality, sense of community, spirit of family and sharing, self-reliance and hard work and respect for elders and authority. These are the values that the study focused on to discover if they were reflected in the religious lives of African men and women. Probably, the incorporation and emphasis on these values is helping to address the concerns and build religious communities that are founded on the backbone of African spiritual formation values. These values are essential in enhancing commitment to the mission of Christ among African religious men and women. The study, therefore, is significant in trying to

unveil possible approaches to foster grounded Africa Christian formation of the religious men and women. For instance, in African set up a religious leader was somebody with values to be emulated by the community. He/she was seen as a spiritual counselor, guider, and reconciler, responsible, other-centered, hospitable, available for service, community oriented, a hard worker and prayerful. Religious men and women from the African perspective were understood as the epitome of values in the community. And, therefore, today's religious men and women in the church are expected to carry the mantle as it were and be the light and conscience of the society. This study is important as it is examining these aspects in terms of African spiritual formation values in religious formation today to see whether these are given emphasis to form men and women who are well equipped with the necessary tools to serve as role models in the face of the changing world of complexities and challenges.

Further, this study is significant as it tries to invite dialogue and call on religious leaders and formators to address the importance of African spiritual formation values that need to be incorporated in the formation programs to enhance authentic religious living. The study is intended to contribute towards realizing, to some extent, the inculturation process in the Catholic Church as the call from the Synod of African Bishops in 1994.

The study brings in the experience of formation that is 'bottom up' which is in respect to African religious who are well imbued in their African spiritual formation values to help shape and give meaning to their vocation to religious life. Evangelization is meant to enrich Africans in living out the gospel values which have found root in the already existing African spiritual formation values.

1.6 Assumptions of Study

- 1) The African spiritual values of respect for elders and authority acquired at home are relevant and can enrich the religious formation programs in Africa today.

This assumption strongly asserted that the African spiritual values in formation are relevant and have a major role to play in molding the formation of African religious men and women. An individual's spirituality is formed first and foremost by his/her cultural beliefs. Therefore, the incorporation of the spiritual values of respect for elders and authority contribute to the harmonious living of the vowed life in various religious congregations.

- 2) The incorporation of African spiritual values of family, forgiveness and spirit of solidarity in religious formation could enhance authentic living of community life among many religious men and women.

It was assumed that with the coming of materialism and a world that experiences economic constraints and growing self-centeredness, the deliberate emphasis and incorporation of these values would foster the African spirit of sharing and solidarity among religious who profess to hold all things in common. This spirit that is deeply imbedded in Africans from their family socialization enhances a sense of family and sense of community among members of a given religious community.

- 3) There is little effort being made to integrate African spiritual formation value of spontaneous prayer welling from the heart as opposed to the fixed form of prayers in religious communities.

It was assumed that there is little effort being done to enhance the African spiritual value of spontaneity in prayer welling from the heart among African religious. The spontaneity, creativity and communication to a relational God are aspects of prayer

drawn from African spirituality. These aspects do not appear to be given strong emphasis in the formation of African religious men and women.

- 4) The African spiritual value of hospitality is not given strong emphasis in religious formation programs in Africa today.

It seems that more often than not, African spiritual formation value of hospitality is rated by non-African religious men and women as outdated, repugnant and time consuming especially when a visitor is given attention in religious communities. This perception, according to the researcher continues to impact negatively on religious community living especially among African religious.

- 5) If the African spiritual values of other-centeredness and service are emphasized in religious formation programs today, viable religious communities with a thrust toward ministry will be fostered.

The researcher assumes that there is little commitment by African religious men and women towards ministry as a result of lack of emphasis on African spiritual formation values, among them, the spirit of service and other-centeredness which need to be incorporated in religious formation. The absence of these values fosters self-centeredness where individuals give priority on themselves and their personal needs over community needs. This kind of attitude kills the corporate spirit of the community working together for the common good.

- 6) The emphasis on the African spiritual values of self-reliance and hard work in the religious formation programs in African would reduce the financial dependence from Western countries by religious communities with African men and women.

The researcher assumes that the apparent dependence of African religious men and women on outside financial donor support to most religious communities currently is as a result of lack of spirit of self-reliance and hard work among African religious men

and women. Most of these young African men and women come from families that struggle to raise their daily needs and their only motto for survival is hard work. What happens when they are received in religious communities that kill this spirited attitude toward work? The emphasis of this aspect of self-reliance and hard work in religious communities would contribute tremendously to the reduction of the so called 'African dependency syndrome' from Western countries. This syndrome only dehumanizes and degrades the dignity of Africans. There is more dignity and pride in what is achieved through one's hard work than what is received on a 'silver platter'.

1.7 Limitation and scope

The study was limited only to religious congregations both the indigenous and international, particularly those with houses in Nairobi. Since the Diocesan clergy are formed to respond to Church needs within their dioceses with similar cultural backgrounds, the study opted to leave them out so as to focus on religious congregations who constitute diverse cultural backgrounds. Some indigenous congregations that were included in the study are those that were founded in Africa and have members from diverse cultures and countries. The international congregations which have their origin outside Africa but with membership of African men and women and responding to various needs with their different charisms were also included in the study. This diversity of multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and inter-cultural groups of men and women brings varied African spiritual formation values into their communities and weave a 'beautiful fabric' that witnesses to authentic unity in our divided world.

The study was also limited to 15 women and 15 men religious congregations both international and locally founded in Africa with residence in, Nairobi. This was considered as a matter of convenience in terms of resources of carrying out the study. The numbers of congregations given above were very helpful in responding to the

questionnaires, face to face interviews and focused group interviews which the researcher conducted to confirm the hypothesis.

The study captured congregations of men and women so as to find out which gender has more or less emphasis as far as inculturation is concerned. This helped in understanding any disparity in the integration and finally led to conclusions drawn from the data of the study. The sample of the study included all those religious men and women who have been ordained or professed within the last 15 years. The researcher chose to sample those within the period of 15 years and below, because they fall in the bracket of the period since the inauguration of the call to inculturation by the Synod of African Bishops in 1994.

The need to know the age at entrance of these religious men and women was helpful in finding out what impact socialization will have had on an individual in her/his African spiritual formation before entrance into a religious congregation. For the non-Africans, the study was to help unravel whether efforts were being made to get education in African spiritual formation values and how these values are embraced in community.

The study was interested in exploring whether the nature of socialization was rural or urban so as to deduce how much African spiritual values were imbued in individuals before entering religious communities.

The findings of this study are significant as they have pointed out some factors that may be influencing the inculturation process negatively or positively and which would offer great help to those in charge of religious formation for modifications.

1.8 Definition of terms

African Spirituality - refers to beliefs, practices and symbols that animate an African's life to reach or relate with the Transcendent, God.

Cloistered- a congregation whose members do not get involved in ministry outside of their houses

Formator – refers to a person who gives instruction to those under training into religious life.

Formee – is used to mean a young man or young woman who is undertaking initial training into religious life.

Indigenous congregation- religious groups founded within African with only African membership.

International congregation- connotes a religious congregation that originated outside Africa mostly Europe or North America

Postulant/Novice – a young man or young woman who undertakes initial training into religious life.

Vocation - a particular way in which one responds to God's call to use his/her gifts for the service of God's people.

1.9 Description of the remainder of the thesis

This study is composed of five chapters. Chapter one provides a general introduction of the thesis. It outlines the background information, the problem statement, the hypothesis, significance of the thesis, research questions, assumptions and limitations of the thesis as well as applicable definition of terms and acronyms used in the thesis.

The second chapter outlines the methodology used in the collection of data that led to the development of the study. The chapter illustrates the entire steps taken from the design of the topic to the process of data collection to the final analysis of the results. The chapter starts with the design and moves on to elaborate the process that was used in data collection, the sampling methods used and the sampled population included as well as the criteria used in the sampling, kinds of variables included and justifications for

their inclusion.

Chapter three presents the findings from the field research. The findings are analyzed from raw data into thematic areas capturing the sections of the thesis to make a meaningful interpretation of the raw data. The researcher presents the findings in a scientific manner of statistics, descriptive and verbatim expression as derived from the respondents and from the questionnaires. In this chapter the researcher develops a conceptual framework that captures the field research findings.

Chapter three also presents the analysis of the findings relating to the thesis topic, the problem statement and hypothesis of the study, significance of the study, research questions, assumptions, limitation and scope of the study.

Chapter four provides the description of the scholarly literature relating to the thesis topic. This literature has been quoted from published books, articles, journals, magazines, newspapers and newsletters which are related to the study. Information from online documents and unpublished literature works is also presented in this chapter. In this chapter the researcher also presents the description of findings derived from face to face interviews and focused group interviews included in the study.

Finally, chapter five forms the discussion of the whole thesis in relation to the results in chapter three and the literature review in chapter four. The researcher presents interpretations and analysis of her findings pointing out the African cultural knowledge as revealed from the field research findings on African spiritual formation values as integrated in religious formation and its implications to the formees and on the religious life in general. In this chapter the researcher shares her personal experiences encountered while carrying out the research; reactions from participants, observations on how she was welcomed, opinions and facial observations on the respondents.

The researcher's personal sentiments and how these impacted on the study in relation to the research findings and the literature review are also synthesized in this chapter. She further discusses the implications of the synthesis of data in light of thesis subtopics, the thesis topic, problem statement, and hypothesis, significance of study, research questions, assumptions, research results and literature review and limitations of the thesis. The chapter ends with a conclusion of the thesis which is followed by summary, recommendations to the reader for further study, and for formators and congregational leadership for necessary implementations.

Chapter Two

Methodology

2.0 Introduction

This chapter of the study on methodology embarks on a thorough description of the steps followed by the study in data collection and methods of information gathering that were employed to facilitate the writing of the thesis. In this chapter there is an explanation of how the research design was developed and all the various steps that were followed during the study to the final step of coming up with the topic of thesis.

There is also a description of the procedures followed in arriving at the sampled population who provided the data, nature of data and the methods of data collection. This chapter also explains the procedure that was followed in collecting data and the process of analyzing the data.

The reasons for the choice of the particular field assistant and the vital role he played in working with the researcher in carrying out this field study are described later in this study. The variables included are described later in the study and criteria for their inclusion have been well explained.

2.1 Research Process

The research process began with the development of research design where the researcher was inspired to look deeper into the topic “Integrating African Spiritual Formation Values with Christian Values in the Religious Formation of African Men and Women in Nairobi, Kenya” which was facilitated by MIASMU course namely “Toward the Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa”. Following this inspiration, the researcher had to formulate a research design that could lead her in carrying out a more focused study in this area resulting in field research.

After developing the design, it underwent amendments as the researcher carried out corrections as directed, first by the research methods lecturer and the Director of MIASMU. This process took quite time to work through various areas that needed amendments, sometimes it required the reframing of words in the thesis topic and reflect the researcher's intended meaning in her area of interest.

After the thesis topic was clear, the researcher was guided, sometimes challenged to come up with a meaningful formulation of the unanswered questions related to her area of interest. This process again took time to come out with the right unanswered questions that would capture the researcher's goal in the field.

Further corrections were offered in coming up with the right hypothesis and parameter of the research. This area involved deeper reflection so as to come up with the right target group that would enable the researcher to come up with meaningful information. This step was time consuming to the researcher, however, she finally come up with this target group of those religious men and women that would form an essential part of her research.

The next area for the researcher was to work on the assumptions which required deep concentration because their right formulation was to assist in framing the right research questions to assist in finding out the helpful data in the field. The researcher received a lot of corrections in this area of data collection specifically the method of collecting data.

The researcher admits that it was quite tedious and requiring patience to come up with the right questions that would help in drawing out the most of what she needed to get from the respondents. This was very helpful as she later found out in the field during the data collection and the analysis of the data.

When the design was clear and approved, the research questionnaire and interview guides were developed. These were then tentatively approved by MIASMU director and thesis advisor before the researcher embarked on carrying out the piloting on the questionnaires. She took a sample of 5 religious men and 5 religious women randomly sampled from Tangaza to pre-test her questionnaire.

After receiving back the questionnaires, the researcher made the required amendments then resubmitted the questionnaire back for approval by the director of MIASMU and thesis advisor. This took quite a period of time because there were several copies of this thesis proposal that underwent corrections and amendments then sent back to the researcher. All these corrections eventually brought out a final copy of thesis proposal that was helpful for the study in the field.

After the approval of the research instruments alongside the entire proposal it was time to embark on carrying out data collection.

Given that her religious congregation and constitution calls for dialogue and openness, there was need to share this progress in her study with the congregational Superiors whose approval was required before going into the field for her research findings. This study would also involve engaging the services of a field assistant who would require remuneration.

Therefore, the researcher requested for financial assistance from the congregation several months preceding her field study. The expenses toward her own fare from her current residence (over 300km away) from Nairobi, payment of the field assistant, fare for all the travels from one congregation to another by means of a taxi, meals during this period of study, stationery required and emergencies for any eventuality were all put into consideration. After sharing with the Superiors the significance of this study and how it

would benefit the congregation, her request was approved and money for the necessary expenses required of successful completion of this field study was granted.

Since more arrangements needed to be done to ascertain that the time taken away from her current ministry during the field research had the approval of the Superiors, she requested to be away and permission was granted. Again, the researcher being in the ministry of formation of postulants in her congregation, she had to dialogue with her sister colleague in the formation house so that the postulants were not left unattended. The fruit of this dialogue was positive and thereafter she was freed from her ministry for four weeks while her colleague in formation carried out all the workload during this period she was out for field research.

Meanwhile, there had been communication with her field assistant over phone to arrange for a suitable time when he would be able to get time off his place of work without causing inconveniences at work. This was successfully organized by the field assistant and ample time was set aside for this field work.

The researcher traveled to Nairobi, her targeted area of field research and where the field assistant resides. On arrival, an appointment was made with her research field assistant to plan on how they could carry out the whole process of data collection and payments.

On meeting with the field assistant, there was a discussion of what was required so as to realize a meaningful outcome of the research. It was important that he understood the areas that were to be covered and what needed to be done. They both mapped out various religious congregations both locally founded and internationally founded within Nairobi for sampling.

The researcher further discussed with the field assistant about the assignments that the field assistant was to carry out and an agreement was reached. Both parties felt

they had made a good deal. Once this was done the researcher agreed with her field assistant on the commencement date for data collection.

While planning for commencement of the data collection, the researcher together with her field assistant made various arrangements of appointments with various religious men and women whom they could engage in getting relevant information. This was done through phone calls to the religious men and women whom she had interacted with in various forums from the past. This made communication easier.

Some appointments had to be adjusted according to the availability of the respondents, an area that called for flexibility on the part of the researcher and her field assistant to allow for these date alterations. In other words these two depended on the availability of their respondents.

The very fact that the researcher is a religious woman and, therefore, not totally a stranger in religious congregation of both men and women, made her work in creating rapport and sampling the respondents much easier. Her religious affiliation was of help in getting faster connections of one religious to another.

The field assistant too had the advantage of having known many religious men and women having been himself in a religious community a few years back. He thus made several appointments for focused group interviews, face to face and administration of questionnaires.

There were prior arrangements made during the whole period of this research study such as the need to know the daily schedule thus where and what time to meet the following day so as to make the most use of this period of field research.

The process of field research began on a daily basis where questionnaires were administered to respondents with whom appointments had already been made. To facilitate the efficiency in administering the questionnaires, some of the respondents

introduced the researcher to their colleagues in the community and they were able to help her in filling the questionnaires. The whole data collection process took three weeks to complete, a week, earlier than anticipated.

During some visits the researcher would administer the questionnaires and do the face to face interviews simultaneously. In other cases, the researcher would facilitate the focused group discussion and then collect the questionnaires from the respondents in the same community.

The whole process was very swift with few hiccups. Areas where this was experienced was in the follow up of unfilled questionnaires which then required rescheduling of interviews with respondents to avoid interrupting their daily schedules. Two of the respondents misplaced or lost their questionnaires and so more had to be administered. All in all, the generosity of sharing the relevant information and availability of respondents during this process of field research was a learning and humbling experience for both the researcher and her field assistant. Many of the respondents were grateful that they were offered the opportunity to be part of the sample population.

2.2 Field Assistant

In carrying out the data collection the researcher deployed the service of one field assistant. The field assistant who was used had previously worked in MIASMU (as field assistant) and had completed his MA in the same program of MIASMU. This field assistant was well known to the researcher something that facilitated the amiable working environment that the two experienced.

The field assistant's good background in this area was a gift. Due to his experience and good knowledge of MIASMU program, he was very useful to the

researcher and this minimized the cost of training another field assistant who may not be acquainted with MIASMU methods and procedures in carrying out an in-depth field work.

Another advantage of choosing this particular field assistant was that by virtue of having interacted with individuals in different indigenous and international religious congregations in Nairobi, it made the work of making contacts for focused group interviews and face to face interviews as well as administering the questionnaires easier and effective.

The field assistant worked alongside with the researcher during the making of appointments, mapping the sample of population to be included in the study, as well as administering of the questionnaires, collection of the questionnaires, facilitating the focused group interviews and face to face interviews.

During the focused group interviews the research field assistant was assigned the role of helping the researcher to write down some notes of verbatim expressions from the respondents. The field assistant later shared his notes with the researcher for clarification and helped in filling in the gaps on unclear areas after the interviews. This follow up on interviews was carried out at the end of every day so as to capture all the information while still fresh. This complementary piece of exercise for both researcher and her field assistant worked out very well.

The researcher had planned to utilize the services of the field research assistant for at least a period of four weeks of which the researcher hoped to complete the collection of the data.

However, the whole process of collecting data took three weeks. This was as a result of proper planning to know when, where and which target groups the researcher and field assistant were meeting every day. As already noted, another reason for the swift

process of field research was as a result of both the researcher and her field assistant having had the opportunity of having known most of the respondents in religious congregations who further introduced the researcher and the field assistant to other members in religious communities within Nairobi.

2.3 Research Instruments used in Data Collection

The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods in the data collection. The study utilized data obtained from the respondents using the four different instruments, namely structured research questionnaire, and focused group interviews, face to face interviews and participant observation.

The research instrument had structured questions containing both open ended and closed ended questions which were aimed at drawing information from the respondents in descriptive form as well as concise manner of either yes or no. The questionnaire had a total of 25 questions. The questionnaires were administered to a total population of 120 respondents who included men and women religious from different religious congregations of indigenous and international origin.

The questionnaires were self-administered by the researcher and her field assistant manually while others were administered through internet in a soft copy, where by the respondent answered and forwarded back. The questionnaires that were responded to through internet were very few in number and applied to those religious who requested to do so since it was convenient to them due to their nature of work. During the focused group interviews and face to face interviews the researcher used an interview guide of 10 questions. The questions were designed in such a way that they enabled the researcher to have deeper probing of the respondents in order to ascertain certain elements of African spiritual formation values or clarify some aspects that were vague. The interview guide used for the focused groups and face to face was formulated using

different types of questions including structural, personal, hypothetical, descriptive, functional, and incident.

A total of 12 focused groups and 7 face to face interviews were captured during the period of study. It was during the focused group interviews and face to face interviews that the researcher and the field assistant were able to jot down some verbatim expressions that were said by the respondents.

Participant observation approach was used by the researcher during the focused group interviews and face to face interviews. During this period, the researcher was able to identify body expressions of the respondents in relation to the exact message that they were saying. Indeed there was much that was communicated by this non- verbal communication and sometimes the verbal and non- verbal did not match. This further prompted the researcher and her field assistant to ask for clarity to harmonize the messages. These respondents were surprised at this subtle observation of the researcher and her field assistant. This was an eye opener of how much more is revealed by respondents from face to face interviews and, therefore, paying attention to body language of respondents is helpful in the field. This is definitely an effective research method.

The researcher also used deeper probing whenever she realized that the respondents were over reacting or not clear on responding to certain questions which was revealed by their body language as ‘they did not want to respond verbally’.

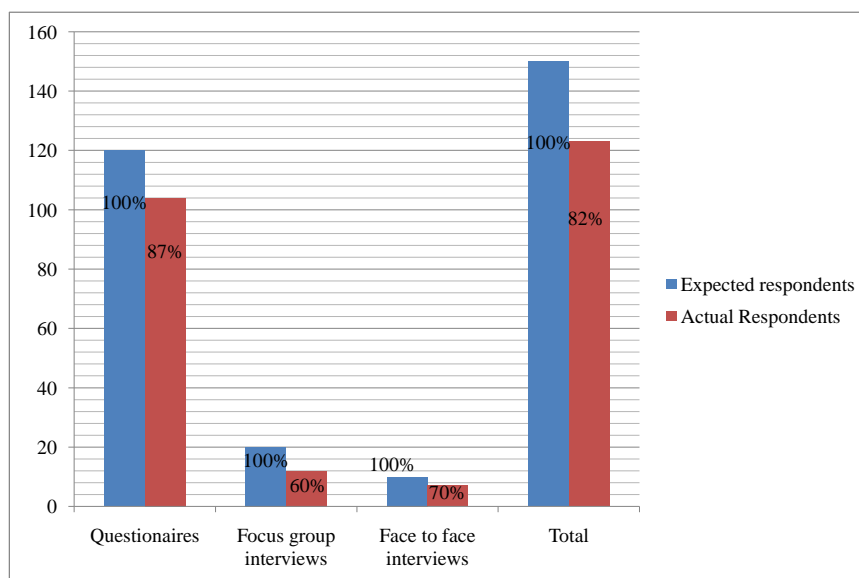
2.4 Research Methodology

During the study the researcher used scientific methods to sample the population for her data collection. The following methods were included.

2.4.1 Populations

A total of 120 respondents were sampled through the questionnaires, 20 respondents were targeted through the focused group interviews and 10 through face to face interviews. The total sample for the whole study was 150 respondents falling in the three categories outlined above. As illustrated in the figure, there were a total of 104 out of the 120 respondents from the questionnaire, forming 80 percent of the total sample. Those from the focused group interviews were a total of 12 out of 20 respondents, forming 60 percent and face to face interviews were a total of 7 out of 10 respondents, forming 70 percent of the total. A larger sample of the total population in the questionnaire was the sisters who made up a total of 60 of the entire respondent population of 104, while priests were next numbering 30 and brothers were the least with a total of 14 in number.

Figure 1: Indicating the categories of respondents (N=123).



In the sample population 15 were male religious congregations and 15 were female religious congregations. In each category of the sample, there were respondents

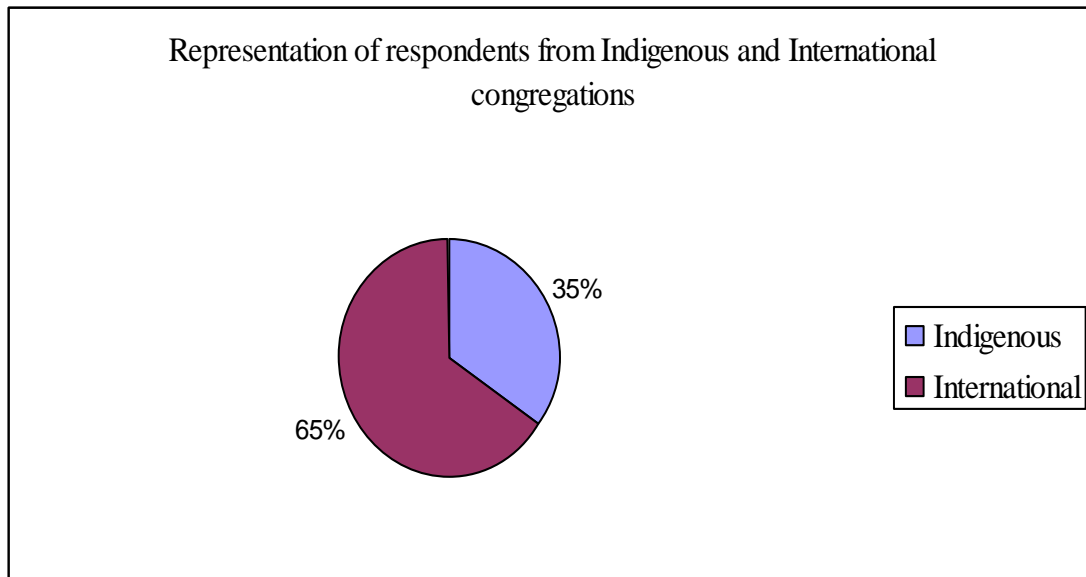
drawn from both indigenous and international congregations. However, during the sampling the researcher was faced with a challenge of having more international religious congregations in the sampling within Nairobi than indigenous.

From both categories of male and female sampled population, the indigenous congregations formed 35 percent while the international congregations had 65 percent. This disparity was caused by the fact that most indigenous religious congregations have most of their houses established in the rural settings away from Nairobi, which was the area of concentration for this study. These few respondents sampled from indigenous congregations were those who have houses of study in this area. The reason behind this comes from the fact that they were founded for needs within particular dioceses and therefore, are meeting the needs in those areas, whether educational, health, pastoral or social in varied ways. These were not in the region of the researcher's focus. This explains the reasons for the smaller percentage of the sampled group which have houses in Nairobi for either residential for their sisters or brothers in institutions of higher learning or are reaching out to needs beyond their dioceses.

However, it was observed from the findings that though the international congregations had the highest population, they still have a higher number of African memberships than their non-African members in the same congregations. The researcher had targeted to capture the population of those who are in charge of formation and/or had been ordained or professed up to and not more than 15 years.

During the research it was found out that many of the respondents in charge of formation were 15 years and above since ordination or profession. It also turned out that most of the respondents both in the questionnaires, focused group interviews and face to face interviews were also within these years of ordination or profession thus again 15 years and above.

Figure 2: Representation of respondent based on religious order (N=123)



The population sampled individuals who are in responsibility as formators currently, those who have once been formators within the past 15 years and those who have not necessarily been in formation responsibility but are either professed or ordained. Formation as understood by the researcher in this study is a life- long process; therefore, it is not necessarily restricted to younger members of a congregation who are still in initial formation. This understanding influenced the entire study and she adjusted to this reality with her field instruments with a new focus on all religious men and women regardless of how long they had been professed or ordained.

2.4.2 Sampling Procedures

The sampling of the respondents was arrived at using three methods, namely random sampling, snow ball sampling and purposeful sampling. The researcher used random sampling to get respondents from different indigenous and international congregations. Religious men and women from these congregations were sampled randomly with equal opportunity for each responding to the questionnaire so long as they fell into the category of professed brothers and sisters or ordained priests for the same reasons that many of the respondents as the reality on the ground revealed were 15 years

and above after profession or ordination. This adjustment had to be done to meet this reality in the field. The different religious congregations within Nairobi were randomly sampled to respond to questionnaires, focused group interviews and face to face interviews.

During the administering of questionnaires, the researcher was introduced to other respondents by their fellow formators whom she had made appointment with. Through snow ball sampling, the researcher was able to reach out to several respondents to fill the questionnaire from the same religious community. Similarly, it was by the use of snow ball sampling that the researcher came to know other religious formators who were not known to her previously but were introduced in the process.

It was through snow ball sampling that most of the focused groups were formed. One respondent in a religious community introduced other members who later on formed the focused group that the researcher interviewed. This made a big contribution to the speedy movement of the research work.

The researcher applied purposeful sampling technique to target only those in charge of formation programs in various sampled religious congregations. It was through this technique that targeted religious men and women specifically introduced the researcher to their colleagues in the same capacity as formators.

This was done through giving of contacts and names of those specifically in formation programs in different religious congregations. This was possible among the formators because they knew each other so well and had one another's contacts.

2.4.3 Criteria for Inclusion

The researcher based her variables on different criteria, namely: indigenous or international congregations, gender, years of profession or ordination, vocation whether brother, sister or priest, age at entrance and finally rural or urban upbringing.

The researcher included the aspect of congregation in order to identify respondents based on their type of congregation. This enabled her to see which African spiritual formation values were being integrated in either indigenous or international congregations. The researcher was interested in finding out how the indigenous congregations with more African members were keen in embracing African spiritual formation values and integrating them in their ongoing religious formation process.

According to the researcher the Africans in indigenous religious congregations are expected to have a deep knowledge of their African spiritual formation values and embrace a wealth of values with pride. This is an area the researcher hoped to find helpful so as to emerge with comparisons with those congregations of international origin regarding the depth of inculturation.

The researcher delved into this study to enable her to find out how much influence the African bishops have had through their Episcopal conferences since the call to inculturation was inaugurated at the Synod of African bishops in 1994. Most indigenous congregations canonically fall under the authority of their Local Ordinary and some are founded by these African Bishops, a good reason to expect that these congregations would be better integrated in African spiritual formation values.

Consequently, regarding the international congregations, the researcher wanted to see the influence of the early missionary mentality as it was painted that the African spiritual formation values were outdated, obsolete and repugnant and how this has impacted on religious formation in Africa in the 21st century. From this perspective the researcher was able to measure the involvement of both Africans and non-Africans in changing this stereotype so as to embrace a true spirit of inculturation in their congregations. The researcher was also interested in finding out just how much the

African members are aware of in terms of the wealth of value resources they come with to religious congregations and what is actually integrated in their formation.

Moreover, the researcher wanted to see how far the non-Africans are being acculturated by the host culture in order to embrace and accept the integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values in the whole process of formation. This was another area of interest for the researcher, to find out whether there is even knowledge of anything of African spiritual formation values among the non-African members in the international religious congregations.

This was a deliberate move by the researcher, intended to lead her research further into another pertinent area of finding out how much of this knowledge and values, if any, have been integrated in the formation of their African members. The researcher still had more interest in getting to know the general sharing of day to day of life in community and whether the presence of African spiritual values was reflected in their day to day life. This led to further questions that delved into these areas to satisfy the researcher's area of field study.

Gender was included in the study based on the fact that the call to inculturation was a common call to all religious congregations and for a people who are to embrace gospel values in all their ministries, pastoral work and community life. This implies that both male and female religious congregations have a responsibility towards living out this call to religious life.

The researcher, therefore, wanted to see how various religious men and women live out this call in their particular congregations. This has been well addressed in the findings as presented in chapter three. Years of profession or ordination were included so that the researcher could be able to find out where the thrust of inculturation has taken root. This has enabled the researcher to figure out amongst the respondents who have

embraced the call to inculturation in terms of their years of experience in various congregations. This has enabled the researcher to clearly uncover from her findings who of the variables have apparently given energy in this endeavor of inculturation.

The call to inculturation has been in existence since 1994 coming out of the synod of African bishops and now majority of religious men and women in both international and indigenous congregation have lived long enough into this call to begin showing a gradual change towards accepting and embracing true inculturation in their various religious congregations.

Religious vocation was included by the researcher in order to find out where more emphasis on African spiritual formation values was being put into practice. This variable was included to assist in finding out and depicting who among the three categories of brothers, sisters and priest have shown more commitment in embracing and living the call to inculturation in their daily lives and activities.

The researcher had interest in these categories of vocations to religious life because the call of the Synod of African bishops to inculturation was aimed at transforming the Catholic Church into an 'African church'. This is what the researcher considered as a place where African religious men and women, whether in indigenous or international congregations can find more African expression by embracing the cultural innate values from their various social contexts.

The researcher chose to include the age of entry into the variables in order to gauge whether those who entered while young had had enough socialization in the African spiritual formation values before entry into religious congregations. At the same time the age variable would help the researcher to find out if those who entered at an adult age had better knowledge, appreciation and ability to live out their African spiritual values than their younger ones. This age difference is an area of interest to the researcher

especially in making conclusions from the findings on what may be considered a good age requirement for formation and entrance into religious congregation. This finding could help many congregations in setting a rationale that could be put in place to help decide on the age considered eligible for men and women joining their congregations.

Rural and urban variables were used by the researcher to find out the influence of two social settings in the upbringing in terms of imparting African spiritual formation values in the young people before entrance into religious life. It is expected that children raised up in rural areas have more cultural knowledge of their African spiritual formation values than their counterparts in the urban set ups. This kind of interaction has more influence and deeper understanding on the African spiritual values and how to live them out when they join religious life.

The up-bringing of an individual is so much influenced by the surrounding that the inclusion of these two variables is helpful to the researcher in this study since it gives the role the two settings have had on the young people before they enter discern and enter religious congregations. On the other hand, it is perhaps assumed that urban children live in a more cosmopolitan social setting that impact them with varied cultural values that when they join religious life, it becomes difficult for them to choose which one to promote as Africans. They may, therefore, end up abandoning some of the values and holding strongly to the so “called Christian values” as being more superior to African values.

2.4.4 Description of the Variables included

The variable of religious congregation was included in the study to capture both the indigenous and international congregations. The indigenous congregations are those religious congregations founded within Africa and in a particular diocese and ordinarily

under the headship of the local bishop. On the other hand international congregations are those founded outside Africa and mostly under pontifical right.

Gender is another variable which was included by the researcher to illustrate male and female religious who have responded to the vocation of living in a religious congregation whether indigenous or international.

Years of ordination and profession was used as a variable to mean or bring out the understanding of the period of years they have spent in religious congregations since making their profession for sisters and brothers or ordination for priests.

Vocation is another variable that was included in the study. This variable as used in this study referred to whether the respondents fell into the category of religious priest, religious sister or religious brother. These are men and women who perceive in their hearts through prayer, reflection and discernment to respond to God's calling in their lives and to use their gifts and talents for the service of God's people in the world. Their preparation into this new life takes a process of preparation called formation and the period varies from one congregation to another depending on their laid down laws emanating from their constitutions.

After this process is over they make profession under vowed life. They carry out different responsibilities in the church as agents of evangelization and witnessing to the gospel values through their different charisms.

Age of entry was another variable that the researcher included to signify the period at which a religious male or female entered into the religious life. The various congregations have a set age for the admission of young men and women to begin the process of formation in both indigenous and international congregations.

Rural and urban variables were used by the researcher to show the different social set ups that individuals are brought up in. There are those who are raised in their rural

places and those who have been brought up in urban cities and may have had different socializations and acquired diverse values.

2.5 Data Analysis

In the analysis of data, the researcher first dealt with the process of interpreting collected data to search for broader meanings and linking the parts into a whole forming themes. The researcher developed several thematic areas together as they were arising from the findings. Under each theme were categorized all findings from the questionnaires, focused group and face to face interviews and were collated.

When all the data had been put under the thematic areas, the researcher then moved to the level of interpreting the data at each thematic area in relation to the thesis topic. To carry out the interpretation the researcher used three levels of analysis namely; nominal level, ordinal level and statistical level.

On the nominal level of the data, thematic forms were descriptively analyzed retaining verbal expressions derived from the respondents. This was done under categorized domains as emerging in each theme in the field findings.

The second was the ordinal level which entailed analyzing the data by giving proportionate numbers and figures from responses by the various religious men and women from the sampled groups of indigenous and international congregations. The responses were indicated by quantitative labels using numerical values like , a few, many or more just to name a few. The distribution of respondents in term of their number was also indicated using numerical values.

The third level of analysis that was used in the study was statistical. The researcher interpreted the data using scientific interpretation through figures and tables. Similarly at this level, the researcher assigned values such as percentages, category name

and data values. The tables and figures were preceded by explanations for clear understanding of the data.

Chapter Three

Results

3.0 Introduction

Chapter three presents the findings from the field research carried out in Nairobi among religious men and women of both African and non-African origin. The findings were analyzed from raw data into thematic areas capturing the sections of the thesis to make a meaningful interpretation of the raw data. The researcher presents the findings in a scientific manner in the form of statistics, descriptive and verbatim expression as derived from the responses. The data was collected through face to face interviews, focused group discussions and questionnaires. In this chapter the researcher develops a conceptual framework that captures the field research findings and all the literature review that was used.

In this chapter the researcher also presents the analysis and interpretation of the findings from field research interview and participant observation relating to the thesis topic, the problem statement, hypothesis of the study, research questions and assumptions, significance of the study and limitation and scope of the study. The thesis topic ‘Integrating the African Spiritual Formation Values with the Christian Values in the Religious formation of African men and women in Nairobi, Kenya’ recognizes the well intentioned spirit of the church as it was first received in Africa from the missionary efforts. However, the research observes that since the invitation to the African church to embrace inculturation, there still remains areas within the church that need urgent response to realize this call. Among the many ways is the area of religious formation of African men and women, who, having been raised and influenced to a great deal by their own African cultural values, their contribution to what they receive in formation is of paramount and integral part of their life-long formation.

Therefore, integration of African spiritual formation values cannot be over-emphasized if religious life is to be lived in Africa in a holistic manner. The researcher, in her personal experiences as an African religious finds this contribution less emphasized and therefore embarks on this research to help religious congregations to begin a more serious delving into this integration.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework derived from the research data has revealed four components. First, the religious both men and women in indigenous congregations appreciate and identify with African spiritual formation values and are keen to have them incorporated in their formation process. The major values include the incorporation of spontaneous prayers, the approach to how hospitality is expressed, the ability to take adult responsibilities that foster spirit of family, forgiveness and community life in the spirit of sharing, respect for elders and authority, fostering the spirit of service and other-centeredness and finally self-reliance and hard work. There was a sense of doubt and uncertainty from some non-African members in international congregations that these African spiritual formation values could be fully incorporated into religious formation and life. An area that received resistance from the non-African members was the African value for hospitality and family spirit of sharing that is inclusive of all who come to their houses in need of help. This resistance to embrace the values of hospitality and family spirit as desired by African religious was more obvious among international women congregations than it was in the international men congregations.

Secondly, the very old African religious men and women (over 50 years in religious life) from both the international and indigenous congregations continue to propagate the teachings inherited from the early missionaries' culture at the expense of the African values. They are reluctant and view these African values as unchristian,

repugnant and backward and therefore struggle with the idea of integrating these African spiritual values into religious formation. They are seemingly content with the status quo. 'The -way- things- have- always been mentality'. This mentality is both from the post-colonial era and early missionary perception of Africa, an attitude that has continued to influence negatively, the understanding of the older African religious men and women of who a 'good religious' should be, thus one who has abandoned 'pagan' life as it was viewed by early missionaries.

Thirdly, the data reveals that irrespective of the religious age at entry, gender, location of where one was raised (rural or urban), vocation and nature of congregation or the number of years in religious life, all African religious men and women have deep within them an inherent desire to be rooted in their own identity as Africans. However, this desire is expressed in different ways; for the younger African religious especially those in initial formation, they have fear of speaking out lest they are dismissed from their congregation for being on the opposition. On the other hand those African religious men and women (15 years and above in religious life) are already engaged in dialogue at different levels in their congregations that could yield fruits in realizing this integration. Apparently, as already mentioned, the very old African religious men and women do not seem bothered at all that there is a need for such an integration of values in their religious life.

Fourthly, the apparent old missionary mentality that Africa's values are pagan and working against Christian teachings has not only been harbored by expatriate religious men and women but also influenced Africans' minds. However, religious men and women in indigenous congregations and African religious members within international congregations who had seemingly been brainwashed are beginning to rediscover their roots and want to feel at home in religious life. There is an obvious sign

of hope that efforts toward the integration of African spiritual formation value with Christian values are being made, although at a slow pace.

3.2 Findings related to the Thesis Topic

Five respondents said that African religious men and women still exhibit fears of appreciating who they are as religious with a rich cultural heritage and therefore posing a challenge in the integration of their spiritual values in formation (cf. App. C: #1.3, 4, 5, 7). Similarly, other respondents said that in as much as African men and women have knowledge of African values there is still need to study their cultures so as to learn more about its richness and appreciate it.

One African respondent pointed out that it should not be assumed and taken for granted that since these men and women joining religious life are Africans they obviously know all African values. It became clear that there is need for deliberate efforts to be taken to ensure that an approach is taken by primary agents of socialization who are parents to ensure there is education offered in families to imbue African values in the young people. As a newly ordained priest observed, his parents sent him to boarding primary school at age ten; therefore, he did not feel he had enough of what he could claim to understand his values as an African. He felt that the school curriculum failed to bridge this gap since its syllabus was academic driven, emphasizing on the literal knowledge and passing examinations and when he joined religious life there was no mention of African culture and its values. What was observed in his face revealed nostalgia and a craving for a sense of belonging which would restore his seemingly lost identity (cf. App. C: #8). The following table 1 shows the African spiritual formation values that are slowly getting some emphasis in both indigenous and international congregations of both men and women in Nairobi.

The need to integrate African values was acknowledged by two non-African priests who expressed their interest and effort to get to know more about African values, especially after they had taken their immersion courses at the Maryknoll Institute of African Studies, Tangaza in Nairobi (cf. App. C: # 6, 9).

Table 1: African values by emphasis in religious life by type of congregation

N = 123

Indigenous congregation		International congregations	
Strongly emphasized	Less emphasized	Strongly emphasized	Less emphasized
Expression of hospitality	Spontaneous prayers	Spontaneous prayers	Expression of hospitality
Fostering spirit of family	Forgiveness	Forgiveness	Spirit of sharing
Community life		Spirit of service	Fostering spirit of family
Spirit of sharing		Self-reliance and hard work	
Spirit of service		Community life	
Spirit of other centered			
Self-reliance and hard work			

The majority of the African religious men and women respondents as indicated in the table 2 are aware of these African values although there is little initiative in integrating them into their formation and religious life. The percentage of Africans who acknowledged how their values are practiced was rated high, thus recording over 50% in the values listed except for the area of 'forgiveness' which has the lowest percentage. This indicates how forgiveness as a value still needs to be addressed among Africans.

From an in-depth probing to find out why the value of forgiveness scored the lowest percentage, a priest respondent attributed this to the violence experienced in Kenya during the 2007-2008 post-election violence that left many homeless and

wounded. He recounted, “People do not seem to be ready to forgive their assailants” (cf. App. C: #7). This indicates how this value is not given much emphasis, therefore, having the lowest percentage. This response concurred with many other respondents who during the focused group discussions observed that forgiveness is a personal decision not like other values that the community or group can determine. The table 2 illustrates the proportion of Africans’ knowledge of their own cultural values as indicated in percentage as compared to how the same values are known by non-Africans.

Table 2: Summary of respondents’ with knowledge of African values (N=123).

African spiritual values	Total number of African respondents in percentage	Total number of non-African respondents in percentage
Respect for elders and authority	81%	19%
Honesty and faithfulness	57%	43%
Fear of God	68%	32%
Spirit of sharing	79%	21%
Togetherness/ solidarity/ unity	72%	28%
Team work / community spirit	72%	28%
Hard work/ service	70%	30%
Hospitality	75%	25%
Responsibility	55%	45%
Spontaneous Prayer	56%	44%
Obedience	50%	50%
Care for elderly	70%	30%
Sense of belonging	71%	29%
Forgiveness	46%	54%
Extended family	78%	22%
Palaver (baraza)	62%	38%

A concern raised as to why the African men and women religious do not seem to articulate their values in formation revealed that African men and women exhibit a fear which points to an inherent inferior feeling toward the African values that have for a long time been rated as backward. This was further supported by a non-African religious man who affirmed strongly, “Our African members have very good values that if they are

incorporated into our community we shall have an enriched religious culture” (cf. App. C: #3). One of the respondents belonging to a male international congregation, a national of Brazil of African descent, pointed out an unexpected observation, “Africans are not yet at the level of appreciating who they are and how their culture has shaped them long before they become religious.” He likened this scenario in Africa to his own home experience back in Brazil and said, “Black Brazilians are their own enemies in their fight for recognition in the socio-political and economic status in Brazil. This, according to him is the prevailing situation in the slow movement toward incorporating African values in religious life.”(cf. App. C: #5). In this priest’s view there should be pride and ownership first and foremost by Africans themselves regarding their own values. In the opinion of the researcher the eventual incorporation of the African values cannot be done by anybody else except through the initiative by African religious men and women.

From the findings a total of 82 percent of African men and women religious observed that they know their African values while 18 percent of non-African men and women religious admitted that they know most of the African values which are similar to their own but differ in the manner of expression.

Table 3: African and non-African men and women religious who have knowledge of African Values (No =123)

	Religious men	Religious women
African	34 (65%)	60 (85%)
Non-African	18 (35%)	11 (15%)
Sum total	52 (100%)	71 (100%)

For example, the aspect of the extended family was seen by the non-Africans as going against community life where Africans misuse the religious community property in the name of supporting their distant and close extended members. One of the respondents (cf. App. C: #4) noted, “at times our sisters just invite their visitors into the

community without informing other members of community and they even do not tell us when the visitors will be going back.” This, according to her is an abuse of the values of hospitality which creates disharmony in community.

3.3 Findings related to the Problem Statement

The findings from the field research data indicated that despite the fact that African spiritual formation values were well known, it was evident that they are less emphasized in Religious formation and community living. An African religious woman who has been professed for 50 years and now in her 70s narrated how when she entered religious life, she was among the first Kenyans to join and this implied that they had to adapt Irish lifestyle which was a total disorientation in her as she tried to adapt the new lifestyle According to her everything was totally new and she was to learn how to eat with cutlery and would not be allowed to enjoy her meals eating with her fingers. In recollection of this confusion she said:

It was as if I was a child and had to be taught how to hold fork and knife. This gave me no satisfaction because I left the table hungry, angry and humiliated following the giggling and comments made toward as I struggled to eat using a folk and knife. This was branded as ‘my backward’ upbringing of eating using my fingers, and yet nobody asked me how I felt being forced to adapt this new lifestyle ((cf. App. C: #8).

In order to find out more on the understanding of African spiritual formation values in international communities, the researcher asked, “How is the African culture viewed in your community?” An African religious brother responded, “The persistent impression of a superior versus inferior culture in my community has created existing divisions among members of my congregation” Further responses were given by a priest and sister showing the same results that this impression is also exhibited among African

men and women across many congregations. These sentiments were expressed by another respondent from an indigenous congregation who pointed out that that even religious in indigenous congregations still have this missionary mentality. In this case it is clear that there is no blanket blame over the international congregations for the slow implementation of the integration of African values in religious formation. African religious men and women too have a share in what could be termed as ‘apparent sabotage’ to inculturation (cf. App. C: #15, 17, 20).

An African religious woman belonging to an international congregation who said she was carrying out research for her PhD studies expressed her disappointment at how experience has taught her that African religious men and women get into religious life and eventually change from an experience of poverty, most of them having been raised up from humble backgrounds into living an affluent life offered in religious life and then forget their past. In her own words she said:

I cannot compare myself with my brother who lives in the rural area with seven children and earns a monthly salary of Ksh22, 000 (about US dollars 260) but is able to provide for his family needs like school fees, food, medical, clothing among other things and still could afford to support other relatives or give me some financial assistance when I visit”. However, many religious men and women, despite having all their financial needs met by the community, they still cannot be good stewards of what the community provides for them. They become very extravagant in their spending (cf. App. C: #4)

A brother respondent from an indigenous congregation further decried that he has experienced members in his religious congregation who according to him have moved, “a step higher than their families of origin” (cf. App. C: #2), meaning that they tend to live a life beyond their means focusing on material accumulation that uplifts their status.

This was further confirmed by a non-African older priest from an international congregation whose description depicts African religious as those whom religious life has offered higher social status. This elderly priest referred to African religious as those in a society of 'Easters' thus ever surrounded by plenty coming from Western donor countries (cf. App .C: #6)

Another respondent indicated that among his religious brothers the spirit of togetherness and solidarity is not well expressed on a day to day living. It is only done when there is a problem for example when one loses a family member. Other respondents expressed the same concerns that when it comes to contributing to support each other, it is not well articulated due to lack of trust in each other. Where there seemed to be trust still there was an element of suspicion. It was evident that this was an area of concern among religious men and women and, therefore, affecting openness in creating wholesome relationships that should be built in religious life (cf. App. C: #5)

Another problem that was pointed out by the respondents during the face to face and focused group interviews as well as highlighted in the responses from the questionnaires was a lack of in-depth sharing. This was attributed to fear of being known by others or what others would think if they get to know who individuals really are. This was found contrary to the African values of formation which demand that an individual is to grow responsibly and is expected to respect, care for others and lovingly challenge them as a way of correcting them and not fearing.

Tribalism, racism and groupings according to social classes came out as some of the concerns that religious men and women take for granted and think that they only happen in the secular world. The findings from a focused group interview in an international male congregation revealed that tribalism and racism is rooted in their religious communities. This trend is visible in individuals who group themselves under

tribal basis, their levels of education or racial grouping umbrellas. Though they do not express the terms vividly, there is often the use of terms such as “people from my home, my country, my village mate”, my state, the use of ‘ them and us’, and the ‘idiots’ referring to those considered to have less education. These groupings are now forcing men and women in religious life to move to the extent of excluding others and identifying themselves based on this status (cf. App. C: #4, 5, 8, 11). This unhealthy grouping was found to cut across all the variables regardless of gender, congregation, raised in rural or urban areas vocation or age, African or non-African. These unhealthy groupings jeopardize the spirit family built on love.

The researcher developed the question which targeted the respondents to indicate whether there was need to incorporate African spiritual formation values in formation. The findings in table 4 shows respondents from the questionnaires, face to face interviews and focused group interviews who concurred by saying they supported the incorporation of African spiritual formation values in formation of African men and women. The number of those who supported in all categories were more than those who did not support the incorporation of African spiritual formation values.

The research revealed that 76 % of those who supported the incorporation of African spiritual formation values in religious life were sisters. Majority of the young sisters formed 24% that was not in favor of the incorporation of African spiritual formation values. This was followed by the priests with 89 % who supported and 11% who did not support the incorporation of African spiritual values. The percentage of brothers who supported the incorporation of African spiritual values formed 71% while those who did not support were 29 %.

Table 4: Responses by sisters, priests and brothers in incorporation of African spiritual formation values in religious life (N=123).

Category	In favor		Not in favor	
	No.	%	No.	%
Sisters	54	76	17	24
Priests	31	89	4	11
Brothers	12	71	5	29

Evidently, this struggle to incorporate the African spiritual formation values is not valued much by the young African religious men and women who do not seem to bother about it. As one older African religious sister pointed out, “These young men and women in religious life think that our African way of life is outdated but miss to recognize the deeply rooted African values that could give religious life an African identity.” This same trend was the same as the priests and brothers, thus older members again emerging as the majority in supporting the inclusion of African spiritual values in formation. This clearly shows a growing awareness among these members of the need to find their African identity in religious life. The very young members in religious life from both indigenous and international congregations cut across both genders were not interested to see this inclusion effected, giving the reason that, “we belong to the new generation” (cf. App. C: #4).

From another finding based on Africans and non-Africans on whether African values from family need to be fostered in religious life so as to make religious communities a home for every African member, 91 percent of the total respondents in the study supported the integration of values that African members know from their African family. Examples of such values are hospitality, respect for the elderly and community spirit that were rated highly among Africans.

Figure 4 shows that out of 91 percent, 58 percent thus numbering 71 in total were African religious men and women of varied ages who strongly supported that African values from family are essential and need to be incorporated in religious life.

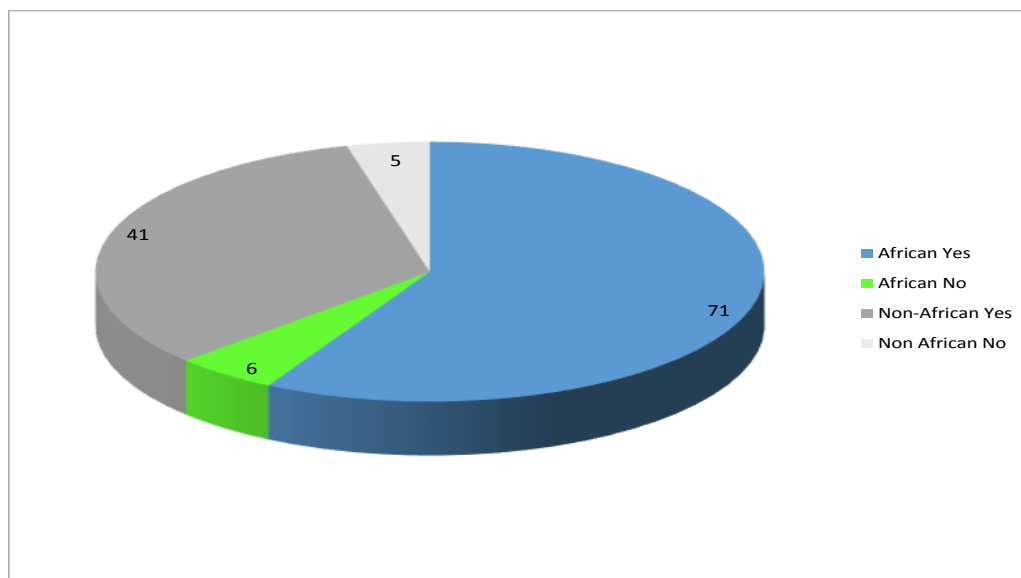
What the researcher found to be unique on this similar question was that a big number of non- Africans, representing 33 percent thus numbering 41 in total strongly supported the inclusion of family values. Initially the researcher thought most of the non-Africans would oppose this, only to realize that most of them especially the older members from both male and female congregations especially those who had lived in Africa for a longer period favored the inclusion of these African values as cited before.

The study revealed that 5 percent or 6 of African religious men and women were against the inclusion the African family values citing that most of the African family values are not applicable in religious life today in this 21st century. This percentage comprise of young Africans who seem to be caught up in the current age that sees no point of living in the past.

Similarly, only 4 percent or 5 of non -African religious men and women did not favor the inclusion of the African family values especially because they had limited experience in Africa and therefore, having little understanding of the entire value of the research.

The figure 3 shows the respective number of respondents to the question “in your opinion, should more African values of family be fostered in your religious community?” (N=123).The following responses were drawn from Africans and non-Africans showing who were in support or in opposition of the inclusion of African values learnt from the diverse family backgrounds.

Figure 3: Should more African values be fostered: Africans/non-Africans indicated by numbers N= 123



From focused group discussions, questionnaire and face to face interviews, the researcher wanted to see whether the respondents concurred with her statement “there is little emphasis on the African spiritual formation values in religious formation today.” Responses on this particular statement varied based on the age of entry, congregation and those raised in the rural or urban areas. There were some strong indications in agreement with the statement despite the differences in variables.

The following table 5 shows that majority of the respondents supported and affirmed the statement that there is little emphasis on the African spiritual formation values in religious formation of African men and women. In the variable of age at entry there were higher percentages in support for the statement in all age categories, for instance, 56 percent, 66 percent and 78 percent respectively concurred with the statement that, ‘there is little emphasis on the African spiritual formation values in religious formation today’, while 44 percent, 34 percent and 22 percent disagreed with the statement respectively. On the variable of indigenous and international congregations in the age category of below 20 years at entry there were similar observations where 56

percent and 60 percent respectively were in agreement with the statement while 44 percent and 40 percent were not in agreement. The findings in the variable of those raised in rural or urban areas did have much difference. As it was found out, 74 percent and 46 percent said yes while 26 percent and 54 percent said no to the statement. Here the researcher observed that there were slight differences in those raised in rural and urban areas because some of those religious men and women who were raised in urban areas had very little knowledge of African spiritual formation values and therefore did not see clearly what was missing in religious life today as far as the inclusion of African spiritual values was concerned.

Table 5: Emphasis on African spiritual formation values by age of entry, by rural/urban, indigenous /international (N=123).

Age at entry (years)	Indigenous		International		Rural raised		Urban raised	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Below 20	56%	44%	60%	40%	74%	26%	46%	54%
20-25	66%	34%	64%	36%	89%	11%	54%	46%
25 and above	78%	22%	71%	29%	82%	18%	45%	55%

In all the variables indicated in the table 5, there were different reasons from the respondents. Some of the explanations that were given to support their answers were as follows:

They come with African values which are implicit but are not nurtured in religious formation (as observed by an African sister raised in the rural area (cf. App. C: #4).

- There is more emphasis put on scripture than on the African values. The inclusion of African spiritual formation values could lead to a holistic growth of an individual (as expressed by a rural raised African priest (cf. App. C: #8).

- An older African priest pointed out that lack of emphasis on African values lead many religious men and women to live with false respect or commitment that often changes when they get to their final vows or ordination (cf. App. C: #5).
- Most of the Africans get to religious life and try to ‘run away’ from their African values while they use the influence of Western values as a scapegoat; this is because there is less emphasis to enable them see the positivity in their African values (views by a newly professed African sister (cf. App. C: #8).
- Lack of emphasis on African values was described as “a poverty” because courses and programs taught in formation are western oriented and do not integrate African spiritual formation values in religious formation. This was raised as a serious concern by one of the African priest respondents in an indigenous congregation (cf. App. C: #7).
- There exists a clash of interests where some religious live contrary to the vow of poverty through modern perception that encourages materialism and accumulation without the African spirit of sharing (views of a non -African brother in an international congregation (cf. App. C: #1).
- Missionaries have been guilty of imposing foreign values on Africans in the name of Christianity (observation by a non-African brother in an international congregation (cf. App. C: #1)

The findings, as further pointed out by an older African sister showed that an individual in the African sense finds a deep sense of belonging to his/her family of origin and when this individual joins religious life there is an apparent loss of this value in her new family in religious life. The response to a family need or crisis is more spontaneous than to a fellow religious member in community. This sister also noted that there is a lack of ownership of their various congregations as places they can call their own

families. This was evident through the various examples that she gave such as care for congregational assets and future planning for the life of the congregation which is not taken seriously or given priority by the African men and women religious (cf. App. C: #8).

The findings from some of the focused group interviews showed that there is lack of equal treatment of the members hence creating divisions among same members of religious community. Due to this lack of equal treatment, some individuals feel they do not belong and therefore invest less energy in the life and activities of the congregation. Some of the examples cited on these disparities were, how decisions were made on who goes for studies, where to go, what to study, how far and who goes for ministry, among the many areas of concern (App. C: #3, 6,7). This study therefore, surfaces the problem of lack of integration of African values in religious formation as a factor that needs immediate attention where members feel a sense of belonging.

3.4 Findings Related to the Hypothesis

The hypothesis of the study stated that “there is urgent need for the integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values in the formation programs of religious communities of African men and women so as to enhance and make the programs holistic and more meaningful in Africa today”. This hypothesis was confirmed from the study findings which have shown that due to lack of integrating African spiritual values in religious formation, African men and women who join religious life tend to adopt new lifestyles that completely distort the meaning and purpose of religious life. One respondent from a face to face interview said:

African religious who mostly come from homes that would be considered economically below average (by Kenyan standards), have a desire to live a simple lifestyle, but when they join religious congregations they experience a

shift in lifestyle. The simplicity of life, as it were is taken over by a materialistic attitude which results in many adapting a lifestyle considered affluent contrary to their vow of poverty and the reality of poverty that surrounds them in Africa. Eventually the African value of sharing and taking responsibility loses meaning (cf. App. C: #4).

The hypothesis that there is urgent need for the integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values in the formation programs of religious communities of African men and women so as to enhance and make the programs holistic and more meaningful in Africa today”, was further supported by four different respondents from face to face and focused group interviews who strongly emphasized that for this to be realized, first and foremost, “we need to have all formators to be formed” (cf. App. C: #1, 3, 5, 7). This was also supported by another respondent, non-African sister who said, “it would be better for formation houses and programs to have workshops on African spiritual values and African cultures so that this could enhance the living and appreciation of the African values by both Africans and non- Africans” (cf. App. C: #8). This reality cannot be disputed because formators are the primary agents to help perpetuate these values in the formees. Therefore, their role is essential in this implementation.

To see whether there was really need of integrating African spiritual formation values in religious formation and if such incorporation would enhance living community life, the researcher used the following question, ‘What other African values apart from what is in the questionnaire would you wish to see embraced in community life?’ From the responses to this question, the researcher found out that indeed there were more African values that needed to be incorporated and embraced in religious communities which could improve the relationship, prayer life, harmony among members and deeper

commitment to community life. The respondents indicated this by listing various African values that needed to be incorporated. The following is a random list of other African values that was generated from respondents across variables of age at entry, gender, congregation and years of profession, African or non-Africans. The value of respect for elders emerged as that with the highest score across all variables, followed by care for elders and sick members of the community, having a spirit of other –centeredness and getting to know families of community members; all these came from majority of Africans more than non-Africans regardless of age or gender. The rest of the values below were mentioned randomly but also considered as pertinent to religious life and community building in Africa:

- Celebration of birthdays
- Spirit of other-centeredness
- Having social events
- Concern for others during meals
- Caring for elderly and sick members of the community
- Listening to others and dialogue
- Sharing responsibilities
- Respect for elderly
- Getting to know homes and families of community members

From the list above, there were different responses basing on variables; years of ordination / profession, gender, African and non-African. The emerging results showed that more older women than men were of the highest preference that African values be incorporated into formation. This cut across all women, whether from indigenous or international congregations. The same was true of all the male religious whose support to the inclusion of African values rated lower than that of the women. This means that those

religious men or women who have not had a longer life experience in religious life still do not show high enthusiasm of inclusion of African values.

3.5 Findings related to the Significance of the Thesis

The findings have pointed out the importance of this study in addressing the question of the true meaning of inculturation, where both African spiritual values and Christian values find a place in the lives of those living religious life. The integration of the two perspectives are essential to the African religious men and women because this integration has a direct impact to their living religious life in a holistic way that depict both African spiritual formation values and Christian values.

The findings have revealed the various African spiritual formation values need to be embraced as a way of integrating Christianity with African values, especially those which have a resonance with Gospel values.

The findings have also pointed out that this study is important particularly with many of the respondents supporting the idea that there is need to incorporate African spiritual formation values in religious formation of African men and women today. The variable of congregation, whether indigenous or international revealed almost equal percentage in terms of supporting the value of integrating African spiritual formation values with Christian values as the thesis topic indicates.

The percentages of respondents in the indigenous category are slightly lower, 42 %, as compared to those in the international category, 58%, simply because there were very few indigenous congregations in all categories of vocations. It is worth noting that majority of African religious men and women in international congregations supported the integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian value. However, the women congregations emerged with a higher percentage partly because they formed a larger population of respondents. Evidently, all those sampled in the

indigenous congregations highly supported the study by indicating that the integration of African spiritual formation values with the Christian values in the religious formation of African men and women was a welcome endeavor toward inculturation as a call from the Synod of the African Bishops in 1994. This is shown from the demographic responses of the respondents as illustrated in table 6.

Table 6: Responses by congregations supporting the integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values N=123

Respondents from	Men	Women	Total Men and Women
Indigenous congregations	17 (33%)	23 (32%)	40 (33%)
International congregations	35 (67%)	48 (68%)	83 (67%)
TOTAL	52 (100%)	71 (100%)	123 (100%)

One older sister from an indigenous congregation who has been in leadership of her congregation observed that the issue of inculturation has been there for long and not much effort has been put in place to see how it is working in the church today. The sister further added “it is good you are carrying out some study on this in religious congregations, it is in religious houses that we form those who later become church leaders who need to help implement these necessary changes in the church today” (cf. App. C: #4).

3.6 Research Questions

3.6.1 Research Question One

Research question one stated “Which African spiritual formation values do you know from your upbringing or from your life experience in Africa?”

Based on the variable of indigenous and international congregations as well as rural and urban raised religious men and women, there were a number of African values listed that they knew. The following values were randomly listed:

- Respect for elders and authority
- Honesty and faithfulness
- Fear of God
- Spirit of sharing
- Togetherness/solidarity/unity
- Hard work/ service
- Team work/ community spirit
- Hospitality
- Responsibility
- Spontaneous Prayer
- Obedience
- Care for elderly
- Forgiveness /reconciliation
- Sense of belonging
- Extended family
- Palaver (baraza)

In response to the question, “Why do you not live out these values if you know them this well?” Two of the rural raised priests said that there is no room in religious formation to guarantee the application of the values (cf. App. C: #13, 14). One of these two respondents further pointed out that the rules and regulations in his religious community do not give room or tolerate the practice of incorporating African spiritual values. The main reason is that they are often told that as they enter the congregation

they must realize that they are being formed to live the spirit of their founder and the charism of the congregation. This respondent noted that this, therefore, becomes their focus of formation. However, he said he found it a big challenge to a young man coming to religious life then suddenly he is told put aside what he has always embraced as part of his upbringing as he welcomes the new spirit of the congregation. This respondent hoped that this study would open an avenue through which formation programs would re-emphasize on the inclusion of the African spiritual formation values in religious life so that they could encourage the African men and women to appreciate and practice the values they have already acquired before joining the religious life.

On the contrary, one younger professed respondent, a sister, belonging to an international congregation was of the conviction that it had never dawned on her that these values have a place in religious life. In fact according to her, she believed that she had been redeemed from what she referred to as “African pagan ways” of life since she joined her congregation (cf. App C: # 4). This therefore indicates that this sister has no regard for her African spiritual formation values. This can be treated as an isolated case that cannot be used to generalize that all Africans have no regard of their values because that was not the case across all variables. The learning therefore is that there are still a few Africans who find it hard to appreciate their own African values and this indeed may be an obstacle in the implementation of the topic of study that addresses the integration of African spiritual values with Christian values in the religious formation of African men and women.

According to 5 other African respondents, 2 from indigenous and 3 from international congregations noted that incorporating African spiritual formation values in the religious life enables men and women who join the congregation to be fully aware of the needs of their time in service and to fully live up to the essence of true meaning of

religious life. These respondents cited the following examples: respect for elderly, fear of God, hospitality, spirit of sharing, obedience, and sacredness of rituals, hard work, other-centered, essence of forgiveness and sense of community as those among the values that if well understood and integrated could enhance community living (cf. App. C: #2, 3, 5, 7, 9).

The study has further illustrated some of the challenges that need to be addressed in terms of values to be confronted in order to live an authentic Christian life that respects and appreciates each member's cultural upbringing. From a focused group of African sisters, some values were enumerated as those that need to be addressed because they have been misinterpreted and expressed in ways that do not enhance healthy community living. This observation was made across African religious men and women who were both in indigenous and international congregations. This focused group hoped that African religious men and women can create forums or workshops through which they can reevaluate their understanding of these values. Some of these distinct African values that were listed as those needing to be re-evaluated include:

- Fear rather than respect.
- Hospitality beyond boundaries
- Unfounded beliefs like witchcraft
- Taboos that mete out collective punishment to an entire family for mistakes of an individual.

The reasons that were raised about these values by these respondents were that many of the young people joining religious life tend to fear their formators and superiors when in actual sense they have hurts and anger that they cannot express. It became clear as 2 young sisters shared that they have always tried to be on the 'safer side' of the superior since they don't like conflicts and to avoid this they remain obedient to the rules

(cf. App. C: #9, 13). This scenario was different from an interview with a group of older sisters, brothers and priests respectively who were bold in confronting situations in their community without fear of authority or pretense. The findings reveal that younger members in religious congregations, especially those who have not yet made perpetual profession, do not seem to engage in confrontations that may give the impression that they can challenge an unpleasant behavior and to avoid this they prefer to appear content with situations that in fact hurt them so long as they can put on pseudo respect and keep their peace. This is a survival tactic that is not out of genuine respect.

Another priest respondent, a non-African said that “hospitality is a value to Africans and I have no problem with that but some of my brothers in my congregation have taken it too far; they misuse community resources claiming that they are being hospitable to their friends and family members” (cf. App. C: #6).

3.6.2 Research Question Two

The research question two was “Do you use spontaneous prayers coming from the heart in your daily community prayers? This question on the use of spontaneous prayers in the religious communities revealed varied responses. The variable of congregation showed that many of the international congregations especially those founded in Europe prefer and most commonly use the written prayers as found in the book, “Prayer of the Church ”, rather than using creativity and spontaneous prayers. In most of these international congregations as found out during the researcher’s visit, they had structured way of prayer as one respondent from one of the international community observed, “I find this way of structured and written prayers boring. It is restricting and too structured and does not motivate me to go for community prayers,” said a sister in charge of postulants in one of the international congregations founded in Europe (cf. App. C: #4).

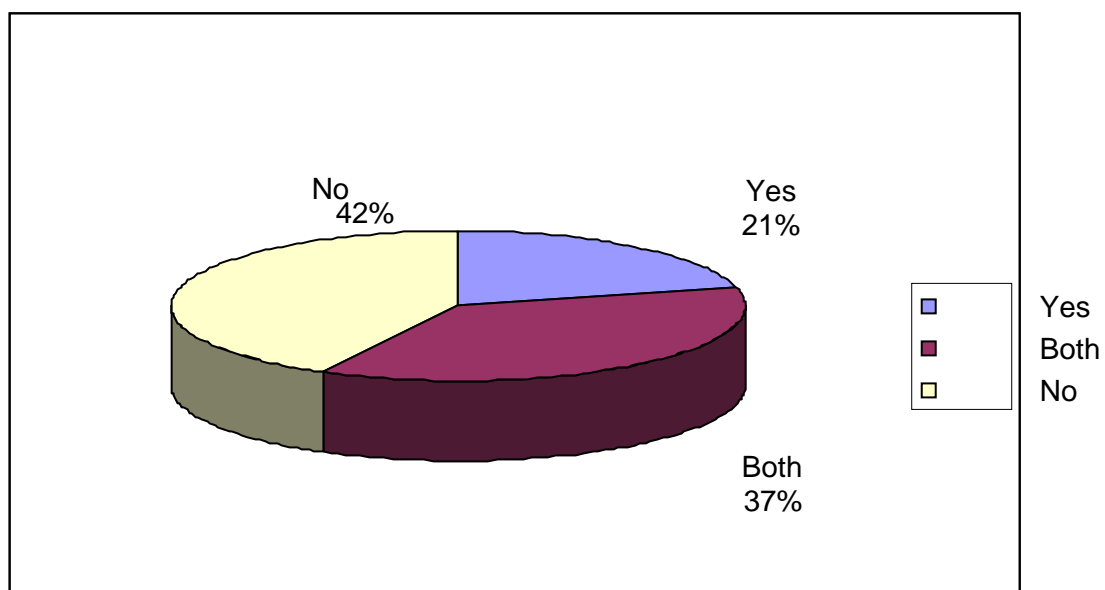
One brother who made final profession recently observed that the use of spontaneous prayers is one way of creating confidence and creativity in the young men and women they are forming. “However, due to the old way of following our founder’s original approach to prayer, there has been very little encouragement to using spontaneous prayers in our congregation”, he said. He added that some brothers, surprisingly, find it a challenge to offer intercession prayers unless they have them written down (cf. App. C: #2).

Another priest who is charge of formation in an international congregation noted that there is very little creativity in preparation of prayers hence creating a monotony that does not motivate some of his brother priests to go for prayer. In other words prayer has become a mechanical practice. This response affirmed what had earlier been pointed out by one of the sisters in charge of formation in a congregation founded in Europe as already cited above that the lack of spontaneity and creativity in prayer is contributing to a laxity in prayer in this religious community (cf. App. C: #5).

The responses were drawn from respondents who were from both indigenous and international congregations. Responses from brothers, sisters and priests were all included to show their practice of use of spontaneous prayers in their communities. It is vividly indicating that in many religious congregations for both indigenous and international congregations, the use of spontaneous prayer has not been well accepted and practiced. This is indicated in Figure 4 by 42 percent of all respondents who said they do not use spontaneous prayers as compared to 37 percent who combine spontaneous and creativity with the approach in the ‘Prayer of the Church’, while only 21 percent indicated to use the spontaneous prayers flowing from their creativity. It was clear that majority of the indigenous congregations basically use prayers from ‘Prayers of the Church’ which are fixed prayers recited daily. Of the international groups, those

with origin in Europe still use the traditional ‘Prayer of the Church’ while those from North America have a revised prayer book, ‘The Peoples’ Companion’ which has inclusive language but gives room for creativity and spontaneity. What seemed to come through all variables was that there is a desire to vary prayers so as to avoid prayers becoming a routine practice to be fulfilled other than for spiritual nourishment. The figure below illustrates the percentages of responses on the use of spontaneous prayers.

Figure 4: Responses on the use of spontaneous prayers by religious men and women from indigenous and international congregations (N=123)



One sister’s answer to the question, ‘Do you use spontaneous prayers in your community?’ Her response came with surprise that there was such an approach. She was only aware of the use of prayers from ‘The Prayer of the Church’ also called ‘The liturgy of the hours’ that is used as the main prayer book where all prayers are recited or occasionally chanted (cf. App. C: #4).

In another international congregation of priests, a respondent did not have an experience of any other approach to prayer other than the use of ‘The Prayer of the Church’ prayer book. It was quite new for him to hear that there would be any creativity, say, listening to a story read from a newspaper on a contemporary issue and build prayer

around that situation and follow up with intercessory prayers coming from the heart in relation to the story. This seemed a totally new approach to prayer for this priest and he wondered if such a thought could be entertained in his community as to introduce creativity and spontaneity of prayer (cf. App. C: #5).

What came out of the study showed that there are different congregations, whether international or indigenous using either spontaneity of prayer with a pattern of creativity or those that strictly use 'The Prayer of the Church.

From the findings, it was evident that the use of creativity and spontaneity at prayer is still a long way to be fully accepted in many of the religious congregations whether indigenous or international with missionaries from Europe. However, congregations with strong roots in North America emerged as those that have adopted more use of spontaneous prayers and creativity. In some of these congregations the main books of reference for prayer were 'Companion to the breviary' or 'The new companion to the breviary with seasonal supplement' or 'People's companion to the breviary'. All these books give room for more spontaneity and have inclusive language as opposed to prayers from 'The Prayer of the church'.

3.6.3 Research Question Three

Research question three was "What activities or projects have your religious community emphasized on so as to enhance the African values of self-reliance in the spirit of hard work?" Findings from this research question showed that majority of religious communities have realized the importance of hard work invested in projects as a way of future sustainability of their communities. For instance out the 15 male and 15 female religious congregations that were sampled in the study, the researcher found out that 7 male religious congregations had at least sustainable projects while 11 out of 15 of female religious congregation had established sustainable projects. One of the

outstanding observations that the researcher found out especially during the visits and participant observation was that most of the thriving projects with a huge income were run by congregations of religious sisters. Out of these 11 women congregations 9 were indigenous congregations showing that international women congregations have not invested much in projects for sustainability. There were only 2 cases of male religious congregation with stable projects while the others were merely starting or struggling to maintain what they had.

Another surprise that the researcher found during her study was that the well-established projects were run by indigenous congregations as compared to the international congregation. This could be attributed to the fact that many of the indigenous congregations entirely rely on their projects for financial support to meet the needs of their members and their ministries.

On the other hand, the international congregations had not invested much in the projects because they still rely on western countries for funding for their sustainability. One of the respondents from an international congregation observed that the idea of dependence on western countries has created a laxity among members, something that has contributed to lack of active involvement in setting up projects for sustainability. According to her, this continues to promote the dependence syndrome that African countries seem to be identified with.

In another research finding, one respondent who is a religious brother is fully involved in massive projects which are a big source of income to their community. Having studied Social Ministry from Tangaza University College and now has a Masters in Project Development from Nairobi University, he is currently using this knowledge to transform and bring about sustainable living that is truly African. His hard work does not only benefit his religious community but others because he is currently offering training

and workshops to members of other religious communities on how to use their local resources to generate income and live sustainably with minimal dependence from donor funding. When we visited him, he was in the farm and had the opportunity to demonstrate to us what he does and how this is translated into the income of the community. He observed that “since my childhood, hard work especially in farming was my most favorable venture which I have cultivated over these years. Even when I joined religious life, I never saw it as a hindrance to continuing my passion for farming and hard working as I used to do at home as a young man” (c.f. App. C: # 2). This respondent further observed that the projects have enabled many of the members who came with specialized skills and knowledge from their rural upbringing to utilize the opportunity to contribute to the wellbeing of the community. Other members of the congregation are now putting their acquired skills from professional training into the management of the projects run by their community (cf. App. C: #4).

Findings from various indigenous and international congregations showed that indigenous congregations have more than one income- generating projects which are mainly supervised by their members as compared to international congregations which even when they have a project it is supervised by hired employees. It comes out clearly that the indigenous congregations of women have the highest percentage generally in having projects of sustenance as compared to the international female congregations who still rely on outside help. Evidently, it could be deduced that these indigenous congregations have grown to a level of maturity that realizes the potential from within and not without and therefore relying on their human resources. This apparent difference, as already pointed out, is motivated by the needs of these indigenous congregations which entirely depend on their hard work. This research area became pertinent to the

study to help support the African value for hard work and how it has been adapted by various religious congregations.

Some of the projects that respondents referred to in their responses and those which the researcher vividly saw during the visits to various religious congregations during her data collection are shown in table 7.

Table 7: Income generating projects by type of religious congregation and gender

(N= 123)

Project name	Indigenous congregation (n=15)	International congregation (n=15)	Male (n=58)	Female (n=65)
Private schools	82%	18 %	26%	74%
Hospitals	22%	78%	12%	88%
Farming (chicken, cattle, fish pond, garden)	86%	14%	32%	68%
Hostels	78%	22%	6%	94%
Retreat center	59%	41%	46%	54%
Guest houses	76%	24%	15%	85%
Rosary and candle making	80%	20%	4%	96%
Rental houses	78%	22 %	34%	66%
Public transport	89%	11%	52%	48%
Vocation training	69%	31%	44%	56%
Publishing	46%	54%	59%	41%
Hosts and vestment making	76 %	24%	4%	96%

3.6.4 Research Question Four

Research question four was “How is the aspect of community as family built on love and forgiveness emphasized in your religious community?”

Table 8 summarized the respondents based on the variable of gender and their years of profession. This table was deduced from the question: “How would you rate the level of your congregation as a family built on love and forgiveness?” From the table, it is clear that values of community as family built on love and forgiveness among members are highly appreciated in many of the congregations both international and indigenous religious men and women. However the level of practicing the same value

was seen to be a challenge to many, particularly concerning the spirit of community as family and especially among male congregations both indigenous and international. On the contrary the women congregations, both indigenous and international, seem to demonstrate the spirit of family more than the men through their maternal instincts of reaching out and care for one another.

One woman respondent said “it is natural to relate comfortably with your own siblings but in religious community one has to make effort to attain and nurture this relationship” (cf. App. C: #4). A male respondent concurred with her by observing that in some of the instances when the spirit of family is experienced, it is during community prayers, sharing community meals, helping and supporting each other during times of sorrow and during celebration. He however said that this comes occasionally, otherwise there is little commitment by individuals to foster this value (cf. App. C: #1).

From table 8, it is clear that the older members from both the variables of female and male religious indicate that there is a deterioration of how the value of community as family built on love and forgiveness is lived out. However, the younger members do not seem to have the same views as shown from their responses. This is evident from the fact that whereas 15 younger male and female religious professed or ordained below 5 years, were of the opinion that the spirit of community as a family built on love and forgiveness was lived well, the older male and female religious professed or ordained 15 years and above saw it differently and had only 1 respondent. This disparity is a clear indication that there are varying opinions on how the value of family is experienced among the younger and older members in religious life.

Table 8: Values of community as a family built on love and forgiveness as lived by rating of gender and years of profession/ordination (N=123).

Years of profession/ordination	Gender	Very poor	Moderate	Good	Very Good
0-5	Male	2	3	5	7
	Female	3	2	6	8
5-10	Male	3	2	3	4
	Female	5	4	3	4
10-15	Male	2	3	3	3
	Female	4	3	4	3
15 and above	Male	10	3	3	1
	Female	13	2	2	0

The researcher noted that about 4 older respondent sisters during the focused group discussion were in agreement with each other that the value of community as a family is not lived as it should be or as it was done in the African families. One of them vividly said “these days individuals decide to pray on their own simply because they are following their favorite television programs during community prayer time or even decide to take a rest in bed during community prayer time; this kind of attitude does not foster a spirit of a family that prays together in the” (cf. App. C: # 4, 7, 10, 19).

In response to a question on, ‘How is love as a sign of community practiced among members?’ The response from a priest indicated that in his community this has been one of the challenges they are facing though they are trying to encourage the young members in formation to keep it. He said that there are certain moments especially when one of the members is sick, the other members do not accord him proper care and support as they would respond if it were a biological family member. It was observed that there is reluctance observed especially between younger and older members, where the younger members feel very much comfortable to support their fellow peers as a gesture of love as opposed to the older ones who times are compassionate to both the

younger ones and their fellow older members. This behavior is a challenge that the respondent pointed out as contradicting the African value of care for the old (cf. App. C: #5)

A brother respondent from an international congregation admitted that there is no true sense of love, community and forgiveness in his religious congregation. He further argued that if indeed all religious men and women within a community are bound together, first, by their baptismal initiation into the church and second by the charisms of their congregations that drew them together, then they should embrace their new families in religious life just as they would do at their homes. According to him this is far from being achieved. Further probing revealed that there is apparent lip-service to ‘my brother in community’ phrase that does not really reflect genuineness (cf. App. C: #2).

Similar sentiments were echoed by another brother from an indigenous congregation who pointed out that the only moment where he observed that a spirit of family in community was explicit was among brothers who hail from one ethnic group who exclude others, creating an atmosphere of ‘us’ and ‘them’ This attitude is divisive in community life and does not enhance unity in diversity (cf. App. C: #3).

Apparently, the opposite was true of women congregations, as a sister respondent pointed out how they try to be sisters to each other and attributed that to women being more relational than men, therefore, find it easy to foster love for one another in community (cf. App. C: #4).

The value of forgiveness as practiced by the variable of vocation had varied findings. The religious sisters seemed to support and embrace forgiveness easily as compared to brothers and priests in religious life. It was found by the researcher that during the focused group discussion and face to face interviews, sisters were at ease to respond and share ways on how they deal with forgiveness and instances that this has

worked in their congregation than their male counterparts. Some of the ways that were illustrated as evidence of when forgiveness has been practiced included: dialogue and acceptance of one another to see the mistake and forgive, through the exchange of a hand shake and a hug as a sign of peace and through the sacrament of reconciliation. However, forgiveness was seen as one of the most challenging elements among the religious priests and brothers in as much as they are expected to be role models of forgiveness.

A priest observed that he had witnessed instances where two priests living in the same house did not talk or eat together at table just because of their past misunderstanding which they were not even willing to solve amicably and forgive each other. He narrated a story of a close friend of his who was in a similar situation, having had differences with his brother in religious formation. Later on the two ended up being sent to the same parish after their ordination and lived together for about six months without sharing meals or verbal communication except through written notes. This came to the attention of the parish members who raised this concern to the Bishop and later to their Superior who later on after investigation had to force them into dialogue and forgiveness. He finally said that forgiveness among religious is seen as a matter of personal decision which has to come from within and it is dependent on the disposition of individuals. For him this is not supposed to be the case because true forgiveness requires that one accepts the mistakes and seeks forgiveness from the other and not keep the anger in the heart (cf. App. C: #1).

Another respondent who is a priest also recounted an instance when he did a mistake during his formation time then the formator claimed to have forgiven him. However, every time he erred the formator could go back and remind him of the past mistakes. This for him was not true forgiveness. In the African value of forgiveness as he pointed out:

When I forgive you and we shake hands and eat together or share a drink as a symbol of harmonizing the previously broken relationship I cannot go back to remind you .It is like taking back my own vomit. (c.f. App. C: # 5)

3.6.5 Research Question Five

Question five was “What are some of the gifts and challenges experienced in your religious community in relation to respect to the elders and authority?”

Among those who fell in the age category of below 5 years of ordination or profession and those between 5 to 10 years of ordination or profession had a lot to share about how the older members in religious life expect too much from the young ones and always expect respect from them by their virtue of being older members in religious life. One of the respondents from an indigenous congregation pointed out that he knows from his family socialization that, “old age is a source of wisdom but this fact should not be misused” (cf. App. C: #2).

One of the most conflicting elements on the aspect of elderly and giftedness was, as one respondent brother of international congregation narrated, “many of the old religious men tend to become so inquisitive and suspicious about everything that young ones do, an aspect that generates mistrust between the two age groups”. On the contrary of what would be expected by many especially within the African set up, a religious sister from an international congregation observed that some of the older members of her congregation often feel disrespected when younger members offer to help them as they would naturally do in their African homes settings with their older members in the society. The elderly perceive such a gesture of help as a way of demeaning their strength. This respondent said, “They do not want to be helped lest they are perceived as old and weak but their fragile and diminishing body communicates this” (cf. App. C: #2). This was perceived as causing conflict between African and Western cultural expectations as

far as respect is understood and accorded to the older members in the community. There was further revelation that even the mention of ‘old’ is perceived by some of the older members of non-African origin as disrespectful. A sister from an international congregation alluded to this and said, “I would prefer to be called ‘a senior citizen’ than an old sister” (cf. App. C: #8).

As the observation indicated 70 percent of the respondents who fell in the category of 10 years of ordination or profession and below observed that of those in authority in religious life misuse their powers by demanding respect from their subjects forgetting that respect is earned and it is reciprocal. One young priest noted that the integrity of one who is in authority is enough to draw respect from others naturally without using force (cf. App. C: #1). This therefore, illustrates well how young religious men and women see respect not as a gift but as reason that older members in religious congregation use as a tool to achieve their own ends. Another older African priest indicated that in some instances respect becomes a challenge especially when the person in authority is younger than the ones under him or her and the older one needs to respect and obey the decisions he or she makes for the others (cf. App. C: #5).

3.6.6 Research Question Six

Research question six was “In which ways are the values of hospitality, other-centeredness, service and solidarity reflected in your religious community?” This question aimed at finding out how hospitality is accorded in religious communities with special attention to the variables of international and indigenous congregations and among the old and the young. One respondent from an international congregation pointed out that they welcome visitors whenever they come and are received in a warm manner and there is at least one person assigned to take care of visitors in their community. However, she made it clear that what she understands as hospitality as a

non-African is quite different from the African ways of how this same value is expressed (cf. App. C: #5). These sentiments were supported by examples from another respondent from an international congregation who emphasized the need for a visitor to make prior notification of when he/she will visit, state how long he or she would be staying, and purpose of the visit among other things. To justify this, he said that it helps him to offer the best hospitality he can know that a guest is expected. His rationale for saying this was, “These unexpected visits interfere with my program and disorient me because I have to change my schedule to accommodate the visitors” (cf. App. C: #3).

On the contrary, a first Kenyan woman religious in an international congregation related that in the last ten years her community has had a feel of being an African Province because Africans are the majority and they now live the value of hospitality, other-centeredness, service and solidarity with African flavor. She illustrated that their families are more welcomed today because African members of her congregation feel more comfortable to invite them. Family members are informed and invited to participate in the functions of the congregation and the reverse is also true. During such functions, family members of different sisters are introduced to each other. Families of sisters living in other countries do not lose touch with their daughter because the sisters in their home countries still connect with them. Previously, their family members were not comfortable to visit their daughters in the convent because they understood hospitality differently from how the missionaries accorded them. For instance, whereas the non-African missionary sisters would greet guests who came to their houses verbally the African value to extend a hand shake as a manner of greeting was missing (cf. App. C: #8).

Similarly, a respondent from an indigenous congregation expressed her disappointment and embarrassment whenever visitors are expected to book when they

will come, how long they may stay, whether they will eat. All these questions and formalities are a bone of contention in her congregation between the Africans and non-Africans. According to her a guest who appears at the door unannounced should be received without much ado although the non-Africans require prior arrangements made to avoid inconveniences in the community schedule. This, therefore, as she explained, causes tensions because both the Africans and non-Africans understand the value of hospitality differently in as much as both groups would want to receive guests (cf. App. C: #4). According to the researcher, this cultural perception on hospitality requires dialogue with openness and trust that in these diversity both groups can reach a harmonious level ground.

An African religious brother well advanced in age complained that his younger brothers in community do not seem to understand what hospitality is because they tend to misuse community resources under the pretext of hospitality. He narrated an incident in his community where his younger religious brothers would bring their friends over the weekend, use up all the food supplies from the store and leave it empty. This behavior continued until a meeting was called in which the matter was discussed to correct this behavior. Since then, there is a change of behavior such that there is a limit of who comes and the frequency of visitors has reduced cf. (App. C: #2). This seems to unveil differences on how old religious understand hospitality as compared to the young ones who do not seem to see an end to community resources, evidence of the existence of lack of accountability.

Evidently, what came out showed that there are tensions also between how hospitality is understood among younger and older Africans. These same sentiments were expressed by an older African religious sister who complained that her younger religious sisters had turned their community into a restaurant. Her concern was:

My young sisters bring in their fellow religious friends every weekend and they spend the whole day watching television programs with high volume, they cook all sorts of foods and the whole house is too noisy that I wish I would have a place to go to every time they come. (cf. App. C: #8)

From the complaints of this older sister, it is clear that there are no boundaries as to how long visitors stay, the inconveniences caused in other communities and the insensitivity to other community members need for silence of consideration.

Focusing on the other-centeredness activities as lived out in religious communities of both men and women, the research showed that there are obvious differences between male and female religious in the manner of their ability to be other centered. A difference was noted when one male respondent said that as men they do not really show close care for one another as he had observed from what the women religious do. He gave an example of how in his community, a fellow priest may be sick in his room and yet nobody will take the time to check on him until after several hours. He added, “We men do not reach out to each other as well as our female counterparts do. The sisters have a maternal instinct that will move them to check on one another more often and offer the care that is required” (cf. App. C: #1).

A religious brother responding to how well they use community resources commented from his experience in community where resources are not used with the spirit of stewardship so that others can also have. He was commenting on how the car is used by a brother who uses all the fuel but fails to refuel it, brings and parks it in the garage with the oil gauge at empty. He recalled an incident when there was an emergency of illness and a brother was to be rushed to hospital at night only to find that the car was low in fuel (cf. App. C: #3).

This scenario of other-centeredness is lived differently as a religious sister shared that her sisters do show concern when there is a missing sister in the community such that food is kept for her when she gets to the community late and tired her community members receive her warmly and offer her thing to eat or drink. This sister however, observed that this gesture is mainly expressed by the older sisters and not the young ones. According to her the young ones would be watching television and do not even offer a word of welcome to her (cf. App. C: #8).

Out of curiosity, the researcher sought to find out from a younger sister what she thought about the spirit of other-centeredness. Her response indicated that her actions were misinterpreted by older sisters without knowing that her behavior was influenced by the attitude that these older sisters have toward the young ones. According to her, the bone of contention was, and at this moment she lowered her voice not to be heard, “The older sisters think we can do everything for them. We, too need to be reached out to even though in little tiny ways, like being appreciated for what we do and a word of ‘thank you’ makes a difference” (cf. App. C: #9). The table 9 illustrates how the value for other-centeredness is demonstrated in action among male and female congregations. It shows clearly that female religious do take the initiative very often to visit those who are sick in their rooms, keep meals for those who are away, assist in house chores, ask for the whereabouts of those absent or express a word of welcome to their members. This practice is rarely practiced among the men religious. The table 9 brings out the responses of how often these gestures of care for one another are expressed among both men and women religious.

On the value of solidarity as found from the variables of men and women religious, one priest respondent from an international congregation shared that his brother priests stood by him during the post-election violence here in Kenya (2007-

2008). His brothers in community saved him when a warring group of young men came to their convent demanding for any persons from the ethnic group that was under attack. Had they not protected him, he could possibly have been killed. This protection eventually saved his life. He recalled this experience with tears in his eyes revealing what it meant to him to be surrounded by loving brothers in such a crisis (cf. App. C: #2)

Table 9: Other centered community activities by gender (N=123)

Activity	Male religious			Female religious		
	Very often	Often	Less often	Very often	Often	Less often
Visit the sick in the room		√		√		
Keeping meals for others		√		√		
Praying for others' needs		√			√	
Doing laundry for others			√		√	
Assisting in other house chores		√		√		
Asking whereabouts of others	√			√		
Welcoming others		√		√		
Seeing others off		√		√		
Being present to listen to others			√	√		
Supporting others in sorrow or celebrations	√			√		

Another religious brother acknowledged how his religious community supported him when his whole family was banished from their ancestral home as tradition demands because his younger brother murdered a kinsman. Soon after this tragedy his family was welcomed to their convent until they were reallocated in a far distant place. For him, this was a trying moment but also an opportunity to experience what it means to have brothers who indeed are there for one. He recalled this with deep gratitude for the gift of community life (cf. App. C: #2).

A newly professed African sister in an indigenous religious congregation said that the value for solidarity cannot be overemphasized in her congregation. She narrated when her father died during her years of initial formation in the novitiate in a country other than her own. However, by the time arrangements were made for her to fly back home for the burial, her religious sisters in her home country had already gone to be with her family and remained with her until after burial. She said that this was a gesture of extreme compassion and sisterly love that she will never forget but hope to do the same to others in future (cf. App. C: #4).

In another interview, an older religious sister from an indigenous congregation pointed out that, “we show a sense of solidarity by putting on a common religious habit regardless of our social background or educational level”. She also said that whenever there is a need shared by any of her sisters, especially one requiring financial help for a family member of a sister, they discuss as a community so as to respond to that particular need (cf. App. C: #8).

A religious brother from an international congregation appreciated how his brothers show a sense solidarity during religious professions when members share the responsibilities and duties to ensure that the occasion is as colorful as possible. From his sharing it was quite obvious that the brothers do their level best to celebrate together with their fellow brothers. In this particular community it became more and more evident that what this brother had shared was indeed real. This was observed when another brother joined us and made a comment, “I wanted to know if my brother might need any help during this interview so I have come to join you just in case you need me” (cf. App.: #5).

It became evident from the interviews that religious men and women have a sense of solidarity although it is expressed differently by the various variables of male or female, indigenous or international congregations. It all depends on the situation and the

gravity of the need at hand. However, for the women there is a stronger emotional expression as compared to men when it comes to death or illness but this does not make us think that men do not express their emotions. They do in subtle ways knowing that they are influenced by cultural socialization where boys are told that ‘men don’t cry’.

3.7 Findings Related to the Assumptions of the Thesis

This section provides findings related to the assumptions of the study as derived from the data collected from the field.

3.7.1 Assumption One

Assumption one stated that, “The African spiritual value of respect for elders and authority acquired at home are not outdated and can enrich the religious formation programs in Africa today.” This assumption was revealed throughout the research to be valid. In response to this assumption, 3 respondents from the variables of indigenous and international congregations, gender, and basing on number of years of profession and ordination felt that respect for elders and authority is not observed as something new in religious life but as a virtue that one comes along with from his or her rural upbringing. However, the differences on how this is lived out varied especially when a respondent sister who professed 10 years ago from an indigenous congregation qualified what she meant by giving an example, “generally from our African understanding, elderly members in our community are sources of wisdom and their seniority needs to be respected” (cf. App. C: #1). These sentiments were supported by another elderly African respondent from an international congregation who pointed out that for an African “respect of elders and authority goes deep into the skin” meaning that no one reminds the other about respect of elders. (cf. App. C: #8). According to her, respect for elders cannot be questioned because as she added “we Africans have a very strong belief in the

power of the spoken word from the elderly members, thus we need to respect them since by their word they can determine one's destiny”.

Another respondent who is a non-African brother from an international congregation observed how he has experienced his younger African brothers show respect to older members of his congregation. However, he had concern over the sincerity of the respect because as he recalled, his brothers seem to have respect during their years of initial formation, thus during postulancy and novitiate, but then after they profess there is a sudden change that takes place in them especially after final profession. According to him those in initial formation seem to live in pseudo respect exhibited in fear, thing which he has challenged among his brothers but also wishes that if it is genuine then there has to be a consistence respect even after their final vow profession or ordination. (cf. App. C: #3).

One African priest who is a formator in his international congregation referred to elders particularly, as, “moving encyclopedias” who are consultants to all the community's matters. As he exalted the position of elders with this metaphor he further noted that elders carry the wisdom of the community and are consultants in all matters of life (cf. App. C: #5).

It was further noted by another African priest who is a formator in an international congregation that despite the age gap, anyone who is in authority needs to be respected for the position she or he holds. As an example he explained that there are levels of authority in the formation programs of which everyone at each level deserves his or her due respect from all those under him or her. He said:

A good example is a deacon who needs to be respected by all those in philosophy and first years in theology. Due to their level of formation, they are accorded certain roles like preaching in the chapel which the others do not qualify to do

yet. Thus, a deacon's position in the community grants him the responsibility to serve others and not a privilege". (cf. App. C: #5)

However, a religious brother expressed how the issue of respect and authority was seen to pose challenges particularly when people in authority begin to misuse their authority to intimidate others and demand respect (cf. App. C: #3). His response was further supported by two brothers who gave areas that are most abused by those in authority especially superiors who confront others particularly when it is done in public, something that leaves one feeling humiliated and belittled. According to these two brothers who had been victims of correction in public; a loving correction is well received when it is given in privacy (cf. App. C: #14, 18).

In a focused interview with young professed African brothers it was revealed that there is lack of dialogue in their community and, therefore, they wondered how they can implement directives when they were not part of the dialogue. According to them this does not enhance mutual respect that is needed to facilitate respect for those in authority. They were in agreement that leadership that does not involve all the stakeholders eventually becomes a one person's project which does not survive for long. There was an expression of sentiments that older persons or those in authority need to treat younger ones with respect. A young sister of an indigenous congregation challenged the one-way respect for elders and suggested that in the changing times even the elderly persons need to have respect for younger members. In her perception, she would like to see a society where there exists mutual respect that will foster the vow of obedience (cf. App. C: #4).

A newly ordained priest from an international congregation narrated an incident where the elders in his congregation find it difficult to give younger members who have been elected into authority respect, especially when these older members were their

formators year ago and now roles have changed where they have to listen to their formees (cf. App. C#1)

In as much as this assumption was confirmed by all variables: international and indigenous congregations, rural and urban raised, gender, vocation, old and young religious men and women all alluded that respect of elders and authority is a value. However, the only disparity came in when younger members shared that they need to be represented in decision making which is another aspect of respect drawn from the African cultural understanding. From the African context, young members were represented on the council of elders so that their sentiments were listened to and yet this is not the case in religious forums as two young religious brothers expressed (cf. App. C#14, 18). This, therefore, is an appeal from the young members in religious congregation for a forum to be heard and feel listened to just as they accord those older members who their due respect are in authority.

3.7.2 Assumption Two

Assumption two was, “The incorporation of African spiritual formation values of family, forgiveness and spirit of solidarity in religious formation could enhance authentic living of community life among African religious men and women”. This assumption was confirmed to be valid.

From the study findings, an African priest belonging to an international congregation with a large membership of Africans gave evidence of the existence of the spirit of family in his congregation when he recalled how the first time his community celebrated his birthday reminded him of home. This gesture of care and love to have the whole community give a party redefined in him his sense of belonging to this new family. “The manner in which everybody participated in the party preparation expressed how much all were in solidarity with me” (cf. App. C: #1).

Further study revealed from 2 African sisters of an indigenous congregation concurred with the above sentiments of how they have experienced this spirit of family during moments of grief when their sisters stood with them. One of these respondents acknowledged, “My community has been with me since I received the devastating news of cancer diagnosis two years ago. My sisters’ support has been incredible and this has given me reason to fight on positively aware of their moral and spiritual support” (cf. App. C: #9, 13). Similarly, a focused group discussion respondents from a locally founded congregation of priests went further to list practical ways through which these values of family, solidarity and forgiveness are expressed in their religious communities. The findings showed that there were varied attributes to each of the values. Family as a value in religious communities was highly supported with a lot of energy as the family attributes were cited as shown in the following Table 10.

However, in as much as the value of forgiveness was pointed out to be very important, it was noted that it is a challenge because forgiveness comes out of a personal decision from within. This came out strongly from the male congregations as one respondent shared that it is not easy for men to come out and admit mistakes or ask for forgiveness. According to him it would be considered as a sign of weakness and so none of the parties involved is willing to take initiative toward seeking forgiveness. (cf. App. C: #5). Table 10 illustrates ways of expressing the values of family, solidarity and forgiveness in an indigenous congregation of men.

Based on the three values of family, forgiveness and solidarity it was found out that this focused group of 4 young religious men were comfortable sharing about the spirit of family and solidarity than they were about forgiveness. This might explain why there were reservations on the aspect of forgiveness where it was seen as an individual decision. It is from the same perspective that we could see the explanation on why

forgiveness was seen as something difficult that people tend to forgive but do not forget. It was also confirmed by the researcher during participant observation that respondents were not free talking about forgiveness; rather, they remained silent or nodded their heads in denial of whether they readily forgive their offenders.

Table 10: Expressions of family, solidarity, forgiveness in an indigenous religious community of men (N=123)

Family	Solidarity	Forgiveness
Accepting each other with their limitations	When consultations are made amongst members	Hand shake as symbol of peace and reconciliation
When friends and relatives are received and treated well	Greeting one another	Accepting ones mistakes and openly asking for pardon
Sharing and celebrating together in both joyful moments and during bereavement	Praying together and supporting each other in both needy and joyful times.	Exchange of gifts as a sign of acceptance and forgiveness
Sharing common meals and prayer together	When one is sick she or he is comforted and cared for	Washing hands in common pot of water and sharing common meal from one plate as a sign of peace-making.
Sharing responsibilities	Dressing in similar clothes that symbolize identity (habits)	Use of sacrament of reconciliation
Sharing of personal properties e.g. clothing	Praying for the deceased in the congregation	Use of a facilitator between the two parties

Some brothers narrated situations where they still hold grudges with those who may have offended them years ago. This revelation clearly pointed to further need to foster the virtue of forgiveness in a number of religious communities especially the male congregations (cf. App. C: # 1, 3, 4, 5).

On the variable of sisters concerning the value of family, solidarity and forgiveness, there were quite similar responses as compared to priests and brothers but the differing area was on forgiveness. A focused group of sister respondents did not seem

to have problems regarding forgiveness of one another in community. There was no hesitation in their responses to the question, “How easily do you forgive one another?” Their answers came in unison, “We have no problems so long as we openly share our feelings and reconcile” (cf. App. C: #6, 7). However, one sister respondent did not fully agree with the rest of the group pertaining to the spirit of family from her experience in community. She cited areas where this has failed, exhibiting itself in the “lack of confidentiality in matters of community but instead sisters gossip to outsiders what ideally is meant to be an in-house information.” This respondent was concerned that sisters in her congregation which is her family fail to keep confidential matters as required. She felt that if it were in her natural family from an African perspective, nobody would share such information especially defamation of fellow members.

3.7. Assumption Three

Assumption three stated that “there is little effort being made to integrate African spiritual formation value of spontaneous prayers as opposed to fixed forms of prayers in religious communities. The assumption was confirmed by the findings of the study as it was observed from variables drawn from both indigenous and international congregations, young and older sisters, priests and brothers.

In response to whether spontaneous prayers were frequently used in religious congregations, a focused group of 4 sisters- 3 Africans and 1 non- African belonging to an international congregation all admitted that they use mostly the ‘The prayer of the Church’ book systematically from one week to another without changing the format as taught in their formation house (cf. App. C: #. 4, 5, 8, 11). However, they did give room for spontaneous prayers although not as often, therefore, there is little effort. One of the respondents recalled how her own mother prayed at home with ‘such emotion pouring out her heart during prayer time.’ The other African sisters reminisced her days in

formation, now well over 20 years ago in her class of prayer when they were taught different forms of prayers: praying with scripture, meditation, contemplation and how to pray from the 'Prayer of the church'. According to her there was no deliberate attention given to spontaneous prayers as it was given to other forms and so she did not grow to appreciate spontaneity of prayer as a religious.

Another respondent from an indigenous congregation said "the use of spontaneous prayers especially in our short masses normally consumes a lot of time when people need to finish mass and go to do other duties" (cf. App. C: #4). However, an African priest in an international congregation admitted that their use spontaneous is dependent on who is leading the prayers and how much time they have considering their daily apostolate. Particularly as he recommended, "spontaneous prayers are good when there is a public function like celebrations where there are inter-denominations and people are offered a chance to pray for various intentions" (cf. App. C: #5).

From the responses, it is evident that time seems to be a determining factor in some cases but on the other hand preparation of prayer may depend on the creativity of an individual. One reason given for the seeming exclusion of spontaneous prayers was given by a young African brother who said that their time for prayer is scheduled within specified time and the inclusion of spontaneous prayers may extend this limited time and then interfere with the rest of the daily schedule in their very structured and busy life. This came out of his experience of 'brothers going on and on especially in spontaneous prayer' as he observed. Other than that he was not opposed to spontaneous prayers (cf. App. C: #2). But another major reason reveals that spontaneity and creativity in prayer has not been part of the formation of many of the African religious men and women.

Therefore, responses seem to indicate that prayers as offered in religious houses are mostly limited to recitations from prayer books especially from 'The prayer of the

Church' and determined by schedules but are not dependent on an individual's inner disposition to dialogue with and listen to the divine as understood from the African perspective. When an African is praying, he or she gives the divine total concentration and time factor does not count as observed by a religious male respondent (cf. App. C: #6).

3.7. Assumption Four

Assumption four was "The African spiritual value of hospitality is not given strong emphasis in religious formation programs in Africa today". This assumption was shown to be valid. From the findings as reported by 2 respondents of an indigenous women congregation it was noted that as Africans they well know the value of hospitality, having been brought up with it and aware of even proverbs that alludes to that as 'A visitor is a blessing' or in Kiswahili "Mgeni ni baraka" or "Mgeni njoo mwenye nyumba apone" thus the presence of a visitor brings blessings to the owner of the house. The proverbs are used to emphasize the importance of according visitor hospitality. However, these two religious sisters complained that some of their community members have gone to an extent of misusing the opportunity the community offers them to host visitors. Some of the examples of misuse cited were cases of sisters bringing their visitors without notifying the community members. In other cases a sister welcomes a friend or relative to the community but fails to inform the community how long the visitor will be staying thing that interrupts the community schedule so as to accommodate the guest (cf. App. C: #9, 13)

A non-African respondent belonging to an international congregation indicated that hospitality is not being accorded its due value by both Africans and non-Africans. Having lived in Africa for many years and experienced African hospitality, he thought it was a value that could be enhanced and if well understood had a greater significance in

promoting the spirit of community. The respondent further pointed out that these days hospitality is not emphasized because many African priests are misusing it for the wrong purpose (cf. App. C: #6). In support of this view another respondent from this same community made this observation:

A brother misses community prayer time just because he has gone to pick a relative from town and when he comes back there is little shared of how long the relative will be staying. He further noted that in some instances such visitors have gone to an extent of interfering with the community's privacy of cloistered life. Cf. (App. C: #3)

Despite these few challenges, a brother from an international congregation still considers hospitality as a vital practice that needs to be upheld in religious community as a gospel witness of 'I was hungry and you welcomed me' if religious men and women are to reflect the virtue of generosity (cf. App. C: #2). A non-African respondent sister said that she has no problem with African hospitality but she needs to know when guests come and when they go (cf. App. C: #4). Another non-African brother respondent concurred with these remarks by saying that African hospitality is deeply embedded in the heart and flesh of Africans that it goes beyond their own brokenness for example even when they are in deep sorrow, one will say, "'welcome' and when asked 'how are you' he or she will first reply 'I am ok', a gesture to make the visitor feel at home before they break any sad news they may be experiencing". This value of hospitality as he noted needs to be emphasized especially in the formation programs of African men and women before it is completely lost (cf. App. C: #5).

One African brother in an international congregation pointed out that from his experience, young religious men and women get over engaged in television programs so much so that when a visitor enters their communities, "they are too absorbed that they do

not receive them into the house”. It is now perceived that a visitor in a religious community is not for the whole community but for an individual they come to visit. This behavior seems to jeopardize the spirit of communal responsibility toward visitors of members of the community. This observation was further developed by a woman religious (cf. App. C: #6) from an international congregation who focused on the value of hospitality within religious communities. She observed that spending too much time watching TV programs and movies is affecting their reflective life and causing separations in community living. Similarly another woman religious from an indigenous congregation regretted that watching TV programs is gradually replacing special times when community members would have time to chat, say, after supper in order to catch up with each other and evaluate how the ancestors and Creator God visited them through the events of the day.

A young woman religious in an international congregation observed some of the restrictions that exist in her community concerning receiving visitors in the community. She said that it is not enough to share with the community when a visitor is coming but one needs the consent of the house superior before she invites a visitor even a relative. This sister shared an incident that she found embarrassing when she had to get permission before she could serve her mother who was visiting the community a soft drink from the refrigerator and worst of all that her mother was made to eat alone in a different dining room and not in the common dining room where the sisters eat. For her, it was a sad moment and regretted that she was in such a religious community although up till this interview time she had not had a chance to share the pain she underwent on that material day. According to her, the superior said that ‘visitors should not interrupt the rhythm of life in the community’ (cf. App. C: #4).

It is apparent that there are varied ways of understanding what hospitality entails. While a non-African religious priest feels that a guest has to inform the host/hostess when they will arrive, what their mission is, how long they are staying and when they will depart (cf. App. C: #6), an African priest of the same congregation sees it differently. According to this African priest, hospitality includes receiving a guest whether he/she arrives unexpectedly or not and is never asked how long they are staying nor what their mission is. As he further explained, his understanding of hospitality goes beyond receiving a guest but also includes offering him/her a drink or meal depending on what time they arrive. This also goes along with remaining with the visitor for as long as they stay and never to ask when they will leave and finally seeing them off outside the house, never to say goodbye inside the house (cf. App. C: #5). In the same breath, an African woman religious of indigenous congregation shared thus:

In times of sorrow and joy, the community takes it upon themselves to reach out to her member by providing material and financial support depending on her need. Communities near the sister's home make effort to visit her family to support them even when the sister is far. Therefore, hospitality is extended to family members though with specified limits to safeguard the religious community's way of life. Special family needs are addressed through the leadership of the congregation to ensure that the local community does not strain in their up-keep. (cf. App. C: #4)

Another older African woman religious of an international congregation illustrated that though in the African understanding hospitality is a readiness to give and share, for a religious to share anything belonging to the community that could be in her possession, she must get permission from relevant superiors. She highlighted that if a visitor comes to visit bringing some goodies for the sisters, chances are that she will

return home with empty baskets unless the superior authorizes that she be given thing in return. The ordinary and expected response in an African setting is to fill the visitor's basket and see her off when she is ready to go (cf. App. C: #8).

These differences as spelt above came out vividly among the various variables of Africans and non-Africans but even among Africans there is a difference on how the old and the young express their hospitality. Whereas the old members of both genders wish to offer their time and presence to visitors making sure that a meal is served to a visitor; younger members seemed to downplay this value especially when doing so will consume their time for other things like watching television as cited before. The following were responses from a focused group of young religious men and women in light of hospitality:

- It can interrupt one's schedule
- There is no time to give visitors
- It depends on how close one relates with the visitor
- We are too busy with community activities
- The age of the visitor matters - the younger the better
- They stay for too long and take over one's time

3.7.5 Assumption Five

Assumption five was, "If the African spiritual values of other-centeredness and service are emphasized in religious formation today, viable religious communities with thrust towards ministry will be fostered". This assumption was shown to be valid. As one respondent from an international male congregation with majority of African priests observed, "many religious communities that have strong witness and impact in their ministries are those built on the spirit of other-centeredness and service. Each one is at the service of the whole community not just for personal satisfaction (cf. App. C: #5).

This remark came from an observation this priest made from his own religious community in which he saw a missing spirit of service and other centeredness in this community. Similarly, a religious sister in an international congregation shared her experience of how challenging it was in her community in fostering the value of service for the good of the community. She said that many of her community members are focused on pursuing self-interests that benefit themselves and those they deliberately choose to reach out to outside the community especially their biological families. She went on to say:

The resourcefulness of these members is in the end tapped by people outside the congregation. So members become active and vibrant participants in their apostolate which is very good but the same spirit is not shown in community which is their family. In matters of education, one may wonder why everybody needs to study. Those who have Master's Degree, want to get a Doctoral degree, those with Doctoral degree want a second one. One may wonder honestly what the purpose of further studies for a Religious woman is, if it is not for better service to her community and apostolate. (cf. App. C: #8)

Another religious sister from an indigenous congregation pointed out how the African value of other-centeredness in religious community is faced with challenges which have increasingly threatened the unity of members in their religious community. Examples of such challenges as cited were, groupings based on tribal affiliations, levels of education, the holier than thou who think their religious commitment surpasses others, those in managerial positions of various projects in the community and those heading institutions of higher learning, just to mention a few. Asked what would entail being a priest, brother or sister of service and other centeredness, the following were randomly shared from the three variables:

- Being open to others, obedient and honesty enhances trust among members.
- Offering your services equally to all members without any form of biasness or segregation amongst members.
- Service does not demand praise or payback
- Praying with community members
- Being faithful to personal prayers
- Other –centeredness calls for sincerity of heart
- Correcting others lovingly as a good sign of being mindful of others.
- Sharing joyful moments such as celebration of birthdays and feast days brings unity and service to one another.
- Sharing in community chores
- Caring for others especially the sick members makes one feel loved and provides a sense of belonging.
- Helping others in accomplishing their community chores timely as a sign of caring for others and supporting them.
- Listening and understanding each other’s opinion and perspective shows the love and care members have for each other.
- Gestures of hospitality like receiving back a member of community by saying “welcome home” and “how was your day?” implies that one is concerned about the wellbeing of others.
- Being present and available in community
- Involvement in matters of community concern and community building
- Having a heart of gratitude and forgiveness in community
- Being Christ-like among God’s people

The emerging reality as observed from 3 religious, (a woman and two men) was that in as much as there is the awareness of these virtues that build a spirit of service and other-centeredness it is easier said than done. These religious concurred that the mentioned gestures of service and other-centeredness as listed are not fully demonstrated in action. The knowledge and the action have to be harmonized so that these values are reflected in their life experiences; something that has not yet been fully embraced (cf. App. C: #2, 5, 7). Nonetheless, it was evident from all variables of international and indigenous congregations of priests, brothers and sisters regardless of age, those raised in rural or urban areas that there is an inherent desire to do good and reach out to others' needs but at the same time there is still more effort needed to enable realize this African spiritual formation value of service and other-centeredness.

3.7.6 Assumption Six

Assumption six stated that, "The emphasis on the African spiritual formation values of self-reliance and hard work in the religious formation programs in Africa will reduce the financial dependence from Western countries by religious communities with African men and women". This assumption was shown to be valid.

Responding to the above assumption, a focused group of 4 brothers under the variable of an indigenous religious congregation said that they are now focusing on establishing income generating projects as a means to sustaining their members. Various ideas on different projects were shared by this group of respondents on the perception and kinds of income generating projects. Examples of projects cited as underway were:

- Constructing a fish pond
- Rearing of goats and pigs
- Vocational school

They were proud to show the researcher their farm where they had vegetables, dairy cattle and chicken as projects run by the brothers who are students in the various learning institutions (cf. App. C: #1, 3, 4, 5).

A little further from this community was the variable of an international male religious congregation where one African respondent the researcher visited for a face to face interview observed that their formation was work oriented as well as academic oriented, therefore; they had a balance between academic and practical work that their members engage in. He further indicated that each member was assigned a plot to plant whatever he had interest in for example there were those good in chicken keeping, dairy cattle, vegetables gardens, fruit trees, bee keeping, fish ponds, keeping of pigs among others (cf. App. C: #2).

This brother's observation which came out strongly concerning the projects was that it instilled personal responsibility in every member to ensure that one contributed to the wellbeing of the community using their talents and skills. He observed that the values of self-reliance were instilled in the formees from the initial formation so that by the time they get ordained or professed, each one was well aware of the lifestyle he was getting into and how he would be required to work hard in places where they would be assigned in their future apostolate (cf.App. # C: 2).

From other findings in an international congregation with fewer African members as compared to non-Africans, there were differing findings. A respondent of African origin in this particular congregation did not see the need of having a kitchen garden even when there was enough space for a garden. He said that they got all they needed from the shopping mall, giving a totally different picture of what had been observed in the previous findings from international congregations with more members of African origin and from indigenous congregations (cf. App. C: #3). In the variable of indigenous

women congregations, a respondent took the researcher on a tour of their 12 hectare land where they had engaged in massive farming of maize, green vegetables, dairy cattle and chicken. Although they had farm employees, this sister said that each of the sisters had the responsibility to supervise a section of the work on the farm and one of them who received training in project management was a farm manager and the overall supervisor (cf. App. C: #4).

An African priest of an international congregation that has majority of African members observed that the spirit of self-reliance was instilled in every member of their congregation right from initial formation and fostered after ordination so as to nurture the desire and love for work. Some of the positive implications that he shared as having been a product of this spirit of other centeredness and self-reliance were:

- The projects subsidize the income of the community hence reducing donor or external dependence.
- It is for enhancing long term sustainability that will take care of the education, the aging and sick members of the community.
- It reduces the cost of expenditures incurred by the community as most of the products needed are locally produced.
- It is a source of income particularly to the religious men and women who are not in professional employment.
- It is a way of earning daily livelihood for their lay employees
- It is an empowerment place where other people come to learn.
- To empower and support vulnerable groups like widows and orphans so that they can have a meaningful and dignified life.

This farm had become an empowerment place where other religious congregations come to learn. The assumption that, “ The emphasis on the African

spiritual values of self-reliance and hard work in the religious formation programs in Africa will reduce the financial dependence from western countries by religious communities with African men and women” was confirmed by respondents from indigenous congregations who indicated that there is less funding to their congregations because they have invested in self-reliance projects as reflected in the hard work of the members of these religious congregations (cf. App. C#1, 3, 4, 5). Still on sustenance 4 women religious of an international congregation concurred in a focused group discussion that:

In religious life some members may be encouraged to work while others may sit and wait. How are men and women religious looking at work that will sustain the congregation financially? We were used to consuming though we did not know the source of our resources. Now there is a shift in the mindset; as Africans we have to work in order to sustain ourselves. Today we need to enter into ministries that will bring in financial sustenance. This is a challenge; unless we work we will not have what to keep us. (cf. App. C: #4,5,8, 11)

Another respondent whom the researcher visited for a face to face interview observed that their formation is work - oriented and not academic oriented because they have an emphasis of practical work that their members engage in. He further indicated that each member is assigned a plot to use in whatever he is specialized in, for example: chicken keeping, cattle, vegetables gardens, fruit trees, bee keeping, fish ponds, keeping of pigs among others (cf. App. C: #2).

3.8 Findings related to Limitation and Scope

The study was limited only to religious congregations of men and women of both indigenous and international origin, particularly those with houses in Nairobi. The

findings have shown that there are indeed many religious congregations of priests and sister in Nairobi as compared to the brother congregation.

There were fewer indigenous congregations with houses in Nairobi as compared to those that are international, a contributing factor to the imbalance in the variable of type of congregation. Similarly, the number of religious congregations of brothers was limited due to the fact that generally, the brothers are fewer in numbers but also because they have more of their houses in the rural setting to meet the needs there. Among the few congregations of brothers that were sampled, majority of those interviewed and were captured through the questionnaires were mainly non-Africans, thus 14 out of the total number of 20 brother respondents. The remaining 3 were African professed brothers currently undergoing studies in various learning institutions in Nairobi.

The priests were a total of 35 in number belonging to both indigenous and international congregations, although the majority came from international group. It must be noted that a larger number of these priests were Africans. The sisters were the majority, numbering 71 in total, sampled from both indigenous and international congregations.

Since the study was purposeful, the population and scope of this research targeted only the professed brothers, sisters and ordained priests and not novices or postulants who are still in initial formation.

The variables of international or indigenous congregations, years of profession or ordination, rural or urban and vocation provided a good revelation in exploring all aspects of the research. For example the variables of international or local congregations indicated that in as much as these congregations have varying membership, the majority respondents were Africans whether male or female at 76% and the non-African respondents at 24%.

The variables of age at entrance, the researcher found out that it did not have influence on the data as compared to the variables of type of congregation, gender and vocation. Therefore, this study did not benefit from this area since it was not any different from those revealed from variables of vocation, international or indigenous congregation, rural or urban and the number of years after profession or ordination.

Chapter Four

Literature review

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is derived from a review of scholarly work drawn out of specific quotes and an integration of aspects of knowledge in various published and unpublished works, journals, online material and research papers done earlier by the researcher and scholars from related field of knowledge. The researcher has also included some of the interviews from her field findings and focused group outcome.

The chapter explores a great deal of views from what other scholars have already shared concerning this thesis topic. There is an amount of scholarly contribution to the field of knowledge to help fill up gaps and offer new look at this thesis topic.

4.1 Thesis Topic

The topic of the thesis ‘Integrating African spiritual formation values with Christian values in the religious formation of African men and women’ traces its roots to the call to inculturation coming from the African Synod of Bishops in 1994. This thesis topic was born out of the course, “Toward the Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa” and the topic of the paper, “The contribution of African Values and Practices toward Building Viable Community life in Africa” which the researcher did in MIASMU (May-June, 2009). The course paper focused on values drawn from African community set up that should be integrated into religious community living in an effort to bring more meaning by contextualizing African spiritual values in religious life. This is what Schreiter (1986) recommends, that the mode of evangelization and development should be that of finding Christ in the situation rather than concentrating on bringing Christ into the situation (p. 42).

In the encyclical “Africa’s Commitment”, his Holiness Pope Benedict XVI states that, ‘the inculturation of the Gospel and the Evangelization of Culture’ gives the church’s initiative for a positive appreciation and safeguarding of African cultures are well known. The Pope still emphasizes how imperative it is to transmit the values that the Creator has instilled in the hearts of Africans since the dawn of time. These values, as His Holiness observes, need to be emphasized, lit up from within so that Christians may truly receive the message of Christ and in this way God’s light may shine before the eyes of all (p. 25). The researcher’s opinion from her own lived experience as a religious who underwent formation that had a more Western approach has observed that there seems to be less thrust put into the religious formation of African men and women in response to the invitation to inculturation since it was first discussed at the 1994 Synod of African Bishops.

Bishop Sarpong’s contribution in the Synod documents (1996) alludes that inculturation deals with the totality of the Christian reality-faith, morality, and liturgy, the organization of the church, the nature of religious life, catechesis, everything and anything in the Christian tradition (p. 223). And Wanjohi and Wanjohi (2005) bring this into perspective when they point out that inculturation and acculturation are to dialogue for evangelization to take root (p. 67). A respondent in Sr. Masicha’s MIASMU course paper ‘The Interpretation of African Women religious on African Family Values in their Life’ cited that:

Our upbringing in an African family determines how we live in our religious life because we do not leave behind values learnt from our families by joining religious life. If we learnt from our family values that enable us to see the good in others and appreciate the differences we will uphold that as we live together. As African women religious, our sense of belonging is transitional and we grow into

it (1st Immersion May- June, 2013). With this understanding it is quite apparent that the need to embrace African values cannot be overemphasized. This helps to understand what Wanjohi & Wanjohi observe that Christianity as a religion cannot exist except in a cultural form (p. 17). The two authors further state that this claim is expressed theologically in the doctrine of the logos (word) found in Jesus Christ and in the light of his incarnation. (p. 18)

Aylward Shorter (1999) in his paper presented at the Goethe Institute on “How African, Can African Christianity be?” gives an example of what Pope John Paul II says, “Faith becomes culture”. This is a demand made of both faith and culture whereby a culture is transformed by faith and a faith is culturally re-expressed so as to have an authentic articulation of a peoples’ spirituality (p. 56). Shorter further quotes Hofsted, who refers to culture as “the software of the mind” and the shared mental package that helps to program our perception and our behavior. This points to the importance of dialogue between culture and faith. Indeed it is not everything from African culture that is desirable (p. 57). If we fail to create the awareness of which African values do not contradict gospel values and which ones need to be left out, it may lead to what Nwagu (1997) calls getting ‘torn between the allegiance to cultural demands and total dedication to following Christ’ (p. 133).

Hillman (1993) shares the views of Shorter above and further clarifies the incarnation of Jesus as he points out that the Divine Word became one of us in human flesh, in history, like ourselves in our day experiences at a particular time and place, ethnicity and culture (p32). This is the dialogue between culture and the gospel, in essence it is inculturation. He leaves us with a question on how the various ‘Formation programs’, historically dated and culture specific as they are, help with the task of inculturation? (p44). In His encyclical, the Holy Father, John Paul II exhorts the religious

to live community life that witness to the life of the Trinity as a practice of an unconditional mutual love, which requires a readiness to serve others generously and a willingness to welcome them as they are without judging them(Vita Consecrata 42).

Shorter (1998) expounds on these words of the Holy Father and points out:

...that consecrated life is a sign of true communion in the church. Wherever it is lived, it must be inculturated in the local culture, like the church itself. There must be a kenosis, a cultural self-deprivation, whenever a particular form of the consecrated life is brought from one culture to another. The sending culture must be relativized, and its representatives must have the humility to submit to a culture other than their own- to be culturally educated by others. This means that they must be open and attentive to the values, history and traditions of other cultures. They must believe in the positive character of other cultures and desire to be enriched by it. They must not make their own culture the criterion for judging other cultures. They must welcome those of other cultures and give them their reserved trust. (p. 13)

O'Reilly (1986) outlines three concerns of religious life as the passing on of an inheritance, the living in the here and now and the preparing for the future. He has these views:

..... religious life as a human possibility must be articulated by a contemporary language and form and therefore the present is a source of knowledge in its own right. And a concern for community's present reality and those seeking admission to it, is an expression of the creative aspect of all religious formation work because if the community's new members are allowed to do no more than inherit a past, then the potency of the founding charism will be stifled. (p. 10)

Concerning the future of religious formation, O'Reilly warns:

...if a religious congregation is to speak of its continued existence beyond the life-span of the present members, then the new members need to believe that they are responsible for the future. If this concern is expressed in the details of formation planning and structuring, the future will be presented as arising from both the traditions handed down to a community and its members' present experiences, but with a newness and possibility beyond either the past or the present insights. If the future is not taken into account, then religious formation will simply be training people to fit into the present scheme of things. (p. 11)

4.2 Problem Statement

The problem statement is drawn from the apparent slow implementation of the deliberation of the 1994 Synod of African Bishops which focused on inculturation of the church in Africa. Religious formation is an aspect within the church needing urgent attention as far as inculturation is concerned. McGary in MacGary & Ryan (2001) traces some of the early effects of the coming of the missionaries:

Africans had to renounce some of their traditional beliefs considered by missionaries as 'false'. They made great sacrifices to become followers of Jesus Christ and experienced the cost of discipleship. Because the missionaries did not understand the traditional ways of their new converts and because at that time the word 'inculturation' was unknown and the concept had long been forgotten, Africans who felt drawn to follow Jesus Christ were obliged to adopt foreign ways and practices, and a moral code which demanded new things and required the abandoning of many old ways that had never before been questioned. (p. 192)

Again, MacGary in MacGary & Ryan (2001) states that to become a follower of Jesus Christ demands the conversion and sacrifice of some of our old ways that are not compatible with Jesus Christ but it does not require that one is completely alienated from

one's culture, rather, that culture is enriched by the deeply human values of the Gospel drawn from Jesus own human life, the incarnation of God living with us and for us (p. 193).

Basing on the example of Bishop Mathew Gymfi, Sunyani Diocese, Ghana (Workshop notes - August, 2011) to the School Sisters of Notre Dame postulants, before their reception into the novitiate, the Bishop raised a concern of what he referred to as 'duality' which results from partial inculturation process. He also observed that there is still a big challenge of how the African spiritual formation values can be integrated into religious formation programs to bring about understanding of who 'African Christians' are and not 'Africans and Christians'. The implication is that there is a scenario of Africans and Christians as opposed to an integrated 'African Christians'. These sentiments are shared by Walligo (1986) who says Africans find themselves into two personalities. During the times of joy and peace, they may be able to live as true Christians but when crises come, they move back to their African personality (p. 57).

The Constitution of SSND recognizes that each member brings the gift of herself, stimulates growth in the community and moves it more consciously into the future as the community is enriched with the gift of self, living tradition and spirituality (YAS C #44). This can only be achieved if there is an integrated formation that recognizes the values of the individual which, no doubt come from her cultural heritage so that the community can be enriched by the same.

Magesa (2006) has the same concern as the researcher in reference to how much emphasis and inclusion of the African spiritual formation values is done in formation when he states:

...it is often extremely difficult for African young people joining international mission institutes to bring with them to the institute a healthy African identity.

Their cultural contribution is often ignored, not because of any personal malice on the part of any individual, but because of a systemic racist perception against the African continent that still lingers on in many openly unacknowledged forms. The training during the novitiate often reinforces African impotence in many areas because, even up to now, African culture and identity have not been properly recognized and accepted as being capable of contributing to the formation regimen not least in terms of African customs and behavior. (pp. 127-128)

The problem, therefore, is the apparent slow adaptation of an approach to formation of African men and women with the deliberate inclusion of what entails a holistic spiritual formation which integrates Christian values and African values. On one hand, the church calls the African Christians to embrace inculturation but on the other hand the researcher experiences reluctance in the actual implementation especially when, apparently, very little has been done to realize this in the formation of African religious men and women since the inauguration of the African Synod of Bishops in 1994 whose main thrust was on inculturation.

4.3 Hypothesis

The hypothesis spells out the urgent need for the integration of African spiritual formation values with the Christian values in the formation programs of religious communities of African men and women so as to enhance and make the programs holistic and more meaningful in Africa today.

Hillman (1993) perceives what he calls ‘a historical dated and culture specific’ approach that fails to address the task of inculturation in religious formation (p. 14). According to Hillman, there persist problems of historical perception that were linked to the African cultures that could pose an obstacle in religious congregations from

integrating some of the spiritual values into formation of their members. For instance, this problem was confirmed during the pilot study where most of the respondents indicated that African spiritual formation values are regarded as barbaric, pagan and inferior and therefore obsolete to be considered as worthy relating with the Christian values. This is a historical problem that was introduced by the early missionaries in condemning African spiritual formation values.

Nwagu (1997) shares the emphasis of the African Synod of Bishops on inculturation as one of necessity and urgency because: “Inculturation ensures the authenticity and depth of the faith in the African Christian, heals cultural alienation, and bridges the gap between life and faith, thus resolving the many instances of spiritual “schizophrenia” and double life affecting many of our people” (p. 134).

Gary Riebe-Estrella (2007) in his paper on “Mission Begins at Home” offers rich insights on the witness of the religious for our contemporary world as coming from the quality of community life, metaphorically, as where the ‘rubber hits the road- it is not enough for us to live together, the witness is found in how we live together’. This is why he goes further to define religious life as ‘being ‘and not ‘doing’ (Vol. 15, no 15, June/July). Therefore, a well-integrated formation, sensitive to African spiritual formation values, may yield into building viable community living whose being will reflect African Christians in their ‘being’.

4.4 Significance of the Thesis

This study is born out of the course, “Toward the Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa” and the topic of the paper, “The contribution of African Values and Practices toward Building Viable Community life in Africa” which the researcher did in MIASMU (May-June, 2009). The course paper focused on values drawn from African community set up that are slowly being integrated into religious community living in an effort to

bring more meaning by contextualizing African spiritual formation values in religious life. Evangelization of the African continent brought with it the dawning of religious life and a different approach to community living under vows that was different from what may have existed in Africa. Drawn to this new life in the church, Africans have continued to respond to this vocation to religious life.

In His Apostolic Exhortation, 'The Consecrated Life' (no 80) the Holy Father, John Paul II, calls consecrated persons to enter into the process of inculturation and inter-religious dialogue especially as they enter cultures and religions other than their own with the attitude of Jesus, who emptied himself and took the form of a servant. He adds, " All elements of consecrated life call for inculturation: the charism itself, the ways of formation, prayers and liturgy, the principles and values of the spiritual life, structures of governments, forms of apostolate and style of life"(p. 82).

This brings to light the questions Magesa (1999) is inviting Africans joining mission institutes to ask:

Who am I? How does the institute I have joined help to foster my relationship with my people and with God? Does the membership of this institute affect my cultural or racial identity negatively or does it promote it? How are the institutes material resources distributed among, and used by members, given differences of status, educational backgrounds and achievements, races, and so on that exist in the institute ? (p. 127)

MacGary in MacGary & Ryan (2001) point out precisely that every culture is that particular person's way of being human and that human beings can be effectively addressed and personally touched within their cultural and psychic worlds (p. 198). Similarly, Mugambi (1998) affirms these sentiments that just as an African cannot

choose the ethnic community into which he is born, so it is also impossible for him to dissociate his religious heritage from his religious background (p. 88).

Fogliacco in MacGary & Ryan (2001) shares pertinent views on the connection between values, culture and Christianity. He observes that basic values are the core of a culture because they define it, organize it and give it direction and momentum and offers the distinctive identity which distinguishes it from all other cultures. Fogliacco further has this to say:

An African is an African because of what he or she values most. Personal fulfillment and full personal identity, in the sense of becoming one's true self, can only be attained by developing in a community, along the lines of basic cultural values. If this is the case, inculturation occurs at the meeting point between African values and Christian values (p. 121).

These views strongly support this study and confirm the same sentiments that qualify the justification of pursuing a scholarly research on a dialogue between African spiritual formation values and Christian values in the religious formation of African men and women. This in essence is what the church invites her faithful to embrace through inculturation. This seed that has led to several forums of discussion and literary works was first postulated by Pope Paul VI during his visit to Uganda in July, 1969 from his words, in Okure (1990), "You may and you must have an African Christianity,"(p. 35). From the Synod Document (1996), the Synod of Bishops of Africa during the gathering in April, 1994 in Rome, began this ground work of how the Church can be pivoted to live a life that is very African, giving its worshippers hope and encouragement (p. 72)

This is probably what Shorter (1995) considers as an approach taken by theologians with the aim of seeing inculturation as a consequence of incarnation. This incarnation is what the researcher sees as the pivotal point to an approach in formation

that embraces a thrust in realizing the importance of what Burke (2001) calls a ‘bottom up’ formation; formation that takes on those values that are already imbued in Africans from their early socialization.

Indeed it is important as Gallanger (1990) notes that inculturation as a reciprocal process requires that as the gospel is shared across cultures and sheds light on each human situation, different dimensions of the gospel are brought into new life (p. 104). Gallanger further observes a three-fold function of inculturation: the new awareness from anthropology of the dignity of cultures, a theology of the presence of the spirit in all cultures and finally a recognition that evangelization is a two way process of mutual enrichment where the faith horizon of the evangelizer is also transformed and challenged through contact with a different culture (p. 104). These views are beautifully spelled out in the SSND Constitution that, “ as sisters, through our ministry, we and those to whom we are sent are mutually enriched and this becomes a mutual giving and receiving “ (YAS C # 25).

Hagan (1999) in his address during a symposium on the “Dialogue Between Faith and Culture” observes that the death of African values and ways of life will not destroy the ingrained and deep-seated religiosity of Africans, but will also render meaningless to them the Christian message. He further points out the good news where the church now realizes that African cultural and religious traditions and values are receptive of the good news of Christ, thereby making the Word alive and fruitful in the life of the African (p52).

The story told from the Akan of Ghana confirms this line of thought and remains a beautiful reminder of the importance of holding the past as a treasure as we move into the future. The story of the Sankofa tells of a bird believed to fly forward with its head looking backward and carries an egg in its mouth. It looks to the past with a longing of

retrieving what has been left behind as it flies into the future. The egg is a symbol of hope that will come from the rich past to enrich the future. The imagery in this story has a deeply rooted lesson for African religious to acknowledge their rich past heritage that could be a springboard into realizing a life filled with fulfillment and meaning as they move into the future and live out their call of being witnesses in the mission of Jesus Christ to the end of the world.

Banzikiza (1995) explains how the African value of community can be acculturated by illustrating the story of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark where his mother and brothers demand to see him and his response is that those who do the will of God become His mother and brothers. This is a good invitation for African Christians to adopt Jesus new interpretation of kinship in which none is excluded but that all who believe and do the will of God are brothers and sisters to each other (p83). What a beautiful heritage this can be to the seemingly impoverishing community life in many Western countries. Who would not acknowledge the depth and breadth of this rich African contribution into religious life!

4.5 Literature related to the Research Questions

4.5.1 Research Question One

The question was, ‘Which African spiritual formation values do you know from your up –bringing or from your life experience in Africa?’ This comes from the researcher’s awareness of the wealth of African values that an individual is bequeathed with through childhood socialization. It is the duty of every African family and community at large to raise children within their cultural norms and values as inherited from a rich past. Ayisi (1972) treats culture as part and parcel of every society and it consists of the ways, moves and beliefs transmitted from generation to generation (p. 4).

Msafiri (2010) identifies parents as the first or perhaps the most important moral formators of the child. He gives an example of the Chagga for whom corporate parental involvement and responsibility was of extreme importance for an integral and sound child moral formation and building up. Examples of values instilled in a child were how to show or express respect to his/her parents through greetings especially in the morning. Children were also taught table etiquette of how to chew small bits of food without opening the mouth, to eat with other children and to be considerate of others particularly in taking equal share especially on delicious foodstuffs like meat. The child was always reminded to say 'aika mae' (thank you mother after meals as an expression of gratitude and appreciation for the food (p. 6-7). Kenyatta (1965) shares these sentiments of Msafiri on how children in Africa are taught how to behave toward their father or mother, grandparents and to other members of the kinship group, paternal and maternal (p. 114).

4.5.2 Research Question Two

The question was, 'Do you use spontaneous prayers coming from the heart in your daily community prayers?' African prayers are, by and large, influenced by the situation or circumstances affecting an individual. They are spontaneous, welling out of the heart and recognizing the presence of God who listens and answers prayers at all times.

Mbiti (1969) says that Africans respond to their spiritual world in different ways, formal or informal, communal or individual, through word or deed (p. 58). An African does not separate the sacred from the secular and so every act is a religious act of worship. Mbiti further gives very practical ways of how worship permeates an African's life. Worship takes on different forms: the sacrifice (animal life destroyed to present to God) and offerings (presentation of foodstuffs and other items). It should be noted that

praying as Mbiti reminds us, does not always involve sacrifice or offerings. He says the Bachwa Pygmies pray before undertaking a journey or going to hunt (p. 62). There are prayers before digging, planting, harvesting and God has to be thanked after a good harvest. This is similar to the Christian tithes which portray an act of worship.

Further, Mbiti identifies that there are other types as prayers before going to war and during war time; even those going to raids pray to God to protect them. Salutation, greetings and farewells take on the form of prayer: Banyarwanda and Barundi say, 'Go with God', to which the other responds 'Stay with God'. A woman who had been married for a number of years without a child exclaimed when she learnt she had conceived, "God has remembered me" (p. 62). How different is this from Hannah's magnificat, "My heart exalts in the Lord," (1 Sam.2: 1) and Mary's Magnificat, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior," (Lk 1: 46)? This is a strong belief that there is nothing that happens entirely on human strength. God is attributed to all that happens in life and glory is offered to him.

Therefore, at childbirth God is praised for keeping the baby and mother safe. During initiation, marriage and all other religious ceremonies the name of God is honored. Even proverbs in some African communities acclaim the power of God. Mbiti mentions that the Barundi have a saying as a safeguard against worrying they say, "God knows the things of tomorrow." There are other forms of worship like through song which is common among Africans. Many religious gatherings and ceremonies are accompanied by singing to pass a religious message or to teach values like corporate feeling and solidarity (p. 67).

Mbiti points out that worship is at the center of an African such that it is part and parcel of their life. This is why he quotes an Ashanti proverb, "No one shows a child the

Supreme Being” meaning, “...everybody knows of God’s existence almost by instinct and even children know Him (p. 4).

Prayer permeates African life and through it an African is able to express his/her spirituality. In an ordinary life of an African, prayers are regular and occasional, individual and communal. Some of these prayers may be offered daily or during occasions of planting and harvesting. In all situations they are accompanied by what may be described as ‘praying with the whole body’. This is beautifully presented by Mbiti (1975) in reference to African prayers as an “outpouring of man’s soul and spirit in the direction of the divine, the spiritual realm and its values.” He adds that the prayers ‘contain spiritual values and those who recite them do so in a spiritual attitude of a spiritual direction’ (p. 22-23). Some of the spiritual values enumerated by Mbiti above are purity, cleanliness of heart, holiness, humility, trust; faith, confidence and assurance are made evident in many prayers as this example shows:

We rise up in the morning before the day, to betake ourselves to our labor, to prepare our harvest. Protect us from the dangerous animal and from the serpent, and from every stumbling block. (p. 32)

More emerging issues from a formator of an international congregation (non-African) raised concern over her novices who offered long intercession prayers with explanation and situating the intention within its context, something she thought was time consuming (Muteshi, May-June, 2009). This was her response to the researcher’s question of how prayers are conducted in her religious community especially by the Africans. This clearly revealed the spontaneous expression of Africans during prayers and as noted earlier, coming from a heart welling up with feelings and a sense of connectedness. Evidently, this approach seemed to raise questions and concern from members of non-African origin equating it to spirit possession. In essence this approach

to prayer as Bahemuka (1982) affirms, comes from the understanding that every African is, and becomes a religious person to the extent that each of his/her actions is a part of his/her religious beliefs (p. 40).

In another interview during the research for class integrated paper with one informant, a male respondent from a religious congregation focusing on how sacred space is revered in Africa, for, example the chapel, Br Brown (not his real name) expressed his concern and a behavior he considered lack of respect, when he observed professed brothers come to prayer with their coffee mugs in the morning, therefore, causing a distraction and disgusting behavior especially when everybody is meditatively listening to each other's spontaneous prayers that help capture the reflections coming from the hearts of the brothers (Muteshi, May-June 2009).

4.5.3 Research Question Three

This question was, 'What activities or projects has your religious community emphasized to enhance the African value of self-reliance in the spirit of hard work?' Magesa (2006) emphatically points out that dependency is certainly not glorified as a good thing in Africa. He observes that African leaders have, in fact, for a long time now complained about it, something that he brings out as that which Pope Paul VI described as the desired situation for the church in Africa, that it should be missionary to itself in the most comprehensive sense (p. 134). Addressing SSND delegates to the Provincial Assembly in Accra on 'Sustainability and Project Management in Africa,' Victoria Kumbour emphasized the relationship between sustainability and mission, "'Self-reliance and sustainability is equal to mission', thus for mission work to be accomplished there has to be an investment in self-reliance (SSND Provincial Assembly Minute 19/2014).

Bahemuka (1982) explains that participation, work and leisure were expected and accepted part of community living because whether one prayed, ate, danced, sang, cultivated the land or walked, these were religious acts for they were performed by a religious being (p. 119).

Bahemuka further reveals that whenever there was a certain task to be performed, each family joined hands with the other members. An example is among the Agikuyu of Kenya whose concept of 'ngwatio', where people belonging to the same age group, or people from one village came together to perform a given task for the common good. The Maasai called this communal effort 'Ematonyok', the Abaluhya 'Obwaasio'; the Luo 'Konyir-kende' and the Akamba 'Mwethya' (p. 121).

Bahemuka recounts that work is made enjoyable by 'ebyebugo' (telling stories) and singing songs (p. 130). Mugambi & Kirima (1976) also share the same views as they point out that working songs would be sung to the rhythm of the digging or clearing, which would make the work lighter (p. 81).

Perez (2007) asserts that there is a historical problem of dependence that is not easy to solve. And in itself poses a serious problem of identity (p. 55). The only lasting solution to this mentality is the engagement of Africans in self-sustaining projects that engage people in hard work.

4.5.4 Research Question Four

The question was, 'How is the aspect of community as family built on love and forgiveness and solidarity emphasized in your religious community?' The findings from a pilot survey at the initial stage of this study indicated that there is a growing effort to uphold the African spiritual values and embrace the essence of family as central to the belief system of Africans. Sr. Nduku (not her real name) of an indigenous African congregation in Nairobi shared that individual sisters, her included, were making efforts

to get their families get to know each other so as to form social connections of extended family relationships. However, she expressed that these steps had faced opposition from other members within the congregation who had earlier looked at such a move as tedious and time consuming until it finally got approval from their leadership (Muteshi, MIASMU May-June, 2009). The occasion, she said, is an event to familiarize themselves with different family members of the sisters and also a counseling moment of families for their daughters on the value and witness of the life they have chosen to live.

Africans are very relational and therefore, more concerned about their relationships with people much more than material things. Our class discussion (July 3, 2009) clearly affirms this observation that for an African it is better to have friends than riches. The worst you can do to an African is to ostracize him/her from the community. There is a strong belief among Africans that when you are ostracized then God approves it. Achebe (1958) in his renowned novel, 'Things fall Apart' gives a good example of how hard it is to ostracize an African by narrating the story of Okonkwo who is banished from his kinsmen and sent to his motherland after killing a kinsman accidentally. He says, "His wives wept bitterly and their children wept with them without knowing why. And before the cock crowed Okonkwo and his family were fleeing to his motherland" (p. 87).

Mbiti (1969) observes that an individual does not and cannot exist alone except corporately. An individual owes his/her total existence to other people, those of the past, contemporaries and of the future. Thus one is part of the whole. Hence, Mbiti summarizes this in his words of wisdom, "I am, because we are, and since we are, therefore I am" (p. 108).

Again according to Mbiti the community must make, create and produce the individual (p. 108). It is very common to hear Africans talking in plural. When an

African is greeted, “How are you?” Many may respond unconsciously, “We are fine” meaning together with their household, neighbors and animals.

However, speaking on the need for forgiveness and reconciliation, Agbonkhianmeghe, in his paper presented in Rome on “Justice and Peace: Salt of the Earth...Light of the World ‘Challenges of the African Synod for Religious Communities in Africa,’ challenges religious institutes for their life and mission in Africa. He points out how Africa has been torn asunder by tribalism and ethnicity and the only way for religious to witness is to model a reconciled community for the rest of Africa and how religious institutes “must become more and more a reconciled community, a place where reconciliation is proclaimed to all people of good will.” In his concluding remarks, he questions how religious communities form their members to live the values of reconciliation, justice and peace but at the same time offers a suggestion that the formation programs need reevaluation. One question related to this research question that he leaves us with is how religious institutes in Africa can adopt and adapt some of the different African forms of reconciliation in order to live as reconciled communities (September, 2009).

Kenyatta (1965) alludes to how family bonds and solidarity are highly regarded in Africa that an individualist is looked upon with suspicion and is given a nickname of ‘mwebongia’, one who works only for himself and is likely to end up as a wizard and may lack assistance when he needs it (p. 115).

4.5.5 Research Question Five

The question was, ‘What are some of the gifts and challenges experienced in your religious community in relationship to respect of elders and authority?’ Concerning elders, Shorter (2000) says of them as those who have given life and are closer to the

world of ancestors. They connect the living and the ancestors and ultimately to God the giver of life and therefore, their authority in Africa cannot be exaggerated (p. 13).

Elderhood plays a reverential role in an African's worldview. They are a symbol of leadership, wisdom, settle disputes and therefore are peace-makers and are characterized by exemplary lives. From class discussions, (July 2, 2009), it was clear that elders serve as intermediaries between God and the people. They are the custodians of the culture and so are responsible of community resources (p. 40-41).

Bujo (1998) does accept that if elders "can no longer give life biologically, they still participate in generating life and giving birth through their experience and wisdom, which they pass on to the younger ones" (p. 200). Bujo again reconfirms the importance of elders since life flows from God, flows in a hierarchical order. At the peak are the ancestors, who are followed by the elders of the community and these, include father and mother of the family, the clan head and the chief or king (p. 197).

Magesa (2005) refers to the understanding of power from the perspective of the African religion as ultimately 'power of God' granted to an individual by God through service to the community and to enhance the life of the community as God would do. However, Magesa also decries the misuse of authority in the present world where some of those entrusted with this responsibility end up as instruments of injustices, oppression and self-promotion. According to Magesa African religion may be a point of reference to discover insights that will help preserve the proper use of authority (p. 317). Magesa (1993) further writes that, "the most important obligation of every leader is to do whatever is in his or her power to protect and prolong the life of the family and the community following the order of the universe established by ancestors and transmitted by tradition" (p. 68).

Magesa (2006) therefore raises a pertinent question on how the young men and women joining religious life in Africa examine their membership in the institutes and whether this affects their cultural or racial identity negatively or promotes it (p. 32). The question the researcher connects with this thought may be, how well formation helps shape the understanding and role of respect attributed to elders and those in authority. Is it the self - centered attitude or that of other centered and service for the good and well-being of the whole community?

In the African realm, as Shorter (2000) brings to our awareness, elders of a family or clan are the progenitors of the generations; they have given them life and are also closer to the world of ancestors than the younger members so they connect the living to the source of life itself, who is God, the Creator and life giver, the ultimate ancestor. This is the reason why elders are honored and their wishes obeyed because as it is understood, when they die they become objects of a religious practice. For this matter, their authority cannot be exaggerated (p. 13). The authority of elders is one delegated by ancestors and therefore, authority rightly understood as coming from the Supreme God. This African value for respect toward elders and authority is very much in line with St Paul's teaching:

Let every person be subordinate to the higher authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority opposes what God has appointed and those who oppose it will bring judgment upon themselves. (Rom.13: 1-2)

The School Sisters of Notre Dame, in their constitution (YAS) recognize this vital role of those sisters who, through prayer, reflection and discernment are called to the service of the congregation in authority. And therefore, in professing the vow of Apostolic Obedience, the Constitution has the following:

As we are drawn more deeply into Christ's life, we experience within ourselves his overpowering desire to be obedient to his Father. In community we strive together to seek and do God's will. By our religious profession of apostolic obedience, we vow to obey God through those sisters who exercise proper authority according to our constitution. Our obedience is apostolic like that of Christ who accepted death on a cross to reconcile all to God who sent him. We give unqualified obedience to God who sends us, surrendering our being to him and his way. (YAS C # 18)

The entire life of every religious is built upon listening to God's will spoken through those in authority and this is what the assumption of the researcher holds about African religious who among other values in life are rooted in this understanding. Respect for elders and authority cannot be underestimated in Africa or considered outdated. Bro Banda (FMS), in his article 'Respect for the elderly' quotes Pope Benedict XVI who acknowledged that, "In Africa, the elderly are held in particular veneration. They are not banished from families or marginalized as in other cultures. On the contrary they are esteemed and perfectly integrated within their families, of which they are indeed the pinnacle...This beautiful African appreciation of old age should inspire western societies to treat their elderly with great dignity" (New People, No.140 September 2012 p. 20).

The Holy Father, Pope Francis, in his homily in Rio de Janeiro during the World Youth Day lamented that a culture of "exclusion, of rejection" is spreading. "There is no place for the elderly and the unwanted child, there is no time for that poor person on the edge of the street" (The Catholic Standard, Ghana's National Catholic weekly Vol. 76 No. 30 Sunday, August 4- Saturday, August 10 2013). This outcry clearly shows how

there is an apparent need to go back to our roots here in Africa lest we lose this value of respect for elders and authority completely.

4.5.6 Research Question Six

The question was, ‘In which ways are the values of hospitality, other-centeredness, service and solidarity reflected in your religious community?’ Magesa (2006) refers to Fr. Thomas Ryan who explains the relevance of conciliar documents on mission: ‘Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World’ (Gaudium et Spes). The ‘Dogmatic Constitution on the Church’ (Lumen Gentium), ‘The Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to non-Christian Religions’ (Nostra Aetate) and the ‘Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity’ (Ad Gentes). These Church Documents spell out clearly that the church can use positive values of the local culture to spread the Gospel (pp. 30-31). These church documents therefore, do not lock out the possibility of inclusion of African spiritual formation values in the formation of African men and women who desire to follow Christ in the vocation to religious life without abandoning their African values. Waswa (2002) acknowledges that Africa has a ‘wealth of cultural values’ acknowledged by John Paul II (p. 84). Similarly, Msafiri (2010) resonates with these views as he shares cultural formation among his people, the Chagga of Tanzania, as entailing a sense of prayer, honesty, kindness, reverence and truthfulness in a child (p. 75) which form an essential aspect of socialization.

Fred Ntedika (OP) in his address to The School Sisters of Notre Dame on the topic ‘Living You Are Sent (YAS), the Constitution of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, in the African context’, cited two values; ‘solidarity and sharing’ as emerging values that should be incarnated into the life of these sisters as they witness to the mission of Jesus Christ here in Africa within their multi-cultural communities. He noted with great concern that African religious must rise to embrace religious life from within.

The priest commended the community in making effort to articulate and relate to their Constitution from an African experience and context. The sharing around these two African values dominated the workshop and generated more African spiritual formation values that are loaded in these two. Examples of such values are generosity, hospitality, hard work and taking responsibility, the spirit of family and other-centeredness, harmony in building divine (vertical) and human (horizontal) relationships (Ukarimu, Molo, July, 2012).

In light of living out the value of solidarity, Magesa (1997) refers to age-sets or age grades, age classes, or age groups formed for social maturity to promote the overall life of society (p. 104). These social groups are necessary when there are celebrations of birth, marriage initiation or death. People come together to support each other in joy or sorrow. This is the same spirit as is reflected by Burke (2010) who gives an example of the Zairean SND sisters who during sorrow “assure the grieving sister and her family of their solidarity. Many remain in the village watching with the kin in front of the body of the deceased which is laid out on a bed in front of his/her house,” (p. 87). In relation to solidarity Burke offers a good comparison between the Belgian sisters of her congregation who when they are sick prefer to be left alone but the Zairean sisters prefer to have company and in the event that she gets admitted in the dispensary for a time, a member of their kin group remains with her to attend to their personal need and prepare their meals (p. 90).

Hospitality is a value for Africans which exemplifies itself in the manner of how much food an African family prepares. There is always enough and more for the unseen guests. Africans have a big heart for strangers, the poor, orphans and widows. Kitururu (2009) shares his views that:

The type of hospitality that one would give depends on the social status, the higher the status the more one is expected to be generous. The head of the family or the clan or the local chief have a greater responsibility to be more generous. But both the wealthy and the poor have an obligation to be hospitable. Every African is capable of being hospitable. This spirituality is not reserved for special people but is available for everybody. It is practical, concrete and communal.

(pp. 35-36)

Mbiti (1975) says that there are morals concerned with hospitality to relatives, friends and strangers. It is held as a moral evil to deny hospitality, even to a stranger. Therefore, when people travel they may stop anywhere for the night and receive hospitality in that homestead and should not be molested unless they abuse the hospitality (p. 177).

4.6 Literature related to Assumptions

4.6.1 Assumption One

The first assumption was, ‘The African spiritual values of respect of elders and authority acquired at home is not outdated and can enrich the religious formation programs in Africa today’. This assumption was true as we find out from the exhortation of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI in his encyclical on “Africa’s Commitment”, in reference to the elderly, reminds us of how elders are revered in Africa:

In Africa the elders are held in particular veneration. They are not banished from families or marginalized as in other cultures. On the contrary they are esteemed and perfectly integrated within their families of which they are indeed the pinnacle. This beautiful African appreciation of old age should inspire Western societies to treat the elderly with greater dignity,” (p. 28) and adds, “Rich in experience is crown of aged, and their boast is the fear of the Lord.”

(Sir 25:6) (p. 28)

The Pope's quotation truly reflects an African's reverence for the elderly and why they are held in high esteem. They are the custodians of the cultural values and bearers of life, givers of life and protectors of life at all costs. In situations of crisis, elders as also authority figures, they will do everything possible within their means to secure normalcy in the family, community or ethnic community. For an African an elder is a revered person who holds a higher status in the society.

The responsibility of a leader in Africa cannot be underestimated, as Wirba (2012) affirms:

The leader is installed for the benefit of the community and the respect due him/her is linked to the indispensable service in the community. Failure in this service leads either to entronement or in some other cases killing of the leader. (pp. 308-309)

Bakanja (OSB) in his contribution on 'Elders as peacemakers' says of the elders: "If we want to attain peace in Africa the entry point should be traditional elder-hood" (New People - No.130 January-February, 2011 p. 27). These very sentiments are also echoed by Wachege (1992) who points out that elders, "enlightened, encouraged, corrected and instructed their people (p.28). This vital role that was originally played by elders, if incorporated and given recognition would be a point of reference when need arises in various religious congregations in Africa.

4.6.2 Literature related to Assumption Two

4.6.2 Assumption Two

The second assumption was, 'The incorporation of African spiritual value of family, forgiveness and solidarity in religious formation could enhance authentic living of community life among religious men and women'. This assumption was confirmed

from the literature. From a MIASMU course paper, 'The Interpretation of African religious on African Values in their Life', Sr. Masicha quotes Coffey (1995) who says that in the African context one whose life is not balanced thus having too much or too little for what is necessary for life qualifies her/him to be called a witch. She further quantifies this point with emphasis on the value on solidarity and sharing which should be enjoyed both in community, ministry and prayer life without any problems. An individual in the African sense finds a deep sense of belonging to his/her family of origin and when this individual joins religious life there is an apparent loss of this value into the new religious family (1st Immersion May-June, 2013). This comes out of the central role that family plays in molding an individual right from conception to death. An individual finds the gift of life within family through parents who offer security and give a sense of belonging such that there is coherence from the 'I' to 'we' and vice versa. This in turn helps connect an individual to the rest of the family and, therefore, shaping a bond of solidarity and harmony. Wirba (2012) affirms that solidarity and communion are cardinal links that unite members of the same family, tribe or clan; that problems, joys and sufferings of each member affect the entire community (p. 252).

The recognition of the essence of family in one's life consequently leads to the spirit of sharing. Karega-Munene in Wanjohi & Wanjohi (2005) observes that sharing was a joy and children were taught on the value of sharing such that it was rare to see a child eating or drinking alone (p. 26). This family spirit is an integral part of an African and if it is tapped into by religious congregations it can enrich the community spirit in which an individual finds herself/himself. Gacambi in MacGary and Ryan (2001) explains that the strong sense of family is deeply rooted among Africans (p. 228). Mbiti (1969), further points out that the family is, "the place where deep African values of life come to be, it is protected and nourished, a place of belonging, where sharing and

solidarity are at the heart of daily life and where each one feels himself or herself to be fully at home” (p. 2). Sabofu (1997) rightly observes that:

Community is the spirit, the guiding light of the tribe whereby people come together to fulfill a specific purpose, to help others fulfill their purpose and to take care of one another. The goal of the community is to make sure that each member of the community is heard and is properly giving the gifts he/she has brought to this world without this giving, the community dies. (p. 22)

People in a family may disagree and have estranged relationships with extended family members but this cannot completely cut off their links because as Schneider (1984) acknowledges, ‘ Blood is thicker than water’ and kinship consists in bonds on which kinsmen can depend and which are compelling and stronger and take priority over other kinds of bonds. He calls this, “states of being not doing or performance” (p165). These are gifts of bondedness that African religious may count on to help build strong communities where there is a sense of sisterhood or brotherhood in their religious families if applied in a positive way, Kenyatta (1965) affirms the importance of social ties as he points out:

Owing to the strength of the social ties existing between members of the same family, clan and age- group and between different families and clans through whom the tribe is unified and solidifies into one organic whole, the community can be mobilized very easily for corporate activity. (p. 112)

Regarding solidarity, Bujo (2003) depicts the support and reverence with which sick and dying are treated in Africa as a sign of showing the family connectedness and solidarity within the context of community. As he adds:

It is well known that people in Africa never die alone and isolated. The community of relatives, friends and acquaintances accompany their sick and

dying until death takes them away. They speak with the dying and give them in various ways the feeling and the awareness that they are included in the process of personal growth even as their physical strength declines. Through this solidarity of the community in suffering and at the hour of death, in a communication that may take the form of a non-verbal “ palaver,” the sick and the dying find fresh courage and learn to face suffering and death with greater dignity. At the same time, their coping with suffering and death provides instructions for the fellowship of those who accompany them; they learn to reflect on their own existence and to confront suffering and death bravely when their own hour comes. (p. 117)

What a beautiful, assuring, supportive and loving approach to use in journeying with our beloved suffering and dying relatives. This scenario being described above shows how much, many religious congregations could borrow from Africa to help revitalize community living and give many a sense of dignity and belonging.

Bujo further affirms that even sick and dying persons make a very significant contribution to the growth in the life of the fellowship of those around them, so that each member becomes a new person (p. 117). This is the researcher’s strong thrust of what African spirit of family and solidarity can bring to religious communities especially with the current trend of adopting western approach where the dying are sent over to nursing homes left at the mercy of strange nursing staff and unfamiliar environment.

Concerning community, Vanier (1979), points out that community is a place of forgiveness and warns that if we come into community without knowing that the reason we come is to learn to forgive and be forgiven seven times seventy-seven times, we will soon be disappointed (p. 37).

The following story told by Healey (2005) of a Rwandan woman demonstrates a deep meaning of forgiveness in the midst of pain and grief:

...In one area a Hutu man murdered a Tutsi neighbor. The wife of the dead Tutsi man was asked to identify her husband's murderer. She refused knowing that the Hutu man would be arrested, imprisoned and perhaps killed in return. The woman preferred to remain silent to save another life. She said: "This is enough. This killing has to stop somewhere. One murder does not justify another killing. We have to break the cycle of violence and end this genocide." So she chose to forgive. (p. 73)

Mbiti (1969) explains the concept of kinship as that which includes those bonded by blood relation, social relationships and even extended to cover animals, plants and non-living objects through the 'totemic' system (special relationship with animals) and sacred objects (p. 104).

In social relationships a child grows up knowing that the age mates of the father and mother automatically are considered as their parents and their children as their brothers and sisters. As Mbiti says, kinship controls social relationships in a given community (p. 104). An African brother and formator from an international community of priests and brothers (with African majority) said that his younger brothers look to him as their older brother. This requires that he really be an older brother by caring and being responsible as their role model.

Mbiti further says that it is a common practice in some communities in Africa to send children to live for some time with relatives where they are considered as members of the family they live with (pp. 106-107). All this demonstrates how social relationships might be extended into religious communities embracing our sisters and brothers as those in our nuclear families. This is very common among Africans. This

resonates with Jesus challenge that ‘Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and my sister and mother,’ (Matt. 12: 50). These are the boundaries that religious men and women are called to break and ‘witness to unity in a divided world’ (excerpts from the theme of the 23rd General Chapter of SSND, 2012). Shorter (1998) says that a religious man or woman finds life in community as in their own family in which they give their first allegiance and responsibility. Shorter compares this bond to the African initiates who formed together a liminal community that transcended family relationships and created closer connections between age mates (p. 37).

This bond of unity was also cited as existing among African religious who went through formation at the same time; to borrow from the African context, these would be called age-mates or in Kiswahili (rika) whose significant role in an individual’s life cannot be exaggerated.

Burke (2001) & class discussion (May 28, 2009) mentioned how her SND Congo sisters fashioned the use of the term kinship and showing how they relate toward one another in community. These sisters refer to an older sister/ brother as Yaya or Ya, Ma for Mother Superior, Tata or Ta for father, Mama or Ma for mother as titles indicating the relationships among them (p. 116). The deeper meaning is understood as engrained in these relational terminologies and how they contribute to the building of harmony in community.

Mbiti (1969) observes that kinship is one of the strongest forces in traditional African life because it controls social relationships as cited above (among the Congo sisters) determining the behavior of an individual toward another. Again, Mbiti explains that kinship extends to include the departed and those yet to be born (p. 105). Life is revered here on earth and after death, the dead who lived good lives become living dead and therefore intercessors for the living.

Pambe, in Magesa (1997) captures the relationship between the living and the ancestors by describing how the Sukuma-Nyamwezi of Tanzania's ancestors are in talking distance and almost tangible terms with their descendants. An African's social relationship with the living dead is, therefore, well understood.

Bujo (1992) considers Jesus as our Proto-Ancestor in whom the whole life of the African Christian can be rooted (p. 77). Africans should not, therefore, find it strange or pagan praying through their ancestors, because this is already a common Christian practice recognizing saints whose lives we admire just as we for our ancestors. Class discussion (June 5, 2009) confirms that kinship relationships recognize an individual as belonging to the family and gives one a sense of identity within the nuclear family, the extended family and in the larger social settings of the clan or community.

Sarpong in Tunucci, et al (1999) observes how the African family is based on the clan or lineage system where all members are considered relatives, irrespective of the relationship or distance separating them. He even adds that slaves and prisoners can be assimilated into it (p 20).

4.6.3 Assumption Three

The third assumption was that, 'There is little effort being made to integrate the African spiritual formation value of spontaneous prayers as opposed to fixed forms of prayers in religious life'. This assumption was confirmed by Gacambi (MacGary & Ryan 2001) who emphasizes that spontaneous prayers are an essential aspect to Africans in maintaining a strong relationship with God the Creator. She cites an example from the Gikuyu ethnic group in Kenya uttered by an elder in praise and gratitude expressing his/her thanksgiving and readiness to do God's will:

My Father, Great Elder,

I have no words to thank you,

But with your deep wisdom
 I am sure that you can see
 How I value your glorious gifts
 O my father, when I look upon your greatness,
 I am confounded with awe
 O Great elder,
 Ruler of all things earthly and heavenly,
 I am your warrior,
 Ready to act in accordance with your will. (p. 237)

There are examples of spontaneous prayer welling out of one's heart as in the words of Hannah, "O Lord of hosts, if you look with pity on the misery of your handmaid, if you remember me and do not forget me, if you give your handmaid a male child, I will give him to the Lord as long as he lives," (1Sam1:10-11). And from the prayer of Esther, "Oh God more powerful than all hear the voice of those in despair. Save us from the power of the wicked and deliver me from my fear," (Esther 4:14-30). Then Mary's prayer of praise, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness, behold from now on all ages will call me blessed ..." (Lk. 1:46-55).

Baudena & Gichuhi (2007) acknowledges African prayers and observes that these prayers were always connected with the situation of the moment and expressed with spontaneous intention of praise, thanksgiving or petition which helped to avoid formalism. An elder would offer prayer for one going for daily work as, "O God, Lord of heavens and Master of unending days, parent who never disown your children protect them, protect them, let the travelers return safe home" (pp. 13-14).

Equally, Mbiti (1969) explains further how an African relates with God when he says, “Whenever the African is, there is his religion: he carries it to the field where he is sowing seeds or harvesting a new crop, he takes it with him to a beer party to attend a funeral...” (p. 3).

It was evident that many religious congregations take all their prayers from the prayer books thus ‘The prayer of the church’ and there is little room left for creativity and spontaneity in prayer. One respondent recalled with nostalgia in these words, “I miss my mother’s prayers because they spoke to situations as direct as if God was there listening to her”

4.6.4 Assumption Four

The fourth assumption was, ‘The African spiritual value of hospitality is not given strong emphasis in religious formation programs in Africa today’. This assumption was confirmed as we observe Gacambi in MacGary & Ryan (2001) who agrees that there are values in the African family that are particularly relevant for the spiritual formation of the church as God’s family. She cites the example of hospitality which characterizes an African and one which the Christian community has to reclaim (p. 37). This gift of hospitality as a value is already inherent in African men and women by the time they enter religious life and, therefore, they carry it with them to share with members of their congregations. In sharing a meal, time, space, life, presence of each other whether in joy or sorrow all are characteristics of hospitality that Africans bring to religious community.

The following expression of presence is portrayed in simple and unspoken manner in the story from Taylor (2001) who says Africans believe presence is a debt they owe to each other. That is why in the story of Nantume the school girl who came to sit silently as her host ironed his clothes that day, and ended her visit as all visits are closed, “I have seen you,” (p. 135). This was hospitality of presence.

As Kitururu (2009) explains the spirit of hospitality, it is clear that African hospitality advocates the positive side of life. Therefore, the sharing of anguish and happiness shows that in spite of human suffering, life is still full of meaning and purpose since one does not suffer or rejoice alone because others give support, consolation and encouragement (p. 9). The words of Mbiti (1989) reaffirm this view as he points out that:

Only in terms of other people does an individual become conscious of his own being, his own duties, his own privileges and responsibilities toward other people. When he suffers, he does not suffer alone but with the corporate group. And when he rejoices, he rejoices not alone but with his kinsmen, his neighbors and his relatives whether dead or alive. (p. 106)

Magesa (1997) affirms that relationships receive the most attention in the adjudication of what is good and bad, what is desirable and undesirable in life (p. 64). Therefore because one constantly builds and rebuilds this relational ties individuals remain ever connected and this is why Kitururu (2009) emphasizes that:

Africans believe that there is a constant communion between the visible and the invisible universe. They hold that visitors may be messengers sent by the deceased and from the way they are treated, the deceased will know whether or not the living are keeping the tradition alive. (pp. 25-26)

According to Kitururu the practice of hospitality is likened to homecoming where people feel freer and become more secure to be at home. For him welcoming people and sharing with them the gift of life goes a long way in making the universe a home for everybody because hospitality provides good company (p. 11).

Mondo in his article ‘ Friend of the Africans’ echoes the spirit of Pope John Paul II who observed that evangelization had not succeeded in Africa because of failure to

have real dialogue with the traditional cultures and religions of Africa affirming that hospitality exists parallel to Christian beliefs (New People No.133 July- August 2011 p. 11).

4.6.5 Assumption Five

The fifth assumption was, ‘If the African spiritual value of other- centeredness and service are emphasized in religious formation today viable religious communities with a thrust toward ministry will be fostered’. This assumption was supported as the study found out from literature on it. Gacambi in MacGary & Ryan (2001), shares that Africans have always been person-centered. The value for a person is expressed in various ways such as through greetings to show that one recognizes the dignity of the other and, therefore, not to greet is considered an insult. Persons are valued, respected and accorded dignity simply because he/she is a human being (p. 232). In this spirit of respect and reaching out to others leads a growing into a sense of service and, therefore, a thrust toward ministry.

Vanier (1979) reflecting on his own experience of life in the community and the value for showing care and in the spirit of service, shares that a community needs to have the gentle concern that people show each other every day coming from gentle gestures of caring, by services and sacrifices which say ‘I love you’ and ‘I am happy to be with you’ (p. 48). This is the spirit of being there for the other. It is the spirit that reaffirms to an individual that he/she belongs to a community. Vanier further adds:

A community is truly a body when majority of its members are making the transition from ‘the community for myself’ to ‘myself for the community’, when each person’s heart is opening is to all the others, without any exception. (pp. 55-56)

Magesa (2006) cites the components of community life as care given to an individual when he/she needs it including advice, correction and encouragement; concern where there is guarantee by the community that care will be provided to the highest degree when needed and the presence which says to a person in effect: “I am not in a void in this life, I am in a social location which I care about and which cares about me” (pp. 67-68). This description fits a reflection of a community that is centered on the spirit of service for each member.

4.6.6 Assumption Six

The sixth assumption was that, ‘ The emphasis on African spiritual formation values of self –reliance and hard work in religious formation programs in Africa will reduce the financial dependence from Western countries by religious communities with African men and women’. This assumption was confirmed and supported by relevant literature. The spirit of hard work and self- reliance was instilled in an individual from childhood as Kayonga (1984) explains that:

...parents were directly involved in socializing their children into adult roles, particularly their roles within their family division of labor. After the age of eight or ten, most children learnt their appropriate work roles by laboring beside the parent of the same sex. Hence, boys spent more hours beside the father and girls more time with the mother. The children thus learnt their future adult roles through actual performance of these roles from an early age. Performing certain work roles was not only intended to teach the child particular skills or technical perfection in that work, it was also meant to make the child diligent, persistent and responsible to all others. In other words character molding was a central aim of parental socialization efforts. (p. 22)

Wirba (2012) helps us to understand that religious life will never be effectively incarnated in Africa unless communities are organized according to their proper resources and standard of life. She further points out that:

If they actually wish to cease appearing like foreign institutions imported to the tropics which cannot survive without foreign aid, African religious must set up their structures and works according to their local possibilities. (p. 305)

These sentiments are supported by Uzukwu (1986) who raises concern over African dependency that does not enable but renders the African Church poorer:

Indeed, the dependency syndrome of the Churches in Africa on the material level appears to be congenital. Material dependency leaves the road wide open to lack of creativity and even blackmail....the beggar has no self-respect. Self-respect of the Churches in Africa and indeed for the African nations, will keep on being elusive until there is a certain level of self- reliance on the material level. (p. 490)

Vanier (1979) shares his own experience from his life in the L'Arche community of the value of using our gifts in building community. He says:

If we are not faithful to our gifts we are harming the community and each of its members as well. So it is important that all members know what their gifts are, use them and take responsibility for developing them, it is important that the gift of each member is recognized and that each is accountable to the others for the use to which this gift is put. (p. 50)

Turaki (2006) sheds light on the African strong belief that protection meaning, identity and status derive from being an integral part of a community (p. 48). And to form part of a community calls for a commitment to contributing to the life of that particular community.

4.7 Literature related to the Limitation and Scope

The underpinning reason in this whole endeavor through this study was to uncover how religious formation programs have responded to the call to inculturation of religious life in Africa since the Synod of African Bishops in 1994. Warren in Taylor (1963) wrote:

Our first task in approaching another religion is to take off our shoes, for the place we are approaching is holy. Else we may find ourselves treading on men's dreams. More serious, we may forget that God was here before our arrival . (p. 38)

Kiaziku (2009), quoting from Fr. Lumbala's article "Mission and inculturation" comments as follows in relation to lack of integration, "To inculturate means to become poor and familiar with our faithful" and adds that: "the missionary of that period did not come to make himself one of us, but to be our 'benefactor', our 'savior' and our 'patron'. He did not become black with the Blacks, but tended to turn the Blacks as far as possible into 'new Whites,'" (p. 99). However, as the Ghanaian proverb says, "Even if a log remains in the river for a thousand years it will never become a crocodile." In this case the call to integrate African spiritual formation values into religious formation can never be a wild idea but only unravel the gift of what African religious men and women can contribute to religious life.

Magesa (2006) alludes to this as he points out that, "People are becoming more and more aware and proud of their cultural heritage" (p. 54). Therefore, the African religious men and women need to take deliberate effort to articulate these African spiritual formation values so as to find ground to dialogue with Christian values in formation. This equitable interaction will be a starting point of genuine inculturation of religious life in the church in Africa.

Chapter Five

Discussion

5.0 Introduction

This chapter is a systematic presentation of the interpretation and synthesis of the results from the study. The findings drawn from the field research reveal that there is little attempt being made toward realizing the integration of African spiritual formation values in the religious formation of African men and women. This attempt, therefore, is very slow and not being given the urgent attention that it requires.

According to O'Relly (1986), a religious congregation can only speak of its continued existence beyond the life-span of the present members if newer members feel that they are responsible for the future. And if this concern is expressed in the details of formation planning and structuring, then indeed the future will be presented as arising from both the traditions handed down to a community and its members' present experiences, but with a newness and possibility beyond either the past or the present insights. And if the future is not taken into account, then religious formation will simply be training people to fit into the present scheme of things which may fail to prepare these African men and women adequately (p. 11).

These sentiments of O'Relly were supported from the finding by a respondent from an international male congregation, a national of Brazil and of Black African descent who pointed out that, "Africans are not yet at the level of appreciating who they are and how their culture has shaped them long before they become religious." In my view, this scenario, as it appears, does not depict an awareness of the treasure of wealth of values Africans hold within them, a result of which may be a loss of identity. (App. C: #5). In this priest's view there should be pride and ownership first and foremost by Africans themselves regarding their own values.

In my opinion, the incorporation of the African values cannot be done by anybody else except through the initiative of African religious men and women.

It is worth noting that from the findings, a total of 82 percent of African men and women observed that they know their African values while 18 percent of non-African religious men and women admitted that they know most of the African values which are similar to their own but differ in the manner they are expressed. In contrast to having knowledge of these values an African respondent referred to these values disrespectfully as “African pagan ways” and according to her she joined religious life so as to be redeemed from what she referred to as ‘African pagan practices’ (cf. App. C: #4). With this kind of negative mentality, one would understand some of the factors that are an impediment in the implementation of an integrated formation in Africa. However, the literature from Wanjohi and Wanjohi (2005) supports the need for integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values in the religious formation of African men and women with his contribution that inculturation and acculturation are to dialogue for evangelization to take root .

Similarly, Magesa (2006) questions how much emphasis and inclusion of the African spiritual formation values is done in formation because, as he observed, it is often extremely difficult for African young people joining international mission institutes to bring with them to the institute a healthy African identity. The cultural contribution of these African men and women is often ignored, not because of any personal malice on the part of any individual, but because of a systemic racist perception against the African continent that still lingers on in many openly unacknowledged forms. This is so because the training during the novitiate often reinforces African impotence in many areas because, even up to now, African culture and identity have not been properly recognized

and accepted as being capable of contributing to the formation regimen not least in terms of African customs and behavior.

The findings of this research have convinced the researcher to assert that in terms of formation program, there is a bias that religious culture is a superior culture while the African culture is the inferior culture especially when formation emphasizes that Africans need to embrace the culture of the congregation. This apparent lack of appreciation of the fact that the African formees come with valuable cultural gifts that can be tapped from their different African cultural backgrounds is evident in the exclusion of African spiritual formation values in religious formation. As a result, the emphasis is put on enhancing the culture of the congregation or the spirit of the founder or foundress which takes precedence over African spiritual formation values.

5.1 Discussion of Thesis topic

The thesis topic: “Integrating African Spiritual Formation Values with Christian Values in the Religious Formation of African Men and Women in Nairobi, Kenya” explored how the integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values has been embraced in the religious formation of African men and women. The analysis of the study indicates how 104 respondents out of 120 through questionnaires showed their interest through their responses, 12 respondents out of 20 through focused group interview and 7 out of 10 responded through the face to face interview. A respondent said, “Our African values have shaped who we are and need to be part of us”, (cf. App. C: #6). This strong conviction, no doubt, gives the impression that African values from family are needed in religious life so as to make religious communities a place that Africans can identify themselves with in regard to how they live in community as sisters and brothers sharing everyday life as a family. From the finding, 91 percent of the total respondents in the study supported the integration of values learned from the African

family. Out of the 91 percent, 58 percent were African religious men and women of varied ages who strongly supported that African values from family as essential and needing to be incorporated in religious life, while 33 percent were non-Africans. Notably only 4 percent of Africans and 5% of non-Africans were against the inclusion citing that some of the African family values such as over-identification with one's clan which eventually creates exclusive groupings or harbors negative tribal sentiments are not applicable in religious life today in this 21st century. This percentage comprised of young Africans for whom modern life has exposed them beyond members of their families of origin or clan.

Basing on the high percentage of respondents who see the need to incorporate African values it is clear that there is a gap that needs to be bridged so as to recognize that the retrieval of African values which had been demonized by the early missionaries is necessary. These findings are supported by literature from MacGary in MacGary & Ryan (2001) who traces some of the early effects of the coming of the missionaries where Africans had to renounce of their traditional beliefs considered by missionaries as 'false' and eventually resulting in many of them making sacrifices of dropping these practices so as to be considered followers of Jesus Christ (p. 192).

Nevertheless, it was surprising to notice that despite the many young men and women residing in urban centers with many colleges and universities and also where there is establishment of religious houses, still the vocation animators prefer getting their candidates from rural areas. This could be qualified by the attitude that the young people in the rural areas may still be firmly grounded in their African values without much influence from city life. However, this might be another area for further study in the near future as to why there are more young people responding to religious life from rural places than urban areas.

5.2 Discussion of the Problem Statement

The apparent slow adaptation to the call to inculturation of the Christian values into African spiritual values in the formation of African men and women continues to be an area of concern to the researcher. The results of the study and literature have confirmed this by indicating that there is still more effort needed to achieve this dream. This was confirmed from the recent data study where 91 percent of the respondents are very aware of their African values and yet they seemingly have not been instrumental in engaging in a dialogue that could foster their absorption into their life in community. Several factors have contributed to this as the respondents indicated from the findings. An older religious sister pointed out that in their natural families the response to a problem comes so spontaneously but in religious life there is a reluctance which according to her poses 'a danger' of how true they become sisters to each other (cf. App. C: #4).

Similarly, another respondent in response to the question; "How is the African culture viewed in your community?" An African religious brother said, "There has persisted a bias impression in my community of a 'superior and inferior culture' which has created existing divisions among members of my congregation". According to him the missionaries consider their culture as superior whereas the African culture is rated as inferior and this creates a split personality among Africans wanting to identify themselves with both (cf. App. C: #1). The result created from this kind of attitude is what the literature of (Walligo 1986) refers to as the situation when Africans find themselves into two personalities. During the times of joy and peace, they may be able to live as true Christians but when crises come, they move back to their African personality (p. 57).

In the findings another respondent from an indigenous congregation further argued that even religious in indigenous congregations have inherited this initial attitude

from their earliest founding missionaries such that it has become a paradox for Africans to continue to devalue their own values (cf. App. C: # 4). In this case it is clear that there is no blanket blame over the international congregations for the slow implementation of the integration of African values in religious formation. African religious men and women too have a share in what could be termed as 'apparent sabotage' to inculturation.

Some of the emerging reasons for the lack of inclusion could be attributed to African religious men and women themselves for their failure to take pride in their own African values. This goes back to the old mentality created by early missionaries that demanded the early African converts to discard their beliefs and values so as to become 'good Christians'. This resulted in these new converts making huge sacrifices of dumping what they had earlier valued for the sake of the new religion. This, therefore, seems to be the trend for African religious men and women today who do not want to identify with African values lest they are considered 'pagans.' As a result of this dark painted mentality there are a lot of African spiritual formation values lacking in the formation process and, therefore, needing to be re-emphasized in the religious formation programs in Africa.

In clarifying this confusing scenario, the literature of (MacGary 2001) states that to become a follower of Jesus Christ demands the conversion and sacrifice of some of our old ways that are not compatible with Jesus Christ but it does not require that one is completely alienated from one's culture, rather, that culture is enriched by the deeply human values of the Gospel drawn from Jesus own human life, the incarnation of God living with us and for us (p193).

In my view, this slow implementation is coming from the missionary negative attitudes toward these African values which in the earlier days of evangelization had been branded barbaric and satanic. It is noted from the field and experience that when

young men and women join congregations many are either discouraged by the religious congregations openly refusing to share their values or by certain negative remarks made toward Africa as a continent and its historical experiences of slave trade and inferior treatment stifles their self-worth. Instead, they are told to adapt the new and 'holy' values of a 'good Christian' cleansed from the supposed obsolete African pagan practices.

The literature review of Magesa (2006) supports these views and raises concern of how much emphasis and inclusion of the African spiritual values is done in formation when the training during novitiate reinforces African impotence in many areas. He decries that African culture and identity has not been recognized and accepted as being capable of contributing to the formation (p. 128). This cultural attitudes caused by stereotypes and racial feelings need to be addressed so as to harmonize community life that will foster respect for cultural differences.

The problem, therefore, is the apparent slow adaptation of an approach to formation of African men and women with the deliberate inclusion of what entails a holistic spiritual formation which integrates Christian values and African values. On one hand, the church calls the African Christians to embrace inculturation but on the other hand the researcher experiences reluctance in the actual implementation especially when, apparently, very little has been done to realize this in the formation of African religious men and women.

An example is a religious brother who shared in his response with the researcher that an invitation to one of their African brothers to go to the US for 'proper training' in accounting was received by the congregation as patronizing (App. C: #2). The concern raised was whether there was no proper training here in Africa. The use of the word 'proper training' made all the difference and was not received well. These are some of

the areas that shed light to this assumption that there has not been deliberate appreciation and inclusion of what is from within Africa in many aspects of life in formation.

5.3 Discussion of the Hypothesis

The hypothesis, “The integration of African spiritual formation values with the Christian values will help realize a well-integrated religious life with meaningful and holistic life by African religious men and women” was affirmed by Nwagu (1997) who quotes the African Synod of Bishops who observed that; “Inculturation ensures the authenticity and depth of the faith in the African Christian, heals cultural alienation, and bridges the gap between life and faith, thus resolving the many instances of spiritual “schizophrenia” and double life affecting many of our people” (p. 134). How can this situation be addressed? Four different respondents through face to face and focused group interviews agreed that “we need to have all formators to be formed” (cf. App. C: #1, 3, 5, 7). This was also supported by another respondent, non-African sister who said “it would be better for formation houses and programs to have workshops on African spiritual values and cultures to enhance the living and appreciation of the African values by both Africans and non- Africans” (cf. App. C: #8).

Though there was limited literature to support the above views, the researcher’s interpretation of the findings and the available literature points to the reality of how inculturation ensures the authenticity and depth of one’s faith because it is coming from what is familiar to the individual. This then confirms that in as much as many African men and women would wish to respond to the call to religious life, there is need that they identify themselves with the new lifestyle. These African men and women already have a rich knowledge of their own African spiritual formation values ranging from spirit of community, hospitality, sharing what is provided, standing with one another in solidarity when need arises, growing in the awareness of other-centeredness and service,

strengthening the spirit of family and prayer as among the many values that shape the life of Africans as a people. The integration of these African spiritual formation values with Christian values would contribute immensely to the holistic formation needed for African religious men and women today.

As indicated in the findings, African religious who, as the study indicates, mostly come from homes that would be considered economically below average (by Kenyan standards), have a desire to live a simple lifestyle, but when they join religious congregations they experience a shift in lifestyle. The simplicity of life in religious congregations requires that as a community they need one another. However, when they join religious congregations some are apparently lured into an ironically materialistic attitude which results in many adapting a religious lifestyle considered affluent contrary to that of their own family members. Eventually the African value of sharing and taking responsibility as good stewards of the goods of the community fades away.

Revisiting her touching moments during the field study, the researcher recalled one of her respondents describing how during her childhood, she shared with her sisters clothing, bed, even a blanket due to financial constraints in her family and there was no fuss about it since the situation was understood by all family members (cf. App. C: #4). How much has this religious woman changed such that she no longer recalls the spirit of sharing that her African family of origin imbued in her? The researcher's own experiences from childhood stories come to mind with nostalgia of how food was shared from one plate and yet the older siblings knew just when to stop eating so that the little ones are left with sufficient food. These findings are supported by literature from (Karega - Munene in Wanjohi 2005) who concurs that sharing was a joy and children were taught on the value of sharing such that it was rare to see a child eating or drinking alone (p. 26).

5.4 Discussion of the Significance of the Thesis

This study is essential in addressing the need to integrate African spiritual formation values with Christian values in the formation of African men and women because this integrated formation will foster the identity of African men and women in the church and the world at large. In His Apostolic Exhortation, ‘The Consecrated Life’ (no 80) the Holy Father John Paul II calls consecrated persons to enter into the process of inculturation and inter-religious dialogue especially as they enter cultures and religions other than their own with the attitude of Jesus, who emptied himself and took the form of a servant. He adds, “ All elements of consecrated life call for inculturation: the charism itself, the ways of formation, prayers and liturgy, the principles and values of the spiritual life, structures of governments, forms of apostolate and style of life” (p. 46).

There are questions arising from this invitation of the Holy Father which the study encountered both from the findings and literature where many Africans are searching for their own identity as they respond to their call to religious life. The literature by Kitururu (2009) confirms these words as he reflects on African hospitality as one of the aspects to be inculturated, “Without hospitality people are living in their house but they are truly homeless. They are like strangers in their own house. It is in social ties and bonds that individuals find a true home” (p. 11).

At the time of this study, it became apparent that there is still little effort in this area of study concerning the integration of African spiritual formation values with Christian values in the formation of African men and women, therefore, giving precedence to this research work that will give a major contribution in this area of inculturation of religious life in Africa. A respondent’s remark found this study worthwhile, “it is good you are carrying out some study on this in religious

congregations, it is in religious houses that we form those who later become church leaders who need to help implement these necessary changes in the church today” (cf. App. C: #4).

It is worth pointing out that the apparent limited areas of reading as far as integrated formation is concerned turned out as the impetus that propelled the study forward to go out to the field and capture what is currently on the ground as for as inculturation of religious life in Africa is concerned and if not, how this can be reflected in the religious lives of African men and women. The literature by Wirba (2012) confirms that inculturation is not only the transformation of culture by faith, but also the cultural re-expression of faith (p. 285). It is hoped that this resourceful knowledge will rekindle a spark of new energy toward the full implementation of integrating African spiritual formation values with the Christian values in the formation of African religious men and women.

5.5 Discussion of Research Questions

5.5.1 The African Spiritual values known to both Africans and non-Africans

The research question was, “Which African spiritual formation values do you know from your up-bringing as Africans or from your lived experience here in Africa as non-Africans?” The following values were randomly listed by respondents of African and non-African origin:

- Respect for elders and authority
- Honesty and faithfulness
- Fear of God
- Spirit of sharing
- Togetherness/solidarity/unity
- Hard work/ service

- Team work/ community spirit
- Hospitality
- Responsibility
- Spontaneous Prayer
- Obedience
- Care for the elderly
- Forgiveness /reconciliation
- Sense of belonging
- Extended family
- Palaver (baraza)

From the research investigations it was revealed that two non-Africans expressed their interest and effort to get to know more about African values especially after they had taken their immersion courses at the Maryknoll Institute of African Studies, Tangaza in Nairobi (cf. App. C: #6, 9). It was further evident that most respondents of both African and non-African origin have knowledge of numerous African values. Africans especially cited the values with certainty and claimed them as a part of who they have become as they learnt them from their families.

The literature by Msafiri (2010) supports these findings and also identifies parents as the first or perhaps the most important moral formators of the child. He gives an example of the Chagga for whom corporate parental involvement and responsibility was of extreme importance for an integral and sound child moral formation and building up in all aspects. (p. 8).

The researcher's support to have a page in their congregation's 'African Newsletter' monthly where a sister is invited to share in writing on a cultural aspect, say, 'The value of naming ceremony among the Ibo of Nigeria' and then finally reflect how it

relates to the significance of baptism as understood from the Christian perspective. This practice deepened and re-ignited an awareness of the wealth of different cultures in Africa. It has also lit a spark of enthusiasm in many School Sisters of Notre Dame in the Province of Africa who now share this dialogue between African spiritual formation values and relate them to Christian practices, creating an appreciation and articulation of various African spiritual formation values (SSND, Africa Newsletter, December, 2011).

This observation has been supported by literature from Hagan (1999) in his address during a symposium on the “Dialogue Between Faith and Culture” who observes that the death of African values and ways of life will not destroy the ingrained and deep-seated religiosity of Africans, but also render meaningless to them the Christian message (p. 52).

Two respondents shared that they have always tried to be on the ‘safer side’ of the superior since they don’t like conflicts and to avoid this they remain obedient to the rules (cf. App. C: #9, 13). This reveals a survival tactic that does not exhibit mature behavior where people take responsibility of their actions but instead do things to please those in authority. Is religious life breeding puppets for superiors?

5.5.2 The Use of Spontaneous Prayers in Religious Communities

Research question two was, “Do you use spontaneous prayers coming from the heart in your daily community prayers?” The research findings indicate that the use of breviaries at prayer time emerged as the most commonly used form of prayer, therefore, religious men and women recite these prayers morning, noon, evening and at night time from the book. These prayers are mostly psalms which were first composed to meet a particular need in a given situation in the history of the nation of Israel. And since then, the church has adopted them in religious communities worldwide. As it was observed by some religious that these prayers do not fit the mood and situation of their community

but still they are a guiding principle in their prayer life. This then has become a boring exercise as they pointed out such that religious times do not connect what they most desire in prayer in various situations especially when they use these recited prayers.

As one respondent shared “I find this way of structured and written prayers boring. It is restricting and too structured and does not motivate me to go for community prayers, said a sister in charge of postulants in one of the international congregation founded in Europe” (cf. App. C: #4). Whereas indigenous congregations seemed to concentrate more on the use of designated prayers by the church in their original form, the international congregations of both genders especially those with roots in North America seemed to be flexible in their approach to prayer.

Similar responses were drawn from two focused groups of priests and sisters from international congregation who confirmed that they no longer use the traditional church prayer books but have since substituted them with a version, “Companion to the Breviary”, which has inclusive language and gives room for creativity in prayer preparation depending on the prevailing circumstance as need be (cf. App. C: #6, 7). This finding has been supported by literature by Mbiti (1975) who affirms that African prayers are an “outpouring of man’s soul and spirit in the direction of the divine, the spiritual realm and its values.” He adds that the prayers ‘contain spiritual values and those who recite them do so in a spiritual attitude of a spiritual direction’ (p. 22-23).

The literature by Gacambi in MacGary & Ryan (2001) agrees that the African people maintain a close and vital relationship with what is spiritual: their daily lives both individual and groups are influenced by belief in the supernatural. She quotes Pope Paul VI (*Africae Terrarum* p. 8) who articulated this reality saying:

The constant and general foundation of African tradition is their spiritual view of life. The most important element generally found is the idea of God as the first and ultimate cause of things. This concept perceived rather than reflected on, is expressed in very many ways from culture to culture, but the fact remains that the presence of God permeates African life as the presence of a higher being, personal and mysteries. (p. 234)

However, this spontaneity and creativity in prayers was found out to be less emphasized in religious communities. The findings have shown that most religious still use the traditional church prayers from the 'Prayer of the Church.'

The emerging point to be noted is that religious congregations with older membership from North America, whether men or women, preferred the use of creative spontaneous prayers and even their breviaries, as it was found out, had inclusive language thus where the noun God is referred to with a masculine pronoun 'Him', these breviaries with inclusive language repeat the noun 'God' to avoid the use of the pronoun 'Him'.

An example was cited "Glory to you Source of all Being Eternal Word and Holy Spirit' instead of 'Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit' (cf. App. C: #.6, 7).

The implication, therefore, is that there is a longing for a relational experience of God who among most Africans is experienced through more creative prayers that will give room for an inclusion of spontaneous prayers welling up from the heart. This brings us to the conclusion that there is a hunger among some African religious men and women which cannot be satiated until more attention and sensitivity is given to this area of prayer, the result of which will deepen the spiritual aspect of African religious men

and women because prayer as pointed out in the literature and from the personal experience of the researcher, is foundational to every religious.

5.5.3 Projects Emphasized to Enhance Self-reliance in the Spirit of Hard Work

Research question three was, “What activities or projects has your religious community emphasized to enhance the African value of self-reliance and the spirit of hard work?” The findings concurred with the literature pointing to the role of socialization of children in Africa where both boys and girls are socialized through conscious and non-conscious ways by their parents, uncles, aunts and grandparents. They are taught the importance of being a participative member of the family and how every family member needs to contribute to the welfare of the whole family. As it was observed laziness is abhorred and songs or proverbs are used to deride those who show such behavior (cf. App. C: #2). This finding is supported by literature from Kayonga (1984) who confirms that parents were directly involved in socializing their children into adult roles, particularly their roles within their family division of labor (p. 22).

There is no doubt that some religious communities are fostering the above spirit as it was revealed that efforts are being made in most of the religious congregations to strive and keep a small kitchen garden even when they may not engage in big enterprises (cf. App. C: #5). Evidently, these efforts or desires were explicit to the researcher during the participant observation where the spirit of self-reliance and fostering hard work was evident among a number of religious communities who tap the talents of their members from initial formation. In some congregations the postulants and novices have a set time in a week when they give service in the community garden or farm (cf. App. C: #2). This effort to foster self-reliance is supported by literature by Wirba (2012) who asserts that religious life will never be effectively incarnated in Africa unless communities are organized according to their proper resources and standard of life (p. 305). Further, the

researcher established that a few communities have incorporated the spirituality of ecology in their formation which seems to help the formees to find meaning in their relationship with mother earth by establishing a sensitivity and respect to all created things and the symbiotic relationship between human beings and the entire creation (cf. App. C: #4).

Additionally, the projects also play a very important role in promoting the African values of hard work and responsibilities which most of the formees have undergone as experienced in their dynamics of upbringing. A respondent during the field interviews who has lived community life for over 35 years shared that his brothers in community emphasized “getting together and sharing work” like cooking, doing household chores as a strong emphasis in one of their annual goal setting meeting. This was arrived at as a gesture to show their sense of concern for one another especially when work is shared and done in the spirit of the community (cf. App. C: #1). These sentiments of shared responsibilities are echoed in the literature by Bahemuka (1982) who concurs that whenever there was a certain task to be performed, each family joined hands with the other members to complete it (p. 121).

However, these efforts face challenges from the attitude of expatriate religious men and women who continue to promote full reliance from Western funding, stifling the spirit of self-reliance and hard work among their African members. This mentality is what is challenged by Magesa (2006) who emphatically points out that dependency is certainly not glorified as a good thing in Africa (p. 143). One respondent referred to religious with this dependent attitude as ‘perpetual babies,’ always needing help (cf. App. C: #8). The big question of concern is what happens to the same African men and women who undergo formation that seems to prepare them so well into responsible adults but eventually change to be liabilities in their communities after profession

or ordination

The same respondent above who referred to lazy religious men and women as ‘perpetual babies’ claimed that congregations ‘spoil’ African men and women religious who, on entering congregations cease to carry out responsibilities as they would if they were in their natural families (cf. App. C: #8). These questions come to mind: Who does all the work in religious congregations? What kind of formation have they received? Are these congregations totally dependent on foreign financial help? What does this do to their own dignity as human beings when you have to rely all your life on hand-outs from donors?

5.5.4 The Emphasis of Community as Family of Love, Forgiveness and Solidarity

The research question four was, “How is the aspect of community as family build on love and forgiveness and solidarity emphasized in your religious community?” Class discussion (June 5, 2009) confirms that kinship relationships recognize an individual as belonging to the family and gives one a sense of identity within the nuclear family, the extended family and in the larger social settings of the clan or community.

On the contrary, there was an observation from the findings that there is a need for religious to feel included in the affairs of the community and congregation at large. The concern is raised especially when there is information to be communicated to the religious whereby only a few get the information and yet it affects the whole, this creates division among religious who feel not consulted over matters that affect their lives (cf. App. C: #4). It then becomes a problem when it comes to implementing decisions that one was not a part of. In such a case plans are not wholesomely supported and may be sabotaged by those who feel left out creating disharmony in the community. This fails to create a community where all feel they have a sense of belonging to the kinship. As literature by Mbiti (1969) says, kinship controls social relationships in

a given community.

The focused group of four respondents expressed that they have the desire to nurture the spirit of family value in community but when the resources of the community are not equally distributed then it creates a disparity. Such resources would be like the monthly allowances allotted to every individual which end up not being shared fairly as expected (cf. App. C: #4, 5, 8, 11). The tendency of mismanagement of resources especially for a few religious put in charge of projects or schools who later embezzle funds and do not have the welfare of the group at heart was observed as stifling the spirit of family by this greedy behavior.

What is being revealed here does not truly reflect the kind of family that Jesus would consider as ‘my mother and sisters and brothers are those who hear the word of God’. How does the love of Christ which all who profess promise to embrace and witness to the world get reflected? It is not enough to share a roof, wear similar habits or congregational pins or medals of identity when these virtues do not find expression in the lives shared together. There should be a reflection of true discipleship of a community of love build on forgiveness. One religious wondered, “Where is the African spirit of sharing?” It is clear that there is a disconnection between the values learned at home and what is lived in religious community (cf. App. C: #5).

On the contrary, a respondent said that if she had not found a family spirit in religious life she would have gone back home but because she feels supported and loved, she has stayed, now 25 years in religious life and added, “I am very happy and if I were to reverse things, I would choose to be a religious in this very congregation”. This literature is supported by Msafiri (2010) who stresses that the family promotes and enhances an on-going deeper human as well as integral moral enrichment (p. 8) and

Healey & Sybertz (1996) confirm these sentiments that inclusiveness in family is a key value in Africa (p. 34).

When we talk of family in Africa, life is so intertwined that as the literature by Bujo (2003) confirms even the sick and dying persons make a very significant contribution to the growth in the life of the fellowship of those around them so that each member becomes a new person (p. 117). This is the researcher's strong thrust of how African spirit of family and solidarity can bring to religious communities especially with the current trend of adapting Western approach where the dying are sent over to nursing homes left at the mercy of strange nursing staff and unfamiliar environment.

A story is told of a six year old African girl who was one day met by a missionary priest who was doing his pastoral work in her village when she was carrying her little baby brother on her back. In dismay and obvious concern this priest wondered why on earth a caring parent would leave such a burden to a child, to carry a heavy baby. He expressed his pity and likened this responsibility left to a little one as child abuse, but the little girl's response was that the baby was not a burden because he was her brother and this was a gesture of care and not a burden. The moral of this story is a challenge that religious men and women should not find it a burden to carry each other's load because they are sisters or brothers to one another forming one family. Indeed in theological understanding a family is a gift of God.

The researcher's own SSND communities, and probably other religious communities, have a common practice to pray for each of the departed sisters by name in all communities all over the world. This is not strange to an African religious who already appreciates this bond with the living dead. This spells out the presence of family spirit that goes beyond life in effort to stay connected with the dead members of the lineage. This is done in the spirit of family bond flowing from a shared blood connection

in other words they are 'waxed together' as it may be referred to. This connectedness in African families is confirmed by Mbiti (1969) who affirms that an individual does not exist and cannot exist alone except corporately. An individual owes his/her existence to other people even those of the past and contemporaries are still considered vital members of the family (p 108).

The literature by Serrao (2004) is in agreement that a good family education provides the certainty of being loved by the family members, occupying in the family a 'place' of satisfaction for self and others in a serene climate of mutual acceptance (p. 10). This could be a resourceful example for religious communities to emulate what it means to be in a well knit family relationship as experienced from the African perspective and blend into religious life.

This spirit of solidarity will, no doubt, breed lasting caring families especially where each person recognizes her vulnerability and that of others and, therefore, willing to forgive one another. On the contrary although families are expected to reflect the spirit of forgiveness from the African perspective, the researcher has a personal experience during the time of writing up this chapter that is heart breaking and needing urgent re-looking and immediate revamp because it goes against all that family members could do to one another.

This heartbreaking experience comes from the practice of Abaluhya of western Kenya who ostracize an entire family when a member sheds the blood of a kinsman then the rest are all banished from that clan because the two families can no longer share common social amenities like fetching water from the same stream or share same tap water or buy things from the same shopping center. This background sets the basis of a true story encountered recently in the family of a male religious brother whose father died when the whole family had been forced out of their ancestral land after his brother

stabbed his clansman to death, therefore, forcing them to vacate their land for their maternal uncles as the cultural practice demands. The convict was arrested to face the law but his family is forced by culture to share in his sins in the name of collective responsibility. How does this collective retribution help reconcile families that are supposed to be the center of moral teaching on forgiveness? This is an African cultural practice that needs challenging since it breeds revenge and not forgiveness. In essence the practice is meant to be a deterrent for any would be murderers so that life is perpetuated and not terminated. However, the measures of punishment meted turn out to be extremely harsh on the innocent larger family. Again it reflects how in Africa an individual's behavior affects the entire community and the call to be responsible of each other cannot be overemphasized.

Indeed an individual's actions affect the entire family as we see the example by Achebe (1958), who depicts Okonkwo's wives weeping bitterly and their children weeping with them without knowing why, when his family was fleeing to his motherland" (p. 87). A respondent shared that there is a transfer of this practice into religious communities whereby revenge is extended to a group just because one of their own has offended another person in the community. An example given was a case of two brothers who had personal differences but surprisingly members of their different tribes got involved in these differences and eventually members from the two tribes would not talk to each other (cf. App. C: #1). This is contrary to the call to 'witness to unity in a divided world' (excerpts from the theme of the 23rd General Chapter of SSND, 2012). No wonder among some of the religious it was evident that forgiveness of one another seems to be a struggle. Agbonkhianmeghe , in his paper presented in Rome on "Justice and Peace: Salt of the earth...Light of the world 'Challenges of the African Synod for Religious Communities in Africa,' challenges religious institutes for their life and

mission in Africa. He points out how Africa has been torn asunder by tribalism and ethnicity and the only way for religious to witness is to model a reconciled community for the rest of Africa and how religious institutes “must become more and more a reconciled community, a place where reconciliation is proclaimed to all people of good will,” (September 2009).

The value of family lived by religious men and women should reflect aspects of what married life would have been in terms of being expected to be a life giver though not biologically but through the various apostolates and in their communities. The findings from a respondent resonated with these sentiments as she pointed out that African religious men and women also give themselves to God in order to give life to others (cf. App. C: #2) Therefore, it must be emphasized that in order to be faithful in upholding these values of life giving in family, religious men and women need support from other members within their congregation as a family. There is need for a sense of procreation so as to keep the family alive by attracting more vocations to those particular congregations by the example of life lived together. Thus by the fruit of their life they will attract many others to desire to share life with them.

The literature by Mbiti (1969) supports this finding and explains a common practice in some communities in Africa where children are sent to live for some time with relatives and considered as members of that family they live with (pp. 106-107). In the same way the members joining a particular congregation should be able to be considered members of that family of religious men and women by ‘adoption.’ All this demonstrates how social relationships might be extended into religious communities embracing our sisters and brothers as those in our nuclear families. A sister from a local congregation said that the families of her sisters in community are beginning to form associations to extend relationships to each other since they value the bondedness of their

daughters in community (cf. App. C: #4). This resonates with Jesus challenge that ‘Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and my sister and mother,’ (Matt. 12: 50).

What is evident from this study is that there is need for religious men and women in African to face the fact that there is apparent laxity or negligence in embracing fully the African strong family bond built on love, forgiveness and solidarity. This can be observed from a community where there is deep trust among members that they are accepted and loved as they are in their giftedness and sinfulness. It needs pointing out that there are religious who feel unaccepted in their religious communities and live on the periphery with hurts. These religious men and women are seeking a warm hand to receive them back home like the ‘forgiving father’ in the biblical story of the ‘prodigal son’. It is worth emphasizing that at the center of a healthy religious community are forgiveness, love and a sense of belonging felt by all members regardless of race, nationality or ethnicity. And from this witness many will exclaim,” see how they love and care for one another.”

The finding from a Nigerian religious woman in her late fifties belonging to an international congregation, shared on kinship relationships beginning with, “Blood is thicker than water.” She then added that Africans recognize a network of relationships, through blood, initiation rites, dancing groups as young men and women and working groups. This bond, according to her should run through the entire congregation since the sisters all share the spirit of their founder. This sister gave an example of her community sisters who look up to her as their older sister even when they come from Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya. She added that this respect according to her is reciprocal and it goes with the responsibility that she also treats the young ones with love and care. She cited that initial formation is foundational since it helps in the rooting of their spirit in the

young women who, when they go astray, are reminded, “This is not the spirit of our congregation,” (cf. App. C: #4).

5.5.5 The Gifts and Challenges of Respect to Elders and Authority

The research question five was, “What are some of the gifts and challenges experienced in your religious community in relation to respect to elders and authority?” The finding on this question were supported by literature by Shorter (2000) who confirms that elders are those who have given life and are closer to the world of ancestors. They play a vital role of connecting the living and the ancestors and ultimately to God the giver of life and therefore, their authority in Africa cannot be exaggerated (p. 13). One African priest who is a formator in his international congregation referred to elders particularly, as, “moving encyclopedias” who are consultants to all the community’s matters (cf. App. C: #1).

Similarly, elders play a reverential role in an African’s worldview and they are a symbol of leadership, wisdom, settle disputes and therefore are peace-makers and are characterized by exemplary lives. The literature by Bujo (1998) confirms the importance of elders since life flows from God, flows in a hierarchical order. At the peak are the ancestors, who are followed by the elders of the community including father and mother of the family, the clan head and the chief or king (p. 197). A respondent was in agreement and said; “generally from our African understanding, elderly members in our community are sources of wisdom and their seniority needs to be respected” (cf. App. C: #2).

This observation clearly affirms that the place of elders is undisputable and that their responsibility is of significant role as they are the symbols of wisdom, blessings and consultations in time of need, for example, when things are at stake or crises moments they are sources of helpful information .They help give direction and wisdom in

situations of life when need arises since their life experience has offered them with vast knowledge and wisdom to guide the society. They are the custodians of the community and, therefore, respect toward them is unquestionable.

Moreover, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI (2011) in his encyclical on ‘Africa’s Commitment’ and in reference to the elderly, reminds us that:

In Africa the elders are held in particular veneration. They are not banished from families or marginalized as in other cultures. On contrary they are esteemed and perfectly integrated within their families of which they are indeed the pinnacle. This beautiful African appreciation of old age should inspire Western societies to treat the elderly with greater dignity,” The Pope adds, “Rich in experience is crown of aged, and their boast is the fear of the Lord.” (Sir 25:6) (p. 28)

It is worth pointing out that because there are different perceptions of being an elder from one culture to another, caution must be taken in those religious communities with diverse cultures and the perception of who an elder is. To be old in Africa goes hand in hand with an expectation of respect and even extending a helping hand to those advanced in age. However, a respondent expressed her shock and hurt at how she got in trouble in her effort to keep with her African respect for elders when she offered to help lift a heavy suitcase which her elderly sister in community was dragging along with difficulty (cf. App. C: #8). This respondent innocently acted out of what was obvious respect toward elders whereas this well intentioned gesture was interpreted as disrespectful. This is one of the challenges that come with living in a multi-cultural community with clashing value systems. These African values for respect of elders and authority resonate well with what St. Paul emphasizes this aspect in his teaching:

“Let every person be subordinate to the higher authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been established by God.

Therefore whoever resists authority opposes what God has appointed and those who oppose it will bring judgment upon themselves.” (Rom.13: 1-2)

The School Sisters of Notre Dame, in their constitution, recognize this vital role of those sisters who, through prayer, reflection and discernment are called to the service of the congregation in authority. And therefore, in professing the vow of Apostolic Obedience, the Constitution has the following:

As we are drawn more deeply into Christ’s life, we experience within ourselves his overpowering desire to be obedient to his Father. In community we strive together to seek and do God’s will. By our religious profession of apostolic obedience, we vow to obey God through those sisters who exercise proper authority according to our constitution. Our obedience is apostolic like that of Christ who accepted death on a cross to reconcile all to God who sent him. We give unqualified obedience to God who sends us, surrendering our being to him and his way. (YAS C# 18)

On the contrary, the findings noted with concern that some elders are perpetrators of divisions in religious communities as cited by a respondent in whose community one of the elder members was the source of divisions among the younger members agitating tribal animosity (cf. App. C: #1).

The literature by Wachege (1992) gives us the acceptable role of elders as those who, “enlightened, encouraged, corrected and instructed their people to lead good lives” (p. 41). Similarly, Wirba (2012) points out another aspect of authority which spells out that the leader is installed for the benefit of the community and the respect due to him/her is linked to the indispensable service in the community. Failure to render the service as expected may lead to either to dethronement or in some cases to killing the elder. “...he symbolized unity and reconciliation among his people,” (pp. 308-309). This

sentiments are supported by Magesa (2005) who observes power from the perspective of the African religion as ultimately ‘power of God’ whose proper use is authority granted to an individual by God through service to the community and to enhance the life of the community as God would do. However, he also concurs with the emerging misuse of authority in the present world where some of those entrusted with this responsibility end up as instruments of injustices, oppression and self-promotion (p. 317).

Findings from a newly ordained priest of an international congregation as noted earlier reveal that elders in his congregation find it difficult to give younger members who have been elected into authority respect, especially when these older members were their formators and now roles change and they have to listen to their formees (cf. App. C: #1). This apparent tension existing among the Zairean sisters is confirmed by literature by Burke (2001) who affirms that older Zairean sisters, “times admit that they are ill at ease and even embarrassed to discuss personal difficulties with a younger superior” (p. 118).

Evidently, there seem to be tensions arising from the traditional belief in authority going hand in hand with age and now the new trend where younger members are elected in leadership poses discomfort among older members. These tensions could be avoided if there is a shift in understanding that leadership in the modern world does not necessarily go with age as it were in the past but depends on one’s ability through various gifts as needed.

5.5.6 Reflection of Hospitality, Other-Centeredness and Solidarity

The research question six was, “In which ways are the values of hospitality, other-centered, service and solidarity reflected in your religious community?” A respondent from an international congregation of non-African descent shared that they appreciate visitors so long as there is prior notice and the duration of stay and purpose

for the visit well stated. In her view this expectation helps her to provide the necessary warm hospitality to their guests as she observed, “The arrival of unexpected visitors interferes with my program and disorients me,” (cf. App. C: #6).

Another area of concern was raised by non-African priest whose main concern was when visitors arrive unexpectedly and join in meals and fail to share how long they will be staying in the community. This respondent admitted that this has been an area of contention with their African brothers who are opposed to these formalities (cf. App. C: #3). On the contrary, the remarks of an earlier respondent from an indigenous congregation expressed her disappointment and embarrassment whenever a visitor is expected to book when they will come, how long they may stay, whether they will eat. All these questions and formalities are a bone of contention in her congregation between the Africans and non-Africans. According to her a guest who appears at the door unannounced should be received without much ado although the non-Africans require prior arrangements made to avoid inconveniences in the community schedule. This, therefore, as she explained, causes tensions because the Africans and non-Africans understand the value of hospitality differently in as much as both groups would want to receive guests (cf. App. C: #4).

The sentiments in the literature expressed by Healey and Sybertz (1996) reflect a cultural clash in the manner hospitality is accorded among Africans and the non-Africans as brought out in this African proverb, “The fire of the chief is never too small,” meaning that the cooking pots and food can always be increased to accommodate visitors who arrive unexpectedly (p. 171). Therefore, the question of prior notification of when visitors may arrive, good as it may sound, is still foreign to some Africans. This area could cause tensions unless it is addressed in multi-cultural congregations to arrive at a more common understanding.

The response from an African sister on the question; “How is hospitality understood in your congregation?” was how she found it hard to share anything belonging to the community; the procedure is that she has to seek permission from the house superior. So if a visitor comes to visit bringing ‘goodies’ for the Sisters, chances are that she will return home with empty baskets unless the superior authorizes that she be given thing in return (cf. App. C: #4). However, she made it clear that what she understands as hospitality as a non-African is quite different from the African ways of how this same value is expressed.

The literature by Mbiti (1975) supports the African ‘school of thought’ on hospitality as he shared that there are morals concerned with hospitality to relatives, friends and strangers. It is held as a moral evil to deny hospitality, even to a stranger. Therefore, when people travel they may stop anywhere for the night and receive hospitality in that homestead and should not be molested unless they abuse the hospitality accorded to them (p. 177).

An experience of African hospitality was told in an astounding story in face to face interview with an expatriate elderly religious brother who has lived in Africa for over 30 years. A story told by one of their staff working in their project for street children was on a visit to a home to trace the original family of a street boy and when he arrived at the door he found a weary woman who seemed to have just arrived from a long journey carrying black a polythene bag. She offered him a seat in this small tiny room and went off to get her husband. The couple came back and shortly after this, he (visitor) learnt that in the bag was the corpse of a baby that had died in hospital and since this woman had no money to board a public vehicle and/or hire one she secretly hid the corpse in a bag and carried it home for burial. This moving episode was a deep demonstration of African hospitality that left the social worker in tears of how hospitality

was offered to him in the midst of sorrow. This immense hospitality cannot be underestimated.

A religious woman in her late 50's belonging to an international congregation with African majority shared her experience of what hospitality means. In fact, before the researcher started her interview, she served a cup of tea. She said that it is a priority to give a drink before anything is said to a visitor. However, she pointed out that it carries weight when one is received with a smile and greetings that include a handshake, and then served thing to eat or drink without asking their consent. Asked if this gesture is challenged in her community with the present economic constraints, she said this is done with sensitivity to community resources and respecting what is the best way of sharing without closing doors to visitors. She gave the story of Jesus visiting Mary and Martha and said how she would think most Africans would identify with Martha more than Mary (cf. App. C#8) These views are backed by Kitururu (2009) who similarly explains that hospitality that was given depended on the social status of a person thus the higher the status the more one was expected to be generous (p. 9).

There is certainly a new attitude toward hospitality among Africans as revealed in the finding from a religious sister with now 50 years of lived experience in community life expressed that there is a decline in hospitality especially from of the younger members. She pointed out the lack of warmth and spirit of welcoming visitors and cited an example of where she said, "they are glued to televisions that they can hardly notice a visitor coming in the house or at most wave a hand and concentrate on their favorite programs.' This behavior, she said, is being addressed and questions of concern had already been raised in their community meetings to counter this unbecoming behavior (cf. App. C: #8).

Similar sentiments had already been raised from the findings by an African religious brother well advanced in age who complained that his younger brothers in community do not seem to understand what hospitality is because they tend to misuse community resources under the pretext of hospitality. He narrated an incident in his community where his younger religious brothers would bring their friends over the weekend, use up all the food supplies from the store and leave it empty. This behavior continued until a meeting was called for in which the matter was discussed to correct this behavior. Since then, there is a change of behavior such that there is a limit of who comes and the frequency of visitors has reduced (cf. App. C: #2)

In my view, there is an obvious difference in the manner younger and older African religious extend or understand hospitality. Whereas the older ones seem to hold unto the strong hospitality has always been, younger members' exhibit deterioration. Another observation reveals that in as much as there are obvious differences in the manner of according hospitality for both Africans and non-African, both groups do appreciate this virtue.

On the aspect of solidarity the literature by Bujo (2003), again brings out the support and reverence that the sick and dying are shown when the community of relatives and friends and acquaintances accompany their sick and dying until death takes them. This scenario is an assurance to the sick that they are not alone and that the community shares in their pain (p. 117).

The literature by Vanier (1979) confirms these views by reflecting on his own experience of life in community and the value for showing care and in the spirit of service, underscores the importance of concern that people show each other every day coming from gentle gestures of caring, by services and sacrifices which say 'I love you'

and 'I am happy to be with you' (p. 48). This is the spirit of being there for the other. It is the spirit that reaffirms to an individual that he/she belongs to a particular community.

The aspect of other-centeredness and solidarity as expressed by religious men and women was evident in areas of celebrations, shared house hold chores and even in sharing of clothing as habits or literary sharing a pair of shoes with a sister or brother when one has more than she/he needs. This spirit is what Burke (2010) confirmed earlier from the example of her Zairean SND sisters who, "assure the grieving sister and her family of their solidarity. Many of the sisters remain in the village watching with the kin in front of the body of the deceased which is laid out on a bed in front of his/her house," (p. 87). In relation to solidarity, Burke offers a good comparison between the Belgian sisters of her congregation who when they are sick prefer to be left alone but the Zairean sisters prefer to have company and in the event that she gets admitted in the dispensary for a time, a member of their kin group remains with her to attend to their personal need and prepare their meals. Again literature by Sabofu (1997) rightly observes that community is the spirit, the guiding light of the tribe whereby people come together to fulfill a specific purpose, to help others fulfill their purpose and to take care of one another (p. 22). Again this is supported by the literature by Wanjohi & Wanjohi (2005) who observe that sharing was a joy and children were taught on the value of sharing such that it was rare to see a child eating or drinking alone without sharing with others (p. 26).

It is obviously clear that there are different expectations of how Africans and non-Africans understand and express solidarity. Africans being very community based and more relational tend to stick together more than the non-Africans when there is a common cause to respond to.

5.6 Discussion of Assumptions

5.6.1 The African Spiritual Value of Respect for Elders and Authority

The assumption was, “The African values of respect for elders and authority are not outdated and can enrich religious formation programs today.” This assumption was found true from the findings as pointed out by a respondent, ‘respect for elders goes deep in the skin’ (cf. App. C: #4).

These views were supported by Shorter (2000) who points out that elders of a family or clan are the progenitors of the generations; they have given them life and are also closer to the world of ancestors than the younger members so they connect the living to the source of life itself, who is God, the Creator and life giver, the ultimate ancestor. This is the reason why elders are honored and their wishes obeyed because as it is understood, when they die they become objects of a religious practice. For this matter, their authority cannot be exaggerated (p. 13).

Further literature affirms the significant role played by elders from Brother Bakanja (2011) in his contribution on ‘Elders as peacemakers.’ He says of the elders, “If we want to attain peace in Africa the entry point should be traditional elder hood” (New People-No.130 p. 27). And from class discussions, (July 2, 2009), it was clear that elders serve as intermediaries between God and the people.

Elder hood went hand in hand with age, however, in the current world age is no longer the yard stick for authority because there are younger persons in authority of numerous older persons. The literature by Burke (2001) confirms that among the older Zairean sisters in her words, “times they privately admit that they are ill at ease and even embarrassed to discuss personal difficulties with a younger Superior” (p. 115). This reveals that there are tensions between young religious who are elected in positions of leadership over the older members. However, from the finding a respondent alluded to

the fact that it can be challenging when the person in leadership may have been a formee of an older member and especially when obedience is demanded of him/her (cf. App. 5). This seemed to come from a few individuals but the larger number of respondents did not seem to have any problem with giving their allegiance to younger members who are entrusted with leadership.

As another respondent pointed out that respect is earned and not automated by age since experience has it that there are older members whose conduct does not warrant respect and yet younger leaders may have a lot to emulate (cf. App. C#1) The literature by Magesa (1993) helps us to understand that, “the most important obligation of every leader is to do whatever is in his or her power to protect and prolong the life of the family and the community following the order of the universe established by ancestors and transmitted by tradition” (p. 68). These sentiments do apply to leaders in general regardless of age so long as they carry out the role bestowed on them by the community.

Respect is perceived differently for example among Africans, to keep quiet with the head bowed down when an elder speaks is a sign of respect as opposed to how it is interpreted by non-Africans in international congregations to be disrespectful and not being open . These cultural differences in interpreting gestures has resulted in mistrust among members in religious community. (cf. App. C: #1).

The research findings show that there are signs of diminishing respect of authority and elders contrary to what was there years ago. Some of the factors cited for this shift were attributed to the apparent awareness of personal rights and freedom of what one wants to do. This is an area of concern in religious communities that the African values of respect for elders and authority is not being given the emphasis it deserves in all aspects.

The Holy Father, Pope Francis, in his homily in Rio de Janeiro during the World Youth Day lamented that a culture of “exclusion, of rejection” is spreading. “There is no place for the elderly and the unwanted child, there is no time for that poor person on the edge of the street” (The Catholic Standard, Ghana’s National Catholic weekly Vol. 76 No. 30 Sunday, August 4- Saturday, August 10 2013). This outcry clearly shows how there is an apparent need to go back to our roots here in Africa lest we lose this value of respect for elders and authority completely.

The literature by Wirba (2012) affirms that because the leader is installed for the benefit of the community, the respect due him/her is linked to the indispensable service in the community and failure in this service leads either to enthronement or in some other cases killing of the leader (p. 308). This observation of the vital role of elders is supported by Wachege (1992) who points out that elders, “enlightened, encouraged, corrected and instructed their people (p. 28). These sentiments were affirmed by a religious sister from an indigenous congregation agrees with the literature in her own words, “generally from our African understanding, elderly members in our community are sources of wisdom, encouragement and their seniority needs to be respected” (f. App. C: #5).

A respondent regretted that in many cases, respect has been misunderstood to mean a survival tactic where individuals choose not to be straight forward about an issue while pretending that they are being respectful. As a result they fail to confront matters of concern even when they know there is need to do so (cf. App. C: #6). What is implied here is that there has to be genuine respect and not words that only serve as ‘icing sugar’ when underneath lies more than is expressed. What seems to be missing is trust that allows one to lovingly confront and speak the truth without the fear of being misconstrued. Pope Francis addressed this situation in formation houses during his talk

to young religious men and women in Rome encouraging dialogue and healthy confrontation to avoid problems in some houses of formation. Indeed such an atmosphere may help in pseudo behavior where young people grit their teeth, try not to make mistakes, follow the rules smiling a lot, just waiting for the day they are told: 'Good. You have finished formation' (Rome, Nov. 27- 29, 2013).

A respondent points to an example of misuse of power in her community where she has to get permission in doing little things like when she wants to see a guest off the compound she has to get permission from the house superior or when she needs to share a piece of cloth with a needy person or a relative (cf. App. C: #4).

There is no doubt that this kind of misuse of authority as revealed can be intimidating and rendering religious helpless before the powers that be. Unless this is corrected it could lead to serious abuse of power by religious men and women in authority. The result of which will breed only bitter religious men and women ever seeking revenge instead of love and forgiveness. Therefore, it is of no good to pretend that there is respect for elders when in fact it is fear coated with pseudo smiles for survival sake. To extent this seems to be the case as it was observed from experiences through interactions with members of congregations in Nairobi (cf. App. C: #15, 17, 20).

On the contrary, there are cases of genuine respect as the finding from a young religious sister from an international congregation who said that the older sister in their community is referred to as 'cucu,' a Gikuyu word for grandmother. These African sisters recognize her age as that of their grandmother in African setting endowed with wisdom, tender love and care for the young (cf. App. C: #4).

5.6.2 The African Spiritual Values of Family, Forgiveness and Spirit of Solidarity

The assumption was, “The incorporation of African spiritual values of family, forgiveness and solidarity in religious formation could enhance authentic living of community life among religious men and women.” This assumption was confirmed by the research findings and literature.

An African respondent who was among the first Africans to join her international congregation admitted that her early years of formation were greatly influenced by Irish culture because majority of the members were Irish. As she observed, the first craving of every human being and as an African, for that matter, is to belong in order to receive and give social support. In her case, she had to be an ‘African Irish,’ in her own continent of Africa. For her, everything had to be done the Irish way; her pronunciation, what she ate and how she ate were all determined by the Irish culture (cf. App. C: #8). This is confirmed by literature from what Sarpong (2002) recalls how Africans were instructed by missionaries through imposition on how to do things like pray, how to say ‘I am sorry’ by striking one’s chest which among the Asante of Ghana is defiance. Instead they should have been asked how they express it thus placing the back of their right hand in the palm of one’s left hand (p. 27). No wonder the sister above experiences confusion of her new identity where the supposed ‘western superior culture’ takes over and the ‘African inferior culture’ is suppressed. In this context her own African culture which is evidently the host culture was relegated to being inferior.

A respondent pointed out that the sense of belonging to a religious family is not as natural as that of a biological family. This sense of belonging deepens day by day as one perceives and experiences that she is accepted by her religious sisters in community just as she is with her strengths and weakness (cf. App. C: #8). This means she is free to share her sorrowful and joyful experiences. The acceptance here implies affirmation and

loving confrontations that facilitate continued growth in an individual and the group. This was supported by a focused group of sister respondents who did not seem to have problems regarding forgiveness of one another in community. There was no hesitation in their responses to the question, “How easily do you forgive one another?” Their answers came in unison, “We have no problems so long as we openly share our feelings and reconcile” (cf. App. C: #1, 3, 4, 5). On the contrary, a focused group of male respondents did not find it easy to forgive one another because as they claimed, ‘to ask for forgiveness needs humility but most of us think it is a sign of weakness to do so.’ This is a scenario that is being challenged by literature from Agbonkhianmeghe in his paper presented in Rome on “Justice and Peace: Salt of the Earth... Light of the world ‘Challenges of the African Synod for Religious Communities in Africa,’ challenges religious institutes for their life and mission in Africa. He points out how Africa has been torn asunder by tribalism and ethnicity and the only way for religious to witness is to model a reconciled community for the rest of Africa and how religious institutes “must become more and more a reconciled community, a place where reconciliation is proclaimed to all people of good will.” In his concluding remarks, he questions how religious communities form their members to live the values of reconciliation, justice and peace but at the same time offers a suggestion that the formation programs need reevaluation (p. 3). One question related to this research question that he leaves us with is how religious institutes in Africa can adopt and adapt of the different African forms of reconciliation in order to live as reconciled communities (September, 2009). The literature by Gacambi in MacGary and Ryan (2001) supports this aspect of reconciliation that has a strong sense of family deeply rooted among Africans (p. 228). Mbiti (1969), further points out that in deed the family is, “ the place where deep African values of life come to be, it is protected and nourished, a place of belonging, where sharing and

solidarity are at the heart of daily life and where each one feels himself or herself to be fully at home” (p. 2).

Unfortunately, as one respondent lamented, many religious men and women are caught up in unhealthy competitions that generate jealousy among themselves. Instead of supporting each other, they underrate each other’s abilities. The resourcefulness of these members is in the end tapped by people outside the Congregation. So members become active and vibrant participants in their apostolate more than in their community which is their family (cf. App. C: #8).

Some concluding remarks reveal that for a religious family to grow, members have to help it grow. In the family, members are united by blood, but in the religious community they are bonded first by their baptism, charism, and common heritage and by Christ in the Eucharist. The sense of belonging is evident because of living similar life style in their particular religious community. In the sharing of whatever they have even if it is small... but mindful of the next person. In time of grief, the religious accompany the bereaved to her home and remain with the family until burial. The presence of the religious with the affected member is very important becomes a true witness of African family spirit reflected in the lives of this religious family.

Confirming how this African value of family and solidarity is experienced, the literature from Burke (2010) says of the Congo sisters, “They assure the grieving sister and her family of their solidarity (p. 94). The finding from a sister supported this as she narrated how when her father died during her years of initial formation in the novitiate in a country other than her own. However, by the time arrangements were made to fly back home for the burial, the religious sisters in her home country had already gone to be with her family and remained with her until after burial. She said that this was a gesture of extreme compassion and sisterly love that she will never forget and would do the same to

the others who will be in a similar situation (App. C: #4). It is quite clear that there is still evidence of how some African sisters have tried to embrace this value of family and solidarity in their religious life.

The literature by Sarpong in Tunucci, Poupard, et al (1999) traces that the value of African family is based on the clan or lineage system where all members are considered relatives, irrespective of the relationship or distance separating them. He even adds that slaves and prisoners can be assimilated into it (p. 20). Well, this profound belief would be an additional contribution of African religious in creating strong families in religious life.

5.6.3 The integration of African Spiritual Value of Spontaneous Prayers

The assumption was, “There is little effort being made to integrate African spiritual formation value of spontaneous prayer as opposed to fixed forms of prayers in religious communities.”

This assumption was supported by literature from a course paper in MIASMU 2009 a respondent (non- African) who expressed how striking it is for her that African novices are so expressive and elaborate in their spontaneous prayers. This finding is confirmed by literature by Mbiti (1975) who points out that worship is at the center of an African such that it is part and parcel of their life. This is why he quotes an Ashanti proverb, “No one shows a child the Supreme Being” meaning, “...everybody knows of God’s existence almost by instinct and even children know Him (p. 4).

This, therefore, reveals that there is no formal manner to teach children how to pray, instead they pick up from their parents and elders in a spontaneous way.

However the research findings show that most of the religious congregations use the fixed prayers from the ‘Prayer of the Church,’ In response to whether spontaneous prayers were frequently used in religious congregations, a focused group of 4 sisters; 3

Africans and 1 non-African belonging to an international congregation admitted that they use mostly the 'Prayers of the Church' book systematically from one week to another without changing the format as taught in their formation house (cf. App. C: #4, 7, 10, 19).

The common trend was that majority of religious congregations still prefer to use prayers as drawn from the prayers of the church or the Breviaries. The whole formation programs of young men and women joining religious congregations focus on this form of prayers that form the foundation of their prayer life.

An African sister, from the findings recalled her days in formation, now over 20 years ago and how they were taught different forms of prayers: praying with scripture, meditation, contemplation and how to pray from the 'Prayer of the church'. According to her there was no mention of African spontaneous prayers and so she did not grow to appreciate them as a religious (cf. App. C: #4). In support of African spontaneous prayers, the literature by Mbiti (1975) describes such an example as an "outpouring of man's soul and spirit in the direction of the divine, the spiritual realm and its values." He adds that the prayers 'contain spiritual values and those who recite them do so in a spiritual attitude of a spiritual direction' (p. 22-23).

The research findings indicate that there is a strong emphasis in recited prayers, as respondents admitted that they do not have creative form of prayer even when it comes to their personal private prayers (cf. App. C: #10, 18, 24).

Evidently, there is an apparent rigidity in approach to spontaneous prayers resulting from the persistent rootedness in recited prayers across majority of congregations, indigenous or international for both men and women. There is very little effort among these religious congregations to incorporate spontaneous prayers. This gives one the impression of how much influence the institutionalized Catholic Church

still has in its expectations pertaining to the faith and manner of prayers adopted by the faithful. The rule of the law is still paramount.

5.6.4 The African Spiritual Value of Hospitality

The assumption was, The African spirit of hospitality is not given strong emphasis in religious formation programs in Africa today.”

This assumption was confirmed as observed by some respondents who pointed out that they cannot plan to invite a visitor to their communities unless the superior of the house is consulted. One respondent contrasted this lifestyle from his African upbringing where he did not have to go through such bureaucracy of asking for permission after permission (cf. App. C: #1). Another respondent further added that they welcome anyone who appeared at their door (cf. App. C: #4). From the finding, a focused group of religious women concurred that they feel deprived in a way because they do not share what they have with needy people as they would wish to do. According to them the rule of seeking permission from the superior is seen as a hindrance and the spirit of hospitality has been curtailed for the most part. The literature by Mbiti (1975) challenges this behavior and says that there are morals concerned with hospitality to relatives, friends and strangers. Mbiti considers this as a moral evil to deny hospitality, even to a stranger (p. 177). This is a fact that I would concur with that what we have received is shared with those who seek assistance.

A young African sister in an international congregation observed some of the restrictions that exist in her community concerning receiving visitors in the community. She said that it is not enough to share with the community when a visitor is coming but one needs the consent of the house superior before she invites a visitor even a relative. This sister shared an incident that she found embarrassing when she had to get permission before she could serve her mother who visiting the community a soft drink

from the refrigerator and worst of all, that her mother was made to eat in a different dining room alone and not in the common dining room where the sisters eat. For her, it was a sad moment and regretted that she was in such a religious community although up till then she had not had a chance to share the pain she underwent on that material day. According to her, the superior said that ‘visitors should not interrupt the rhythm of life in the community’ (cf. App. C: #8). A scenario as this one mentioned contradicts the literature by Kitururu (2009) who reminds us that every African is capable of being hospitable (p. 36) and by Healey and Sybertz (1996) in the African proverb, “The fire of the chief is never too small,” meaning that when food is prepared there is always extra amount for the unforeseen guests (p. 171).

In as much as the economic constraints are a factor that may probably be considered when addressing African hospitality so that there are checks and balances of how much is shared with visitors, there is need to be cautious so that it is not exaggerated. The amount of time given to visitors in the name of entertaining them needs to be taken into account so that the schedule in religious houses is still respected for harmonious living in community. It came out clearly that the value of hospitality is lived in religious communities but it is apparently expressed in different ways according to set regulations by the superior of the house or the leadership of the congregations at large.

It is worth noting that different congregations have different policies regarding visitors, for example one respondent of a female religious congregation pointed out that her community has a policy that when they receive gifts, the containers or baskets are not returned empty. The receiving community member fills those containers with ‘goodies’ and sees the guests off (cf. App. C: #4). This gesture of hospitality in this example is confirmed by the literature from Kitururu (2009) who defines hospitality as welcoming

people and sharing with them the gift of life which goes a long way in making the universe a home for everybody because it provides good company (p. 11).

Whereas, western culture may treat hospitality as receiving a guest and asking whether the guest will mind a cup of tea or soft drink; an African may consider it improper and impolite to ask this question but instead to go ahead and prepare food or offer a drink without asking. This may turn into a conflict in a community with multi-cultural membership unless there is dialogue on what is the agreed upon ‘proper’ way that will satisfy each member according to their cultural backgrounds.

5.6.5 The African Value of Other-Centered and Service

The assumption was, “If the African spiritual value of other-centeredness and service are emphasized in religious formation today, viable religious communities with a thrust toward ministry will be fostered.”

Findings from a respondent who has lived religious life for over 50 years revealed that there is not yet a strong thrust toward building this spirit of other – centeredness and service because of what she referred to as self-centeredness among many religious men and women. She spoke from her experience of facilitating a number of meetings among religious groups whose topic of interest has been how to foster this spirit among its members (Cf. App. C: #8). The views from the literature by Vanier (1979) offer a solution in this area which is gentle concern that people show each other every day coming from gentle gestures of caring, by services and sacrifices which say ‘I love you’ and ‘I am happy to be with you’ (p. 48).

In agreement to these sentiments the literature from Magesa (2006) cites the components of community life as care given to an individual when he/she needs it including advice, correction and encouragement; concern where there is guarantee by the community that care will be provided to the highest degree when needed and the

presence which says to a person in effect: “I am not in a void in this life, I am in a social location which I care about and which cares about me” (pp. 67-68).

It was quite revealing from some respondents that dialogue and the need to have the interest of the other needs to be respected when it comes to who is recommended to go for studies as a preparation for ministry so that his/her service at a latter period will come from a heart that is fulfilled. The concern was from one of the respondents who pointed out that some congregational superiors do not consult their members on what their area of interest may be before they are sent for studies and eventually they end up taking courses which the superior wants them to do and out of obedience they go to study without question. In the end, the course is done but the individual has no interest in it therefore the end product is that this individual is not productive in ministry (cf. App. C#4)

The lack of involvement of religious men and women in what affects their lives was a strong, observation made that eventually results in breeding religious men and women who are resentful about their ministries and unproductive to the congregation and eventually unfulfilled. On the other hand, there are some religious who seem to be insatiable hunger for studies that is unending such that they want to keep going on and on with one degree after another that they do not give time to the needs of others in community or ministry. They become so egoistic that the other-centered spirit is completely thwarted (cf. App. C: #2).

In relation to this negative attitude, the literature by Mabheka (2013), challenges religious men and women to embrace the value of ‘Ubuntu’ which recognizes the love of self and the other in God where one is friendly to other persons and to all creation, kind to all persons without discrimination, hospitable to the orphan, the stranger, the poor,

helpful to children, the aged and the sick, trusting and willing to sacrifice for other persons and with an openness to listen to what others have to say (p. 20).

Evidently, there is a call to all religious men and women to grow from the 'I' to the 'we' so that together as 'we' they can address the needs in their various ministries and communities so as to keep their charisms rekindled among their members. This is in the spirit of the African value of being with others because left alone an individual becomes insecure and moreover others count on each individual for the survival of the whole community.

5.6.6. The African Value of Self-Reliance and Hard Work

The assumption was, "The emphasis on the African spiritual values of self – reliance and hard work in religious formation programs in Africa will reduce the financial dependence from Western countries by religious communities with African men and women." Similarly, literature by Uzukwu (1986) challenges this attitude of dependency syndrome of the Churches in Africa because as he observes, it leaves the road wide open to lack of creativity and even blackmail (p. 490).

In affirming the value of self-reliance, a formator commented how most of the formees she has had in the past came with an enthusiasm and spirit of hard work. This was observed from how much farming was done ranging from maize, vegetables, rearing cattle, pigs and chickens. She expressed their gift in taking initiative in all household chores and not needing supervision, an example of how adults take responsibility even in their homes. Unfortunately as she observed, this spirit did not last long after their profession or ordination (cf. App. C: #6).

This raises a serious question of, 'What happens to the spirit of hard work that young, energetic and African men and women come with to religious life?' The emerging impression is that religious life tends to nurture a spirit of dependence other

than self-reliance. This attitude is what the literature by Wirba (2012) is challenging that religious life will never be effectively incarnated in Africa unless communities are organized according to their proper resources and standard of life or else it may continue appearing like foreign institutions imported to the tropics which cannot survive without foreign aid (p. 305).

From the researcher's participant observation there was a picture of dilapidated buildings in a few religious communities that would need urgent maintenance in the spirit of self-reliance and hard work instead of relying on foreign funding which when it fails, buildings are left to collapse. A respondent's comment indicated a spirit of lack of stewardship toward communal assets where members do not take much care (cf. App. C: #6). This observation is confirmed by literature by Vanier (1979) who shares his own experience from his life in the L'Arche community of the value of using our gifts in building community and cautions that if we are not faithful to our gifts then we are harming the community and each of its members as well. The community's survival is dependent on the individuals and so are the individuals on the community. This attitude will help inculcate a spirit of stewardship for the resources of the community (p. 50).

It is apparent that there is a big difference in how individuals in religious life respond to collective responsibility when it comes to community resources and how they would when it comes to what is owned by them. There is an obvious laxity and negligence toward communal goods hence leading to a deterioration of property due to lack of care. This is an attitude that has to be challenged because it is not in line with the spirit of community life calling religious men and women to be good stewards of all communal goods. By and large, it is quite revealing that some religious tend to portray a

pseudo spirit of hard work in their early years of formation but after taking perpetual vows of ordination then there is a laxity.

From a respondent it was pointed out how the setting up of projects has enabled some of the members who came with specialized skills and knowledge from their rural upbringing to utilize the opportunity to contribute to the wellbeing of the community. Later on other members who acquire skills from professional trainings are well utilized in the management of the projects. For example, this respondent who is a religious brother has fully been involved in massive projects which are a big source of income to their community. He is not only resourceful to his religious community but also to other congregations by sharing his knowledge through the many workshops and seminars he offers to other religious men and women in Nairobi on how to use their local resources to generate income and be sustainable with minimal dependence from donor funding (cf. App. C: #2).

It was evident from the findings that in many of the religious communities, there is reluctance in volunteering and taking initiative especially in areas of community chores that do not have a specific person assigned. Little effort is done to take initiative unless one is assigned to do. This spirit of taking initiative is lacking and, therefore, leaves a lot of chores unattended. This has affected community life negatively and in some cases led to a few members feeling over-burdened and eventually burnt out. This attitude is not in tune with the literature by Turaki (2006) who sheds light on the African strong belief that protection, meaning, identity and status derive from being an integral part of a community (p. 48). In my view, to be an integral part of the community requires that one invests himself or herself in the life of the community. This could be reflected in active participation in community building like preparing meals for the community and

even going an extra mile to assist those who may be unwell and have their areas of cleaning unattended.

In as much as there is need for religious men and women to take responsibility and build the spirit of hard work there were limiting factors. An obvious example was the total reliance on hired labor even in chores that would otherwise be done by members of a religious family like washing dishes, laundry and general house cleaning. In most African family setting, there is evident effort to do household chores without complaint and yet some religious men and women as the study revealed do not reflect this essential skill when they join communities (cf. App. C: #6).

The research revealed that the tendency to waste food was obvious in religious communities as pointed out by an older non-African priest who said African priests in his community would not eat bread crusts but instead throw them in the bin, but him, an Indian, picks them out, toasts and eats them. In response to the researcher on the why of such behavior, he said, “things come easily in Africa so Africans don’t work. They join societies of plenty so they never work for their needs,” (cf. App. C#6). This response raises grave concern of how the spirit of stewardship can be inculcated in the lives of African men and women since there is an obvious attitude of wastage but to use resources in such a way that is left for the next generations.

However, it would be an exaggeration to have a blanket blame of laxity among African religious men and women. During the research it was evident that majority of communities visited had a small vegetables garden kept and all respondents had no doubt that this was the right thing to do to supplement their kitchen budget. This was a positive sign that there is effort toward enhancing the value of self-reliance in the spirit of hard work but there is still a long way to achieving this.

One religious woman was honest to admit that earlier they entirely relied on western financial support but now there is a mind shift and they have realized that as Africans they have to work in order to sustain themselves. She added, “Today we need to enter into ministries that will bring in financial sustenance,” (cf. App. C: #8).

Therefore, the findings show that there is effort to foster the value of self-reliance and hard work in most religious communities although the implementation is what remains at varied stages of realization.

5.7 Discussion of Limitation and Scope

The study was limited only to religious congregations of men and women of both the indigenous and international origin, particularly those with houses in Nairobi. The findings have shown that there are indeed many religious congregations of men and women in Nairobi. The researcher had targeted to capture the population of those who are in charge of formation and/or had been ordained or professed up to and not more than 15 years. However, while carrying out the research it was found out that many of the respondents in charge of formation were 15 years and above since ordination or profession. It also turned out that most of the respondents both in the questionnaires, focused group interviews and face to face interviews were also within these years of ordination or profession thus again in the category of 15 years of profession or ordination and above.

Consequently, the study ended up sampling respondents who turned out to be mostly above 15 years of profession or ordination. Consequently the study showed that the numbers of religious male respondents were less than those of religious female respondents. This was contrary to the expectation of the researcher who intended sampling equal number of male and female religious. This has had an implication on the

study results which were not equally represented; since more responses were derived from more female religious than male religious so this imbalance may have affected the results.

The majority of the religious congregations, however, were of international origin but with African members. This aspect of both African and non-Africans was helpful in finding out the diverse views on the integration of African values with Christian values in religious formation. There were very few indigenous founded congregations in the area of study because most of these are found in the rural areas. Furthermore the study found out that there were very few congregations of religious brothers compared to those of priests and sisters. Among the few congregations of brothers that were sampled, majority of those interviewed and were captured through the questionnaires were mainly non-Africans who were in charge of religious formation. The few African brothers were those doing studies in higher institutions of learning in Nairobi. The research has revealed that regardless of whether the African members were in an indigenous or international congregation, male or female, urban or rural raised, age of entry , years of profession or ordination and vocation; the majority supported the need to integrate African values with Christian values was not influenced by their type of congregation.

5.8 Conclusion

The researcher's interpretation of the findings, literature and personal opinions and observations clearly indicate that the African spiritual formation values are still a long way as far their incorporation with the Christian spiritual values is concerned. This apparent exclusion is a source of conflict in congregations with both African and non-African members. The genesis of these conflicts arises from the requirement by congregations that Africans not only adopt the new practices of these religious

congregations but also the cultures of those founding missionaries while most of their own African cultural practices are forbidden.

The study has also found out that there are differing interpretations of the African values included in the research especially from the African and non- African religious; for example, whereas the African value of hospitality is given strong emphasis by Africans, the same is still a value but perceived and expressed differently by non-Africans. Even among Africans, the manner in which the older members understand hospitality is different from that the younger members.

The research revealed that religious congregations of both men and women do have the knowledge to heed the call from the Church to integrate African spiritual formation values with Christian values in the formation of African men and women. However, there persists a gap between knowledge and full implementation because so far there has been little effort toward realizing this dream.

5.9 Summary

The study has shown that despite the general sampled respondents, the findings from indigenous congregations whose respondents were all of African origin showed a very similar trend with those African religious from international congregations. The findings showed that the integration of African values has not taken root in religious congregations whether indigenous or international. This depicts how the apparent slow integration of African values cannot be blamed on congregations of foreign origin alone. A similar attitude seems to have been adopted among indigenous congregations who seem to have inherited the attitude of the early missionaries who influenced their early formation.

The researcher's expectation was that since indigenous congregations have an all-African membership, they would tend to naturally adapt their various cultural values

without much ado; however, the study results turned to be contrary. The results indicate that in fact the African religious in international congregations show more interest in holding unto their African values much more than their fellow Africans in some of the indigenous congregations.

There is a need to foster solid foundation in both initial and ongoing formation of African men and women with an integrated and holistic understanding of religious life. This goal can only be achieved through the integration of African values of family build on love, forgiveness and solidarity, spontaneous prayers, self –reliance and hard work, respect for elders, hospitality, other-centered and spirit of service. Religious men and women in Africa are part of the global church and in order to experience an atmosphere of feeling at home the call to inculturation cannot be over-emphasized. This call needs to be deepened and nurtured for religious life to take root on the African continent.

5.10 Recommendations

This section outlines suggestions that could be of great help if they are included in the formation of African religious men and women so as to realize an integrated formation in Africa. The recommendation for further study points out to areas as stated below that may have been given little or no attention during the study and yet they would provide pertinent information to the study. This area also brings out any gaps that if explored would contribute to a worthwhile endeavor into the further study.

The recommendation for implementation provides suggestions to policy makers that would help achieve desired results in the study that will bring about an integrated formation of African men and women.

5.10.1 Recommendation for the Reader

It needs to be noted that the study was carried out in Nairobi which is mostly populated by congregations that are mainly founded outside Africa and therefore have a

community setting that has multi-cultural background. This was of some advantage to an extent such that the study had variables of both African and non-African origin but in some instances there was an imbalance in a few congregations where the African representation is still the minority. Nevertheless, the non-Africans respondents were mostly those who have been in Africa for over 20 years and above and have had a good amount of African cultural knowledge. The majority of the international congregations from which the study drew respondents were those with majority of Africans some of whom joined religious life at a very early age and experienced a life of being minority among the non-African brothers or sisters until at a later time when African numbers started growing in number. This, therefore, implies that these Africans were the ones who adapted to the life in religious life that was totally new to their familiar African lifestyle.

5.10.2 Recommendation for Further Study

The researcher was challenged by the apparent little study that has been done in the area of formation that fosters the integration of African values. In light of this it is worth noting that it would be helpful if there will be more study done in this field of formation of African men and women to find out what influence their formation has had on their African beliefs and practices.

Another research could be done to find out the impact of African values on the religious congregations founded in Africa and those of international origin to help make a comparison that may help to draw conclusions on which of the two groups has embraced the call to inculturation of religious life (in Africa).

The study was also limited to only those religious men and women in active congregations and not cloistered congregations in Nairobi. Therefore, the results of this research may not represent the views of all religious congregations in Nairobi. We

recommend that another study focusing on the cloistered congregations would be necessary in future for better representation.

Finally, it will be of help to carry out a study of how far the contemplative congregations of both men and women have responded to the question of integrating African values in their cloistered community life. This study concentrated on the apostolic congregations only.

5.10.3 Recommendation for Superiors of Religious Congregations

Religious men and women do admit that there is an emerging trend for religious men and women prioritizing the need to acquire more and more education, necessary as this is in the current world; they fail to harmonize their investment in building community life, prayer life, and the mission of the congregation as they do in their own education. The pursuance of education becomes the motivating factor and where this is the motivating factor; community life is compromised. Therefore, I suggest that young religious men and women are first given time in community to get rooted in their charism, prayer life and grow in their own self- knowledge and identity as African religious before they are send off for further studies.

It is worth noting that religious life has evolved in many ways and grown from the old manner of blind obedience to dialogue where individuals are included in decisions that affect their lives. This gives ownership to all members to realize that they are part of those decisions and therefore must work toward achieving the set goals. This will also mean that religious men and women are consulted on matters of when and what each needs to study according to his/her capacity. Therefore, remaining rigid in old rules and regulations with a lot of restrictions that keep religious men and women behind walls may not work. This only stifles their growth instead of allowing them to ‘blossom’ in an atmosphere of taking personal responsibility as their married peers do to their families.

The superiors, therefore, have to read these signs of the time if they desire to keep their charisms relevant at this time in history.

There is need for both initial and ongoing formation that is holistic based on the understanding of religious life and the challenges that are affecting these men and women. The call needs to be deepened and nurtured through regular workshops, seminars and renewal programs that allow for open sharing so that any pent up emotions are dealt with according to individual needs. This is so because there was an indication from a number of religious that they lack forums through which they can express themselves without victimization. These challenges experienced in African religious communities need be discussed. Forums of this nature will reflect true African gatherings (baraza) through which members are given an opportunity to share their feelings about an issue and be allowed to give loving concerns and evaluations. This could be achieved if those in leadership give their religious men and women an opportunity to give evaluation of their congregational governmental structures at every point during their tenure of office so that there are checks and balances but also to involve the entire group in decision making. When groups are part of a decision then they take the responsibility to see that the implementation is followed through. It becomes a group decision and not an individual's project.

Formation programs need to be evaluated to assess how far the inclusion of African values has been done and what more needs to be reinforced so as to make the programs relevant and meaningful to African men and women. There is a degree of ownership when an individual realizes that she/he has contributed to a corporate body. In this case congregations are a corporate body that becomes an investment and therefore more energy put into the stewardship of its whole life otherwise religious men and women may become functionaries. They will join congregations, live foreign lifestyle,

learn foreign ideologies and reflect foreign behavior and yet not be ashamed because nothing speaks to their deep values in which they find their identity.

Having found out that there were very few or no projects run by international congregations with African men and women, I recommend that these congregations begin to cultivate a spirit of self-reliance among these African men and women instead of creating a complacent attitude that there will always be funding coming from foreign donors. This total dependency only fosters a dependency that humiliates and robs the Africans of their human dignity when they continue to rely on funding from outside without tapping the human resources and skills that they have.

Finally, all formators men and women would benefit from enrolling at Maryknoll Institute of African Studies, Nairobi, Kenya to receive a solid foundation in African Cultural Knowledge for the formation of their African men and women. This recommendation comes from observation made from the study whereby some formators have been stumbling blocks to the implementation of an integrated formation that is sensitive to the inclusion of African spiritual values. In other cases it was clear that there is little knowledge among formators in the area of African values though the desire to learn was expressed.

Therefore, a deliberate step to have the African religious men and women in formation attain a well rooted African Cultural Knowledge will be of great help in achieving the endeavor to a formation of African men and women who will reflect a religious life in Africa that is fully inculturated. In fact, formation needs be viewed as an on-going endeavor where there is constant awareness and integration of African values into the day to day experiences. This attempt will undoubtedly increase an attitude of feeling at home in religious life among many African religious men and women in Africa today

References

- Aidan, Msafiri (2010).Rediscovering African and Christian Values for Moral Formation.CUEAPress
- Ayisi, O. E. (1972).An Introduction to the Study of African Culture. East African Educational Publishers Ltd
- Bahemuka, J.M. (1982). Religious Heritage. Thompson Nelson and Sons Ltd. Nairobi
- Banzikiza, (1995).The Pastoral approach to African traditional values of fecundity and marriage. Gaba Publications Eldoret
- Baudena, P. & Gichuhi, B.J (2007).Prayer in the African Context: With an Anthology of African Traditional Prayers.Pauline Publications Africa, Nairobi
- Benezet, Buzo (2003).Foundations of an African Ethic.Beyond the Universal claims of Western Morality. Pauline Publications Africa, Limuru,Kenya
- Bishop, Sarpong in African Synod Documents (1996).Maryknoll, Orbis Books New York
- Burke, J. (2010). Toward the Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa. Pauline Publications Africa. Nairobi
- Burke, J. (2001).Towards the Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa. Paulines Publications Africa.Nairobi
- Chinua, A. (1958). Things Fall Apart. William Heinmann Ltd UK
- Foliacco, N. in Ed. McGary C. & Ryan P. (2001).Inculturating the Church in Africa.Kolbe Press, Limuru, Kenya
- Gachambi, M. T. in Ed.MacGary &Ryan (2001) Inculturating the Church in Africa. Kolbe Press, Limuru, Kenya
- Gallanger, M. P. (1998). Clashing Symbols: An Introduction to Faith and Culture. Paulist Press,New Jersey

- Getui, M. et al (Ed. 2008). Spirituality for Another Possible World. Limuru, Nairobi
- Hagan, G. P. (1999). The Gospel as Good news for African Cultures. The catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi
- Healey, J. & Sybertz, D. (1996). Towards an African Narrative Theology. Pauline Publications Africa
- Healey, J. (2005). African Stories: For Preachers and Teachers. Pauline Publications Africa, Nairobi, Kenya
- Hillman, E. (1993). Inculturation Applied: Toward an African Christian. Paulist Press, New Jersey
- Mugambi, J. & Kirima, N. (1976). The African Religious Heritage. Oxford University Press
- John, Paul II Vita Consecrata 42
- John, Paul II (1996). The Consecrated Life No 80, Paulines Publication.
- Kenyatta, J. (1965). Facing Mt. Kenya. Random House
- Kayunga, M. (1984) The Sociology of the African Family. London: Longman
- Kiaziku, V.C. (2009). Culture and Inculturation: A Bantu Viewpoint. Pauline Publication Africa Nairobi
- Kitururu, B.A. (2009). The Spirituality of Hospitality: African and New Testament Perspectives. CUEA Press Nairobi
- Magesa, L. (1997). African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life. Maryknoll, Orbis Books New York
- _____ (2006). Rethinking Mission Evangelization in Africa in a New Era. AMECEA Gaba Publications Eldoret, Kenya
- _____ (2009). Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the church in Africa. Maryknoll Orbis New York

- Mabheka, I. (2013). Religions and Priestly on-going Formation with Christ Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. XLIBIS LLC USA
- O'reilly, M. (1986). The Formation of a Religious in Africa Today. Spearhead No.93
Gaba Publication, Eldoret- Kenya
- _____ (1996). The Challenge of Being a Religious in Africa. Gaba Publications- AMECEA
- Mbiti, S. J. (1969). African Religions and Philosophy. East African Educational Publishers Ltd. Nairobi
- _____ (1975). The Prayers of African Religion. Maryknoll, New York
- _____ (1989). African Religions and Philosophy. 2nd Edition Oxford: Heinemann Ltd UK
- Mpagi, W. P. (2002). African Christian Theology: In the Contemporary Context. Marianum Publishing Company Limited
- Mugambi, J.N.K. (2002). Christianity and African Culture. Action Publishers, Nairobi
- Nwagu, G. (Afer, June 1997, Volume 39, No.30). Deeping Consecrated Life in Africa. Gaba Publications AMECEA
- Okure, T. et al (1990). Inculturation of Christianity in Africa, Gaba Publications Pauline Nairobi
- Perez, F.T. (2007). La Vita Consecrata in Asia, Africa e Oceania, 435
- Pope Benedict XVI (2011). The Africa's Commitment Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Africa Munus. Pauline Publication, Africa
- Sabofu, S. (1997). The Spirit of Intimacy: Ancient African Teaching in the ways of Relationships. Berkley Hill Books
- Sarpong, P. (2000). Peoples Differ: Approach to Inculturation in Evangelization. Sub-Saharan Publishers, Legon, Accra – Ghana.

- Schreier, R. (1986). Constructing Local Theologies. Maryknoll, Orbis Books
New York
- Serrao, C. (2004). Discernment of Religious Vocation: Formation towards transformation.
- Shorter, A. (1998). Celibacy and African Culture. Pauline Publications Africa
_____ (1999). The African Synod. St Paul's Publication, Africa, Nairobi
_____ (2000). Towards a Theology of Inculturation. Pauline Publication Nairobi
- Taylor, V. J. (2001) Christian Presence amid African Religion. Action Publishers,
Nairobi, Kenya
- The African Bible (1999). Pauline Publications, Africa
- Tonucci, G.M. P. P. et al (1999). The Gospel as Good News for African Cultures. CUEA
Publications Nairobi
- Turaki, Y. (2006). Foundations of African Traditional Religion and Worldview.
Wordlive Publishers Limited, Nairobi, Kenya
- Vanier, J. (1979). Community and Growth Paulist Press New York- Mahwah
- Walligo, Ed. (1986). Making a Church that is Truly African. Inculturation: Its Meaning and Urgency
- Wirba, K. G. (2012). Women and Inculturated Evangelization in Africa .AMECEA Gaba
Publications-CUEA Press, Nairobi
- Wubbels, T. (2012). Celibate Tensions in African Reality. Franciscan Kolbe Press,
Limuru
- Church Documents
- John, Paul II Vita Consecrata 42
- John, Paul II (196). The Consecrated Life No 80, Paulines Publication.

Pope Benedict XVI (2011).The Africa's Commitment Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Africa Munus. Pauline Publication,Africa

SSND Documents

SSND General Council Circular, 'New Moment Document- Oct.2008

You Are Sent – Constitution of the School Sisters of Notre Dame

Workshops

Workshop notes, Bishop Matthew, Gyamfi (August 8, 2011) "African Culture", Sunyani, Ghana

Workshop, by Ntedika, Fred (July, 2012)Ukarimu, "Living YAS in the African Context" Molo, Kenya

Workshop, by Madam Victoria (February 14, 2014). "Self- Reliance and Sustainability is equal to Mission"

Class notes

Class Discussion: Towards Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa, May 28, 2009

Class Discussion: Towards Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa, June 5, 2009

Class Discussion: Towards Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa, July 3, 2009

Journals

Bakanja (2011). "Elders as Peace makers, if we want to attain peace in Africa the entry point should be traditional elder hood" New People No.130 January-February

Banda (September, 2012). 'Respect for elderly' New People No. 140

Mondo in 'Friends of the Africans' New People No. 133 July- August 2011

New People No. 140 September 2012

New People, No.39 Nov-Dec.1995. The African Church Open to the World.

Newspapers

The Catholic Standard. Ghana's National Weekly Vol.76 No. 30 Sunday, August 4-
Saturday August 10, 2013

Unpublished

Agbonkhianmeghe, E. O. (2009) "Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of
Creation".

Masicha, C. (June, 2013).First Immersion Program: 'The Interpretation of African
Women Religious on African Family Values in their Life'.Maryknoll Institute of
African Studies

Muteshi, P. L. (2009). The Contribution of African Practices toward Building Viable
Religious Community Life in Africa. Maryknoll Institute of African Studies
Studies of St Mary's University of MN/USA and Tangaza College, Nairobi,
Kenya

Muteshi, P.L. (2011).SSND Newsletter for Africa-Dec. 2011, 'Celebrating our Cultural
Diversity: A Witness to Unity in a Divided World

Nwagu, G. (Afer, June 1997, Volume 39, No.30). Deeping Consecrated Life in Africa.
Gaba Publications AMECEA (Unpublished)

Riebe Estella, Gary (2007). Mission Begins at Home (Vol.15 Number 15, June/July

Bibliography

- Aidan, M. (2010). Rediscovering African and Christian Values for Moral Formation. CUEA Press
- Agbonkhianmeghe, E.O. (2009). Theology Brewed in an African Pot. Pauline Publications. Africa
- Ayisi, O. E., (1972). An Introduction to the Study of African Culture. East African Educational Publishers Ltd
- Bahemuka, J.M. (1982). Religious Heritage. Thompson Nelson and Sons Ltd. Nairobi
- Banzikiza, (1995). The Pastoral Approach to African traditional values of fecundity and marriage. Gaba Publications, Eldoret
- Benezet, B. (2003). Foundations of an African Ethic. Beyond the Universal claims of Western Morality. Pauline Publications Africa, Limuru, Kenya
- Baudena P. & Gichuhi J.P. (2007). Prayer in the African Context: With an Anthology of African Traditional Prayers. Pauline Publications Africa, Nairobi
- Burke, J. (2010). Toward the Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa. Pauline Publications Africa. Nairobi
- Burke, J. (2001). Towards the Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa. Paulines Publications Africa. Nairobi
- Cencini A, M. A. (1986). Psychology and Formation. Mumbai: Paulines.
- Chinua, A. (1958). Things Fall Apart. William Heinmann Ltd UK
- Foliacco N. in McGary C. & Ryan P. (2001). Inculturating the Church in Africa. Kolbe Press, Limuru, Kenya
- Gehman, R. J. (1989). African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective. Kijabe: Kesho Publications.

- Gallanger, M. P. (1998). Clashing Symbols: An Introduction to Faith and Culture. Paulist Press, New Jersey
- Getui, M. et al (Ed. 2008). Spirituality for Another Possible World. Limuru, Nairobi
- Getui, M. N. (Ed.). (2008). Responsible Leadership in Marriage and Family. Nairobi: Acton Publishers.
- Hagan, G. P. (1999). The Gospel as Good news for African Cultures. The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi
- Harmer C. M. ((1995). Religious Life in the 21st Century: A Contemporary Journey into Canaan. Twenty Third Publications
- Healey, J. & Sybertz, D. (1996). Towards an African Narrative Theology. Pauline Publications Africa
- Healey, J. (2005). African Stories: For Preachers and Teachers. Pauline Publications Africa, Nairobi, Kenya
- Hillman, Eugene) 1993). Inculturation Applied: Toward an African Christian. Paulist Press, New Jersey
- Kayunga, M.(1984) The Sociology of the African Family. London: Longman
- Kenyatta, J. (1965).Facing Mt.Kenya.Random House
- Kirwen, M. C. (Ed.). (2010). African Cultural Domains Book 2. Nairobi, Kenya: MIAS Books.
- Kirwen,M.C. (Ed.) (2010). African Cultural Domains Book 2. Nairobi,Kenya: MIAS BOOKS
- MacGary & Ryan (2001) Inculturating the Church in Africa. Kolbe Press, Limuru, Kenya
- Kiaziku. K. V. (2009). Culture and Inculturation: A Bantu Viewpoint. Pauline Publication Africa, Nairobi

- Kitururu, B.A. (2009). The Spirituality of Hospitality: African and New Testament Perspectives. CUEA Press Nairobi
- Leddy, M. J. (1990). Renewing Religious Life. Mystica, CT: Twenty-Third Publication.
- Liptak, E. P. (2006). The Religious Formator. Nairobi: Paulines.
- Magesa, L. (1997). African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life.
Maryknoll, Orbis Books New York
- _____ (2006). Rethinking Mission Evangelization in Africa in a New Era.
AMECEA Gaba Publications Eldoret, Kenya
- _____ (2009). Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the church in Africa.
Maryknoll Orbis New York
- _____ (2014). What is Not Sacred? African Spirituality. Acton Publishers, Nairobi
- Mabheka, I. (2013). Religions and Priestly on-going Formation with Christ Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. XLIBIS LLC USA
- Mbiti, S. J. (1969) African religions and Philosophy. East African Educational Publishers Ltd. Nairobi
- _____ (1975). The Prayers of African Religion. Maryknoll, New York
- _____ (1989). African Religions and Philosophy. 2nd Edition Oxford: Heinemann Ltd. UK
- _____ (1996). African Religion and Philosophy. East African Educational Publishers Ltd. Nairobi
- Mpagi, W. P. (2002). African Christian Theology: In the Contemporary Context.
Marianum Publishing Company Limited
- Muga, E. (1975). African Response to Western Christian Religion. Nairobi: East African

Literature Bureau.

Mugambi, J.N.K. (1999). Moral and Ethical Issues in African Christianity: A Challenge for African Christianity. Nairobi: Acton

_____ (2002). Christianity and African Culture. Action Publishers, Nairobi

Mugambi, J. & Kirima, N. (1976). The African Religious Heritage. Oxford University Press

Mugambi, A. N. (Ed.). (1999). Moral and Ethical Issues in African Christianity: A Challenge for African Christianity. Nairobi: Acton.

Ndung'u, P. N. (Ed.). (2005). Challenges and Prospects of the Church in Africa. Nairobi: Paulines.

Njia, R. N. (2005). I am Because We Provide: The Africanist Conscientious and Compassionate Gifted-Giver. Tigania: The African Cultural Universe.

O'Murchu, D. (1995). Reframing Religious Life. Middlegreen UK: St. Pauls.

O'reilly, M. (1986). The Formation of a Religious in Africa Today. Spearhead No.93 Gaba Publication, Eldoret- Kenya

_____ (1996). The Challenge of Being a Religious in Africa. Gaba Publications- AMECEA

Sabofu, S. (1997). The Spirit of Intimacy: Ancient African Teaching in the ways of Relationships. Berkley Hill Books

Salvoldi, V.R. K. (1986). In Africa: The Gospel Belongs to Us. Ndola: Mission Press.

Sarpong, P. (2000). Peoples Differ: Approach to Inculturation in Evangelization. Sub-Saharan Publishers, Legon, Accra – Ghana.

_____ (1996). African synod Documents. Maryknoll, Orbis Books New York

Schmidt, J. F. (2008). Praying Our Experiences: An Invitation to Open Our Lives to God. Frederick, MD: The Word Made Flesh.

- Schneiders, S. (2001). Selling All: Commitment, Consecrated Celibacy and Community in Catholic Religious Life (Vol. Two). New York: Paulist Press.
- Schreier R.(1986). Constructing Local Theologies. Maryknoll, Orbis Books New York
- Schreier, R. J. (Ed.). (1991). Faces of Jesus in Africa. New York: Maryknoll.
- Serrao,C.(2010). Discernment of Religious Vocation:Formation towards transformation. Karnataka: Dhyavanava Publications
- Shorter, A. (1975). African Christian Theology. London: Geoffrey Chapman.
- _____ (1978). African Christian Spirituality. New York: Geoffrey Chapman.
- _____ (1998). Celibacy and African Culture. Pauline Publications Africa
- _____ 1999). The African Synod. St Paul's Publication, Africa, Nairobi
- _____ (2000). Religious Obedience in Africa. Don Bosco Training School Press
Makuyu, Kenya
- _____ (2000).Towards a Theology of Inculturation.Pauline Publication Nairobi
- Okure, T. et al (1990). Inculturation of Christianity in Africa, Gaba Publications
Pauline Nairobi
- Perez, F.T. (2007). La Vita Consecrata in Asia, Africa e Oceania, 435
- Taylor J.V. (2001) Christian Presence amid African Religion. Action Publishers,
Nairobi, Kenya
- The African Bible (1999).Pauline Publications, Africa
- Tonucci, G.M.et al (1999). The Gospel as Good News for African Cultures.CUEA
Publications Nairobi
- Turaki, Y. (2006). Foundations of African Traditional Religion and Worldview.
Wordlive Publishers Limited, Nairobi, Kenya
- Tutu, D. (1995). An African Prayer Book. London: Hodder & Stoughton.
- Vanier, J. (1979). Community and Growth Paulist Press New York- Mahwah

Walliggo Ed. (1986).Making a Church that is Truly African. Inculturation: Its Meaning and Urgency

Wanjohi, G. & Wanjohi, W. G. (2005). Social and Religious Concerns of East Africa. Footform, Nairobi

Wirba, K. G. (2012).Women and Inculturated Evangelization in Africa .AMECEA Gaba Publications-CUEA Press, Nairobi

Wubbels, T (2012). Celibate Tensions in African Reality. Franciscan Kolbe Press, Limuru

Church Documents

Daughters of St. Paul. (1994). The African Synod: Pope's Opening Homily, Message of the Synod, Message of the AMECEA and IMBISA Bishops. Nairobi: Paulines.

Daughters of St. Paul. (1995). The Church in Africa: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father John Paul II. Nairobi: Paulines.

John, Paul II Vita Consecrata 42

John, Paul II (196). The Consecrated Life No 80, Paulines Publication.

Pope Benedict XVI (2011).The Africa's Commitment Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Africa Munus. Pauline Publication,Africa

SSND Documents

SSND General Council Circular, 'New Moment Document- Oct.2008

You Are Sent – Constitution of the School Sisters of Notre Dame

Workshops

Workshop notes, Bishop Matthew, Gyamfi (August 8, 2011) "African Culture", Sunyani, Ghana

Workshop, by Ntedika, Fred (July, 2012) Ukarimu, "Living YAS in the African Context" Molo, Kenya

Workshop, by Madam Victoria (February 14, 2014). “Self- Reliance and Sustainability is equal to Mission”

Class notes

Class Discussion: Towards Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa, May 28, 2009

Class Discussion: Towards Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa, June 5, 2009

Class Discussion: Towards Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa, July 3, 2009

Journals

Bakanja (2011). “Elders as Peace makers, if we want to attain peace in Africa the entry point should be traditional elders hood” New People No.130 January-February

Banda (September, 2012). ‘Respect for elderly’ New People No. 140

Mondo in ‘Friends of the Africans’ New People No. 133 July- August 2011

New People No. 140 September 2012

New People, No.39 Nov-Dec.1995. The African Church Open to the World.

Newspapers

The Catholic Standard. Ghana’s National Weekly Vol.76 No. 30 Sunday, August 4- Saturday August 10, 2013

Unpublished

Agbonkhianmeghe, E. O. (2009) “Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation”.

Masicha, C. (June, 2013).First Immersion Program: ‘The Interpretation of African Women Religious on African Family Values in their Life’.Maryknoll Institute of African Studies

Muteshi, P. L. (2009). The Contribution of African Practices toward Building Viable Religious Community Life in Africa. Maryknoll Institute of African Studies

Studies of St Mary's University of MN/USA and Tangaza College, Nairobi,
Kenya

Muteshi, P.L. (2011).SSND Newsletter for Africa-Dec. 2011, 'Celebrating our Cultural
Diversity: A Witness to Unity in a Divided World

Nwagu, G. (Afer, June 1997, Volume 39, No.30). Deeping Consecrated Life in Africa.
Gaba Publications AMECEA (Unpublished)

Riebe, E. G. (2007). Mission Begins at Home (Vol.15 Number 15, June/July

Appendix A

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

Petronilla Lumati Muteshi, SSND is a Master of Arts (M.A) student at Maryknoll Institute of African Studies of Saint Mary's University of MN/USA. The purpose of this questionnaire is to carry out a research which is geared to writing an M.A thesis.

The information derived through this questionnaire will be used for the sole purpose of this thesis.

Instructions

- (i) Kindly provide information as objectively as possible to the entire questionnaire.
- (ii) Any information given will be confidential and will not be used otherwise than for the study.
- (iii) For open ended questions give your answers descriptively while for closed questions tick the preferred option.

Section A: Personal information for professed religious men and women (Africans and non- Africans)

1. Name of Religious Congregation.....
2. Indigenous congregation [] International congregation []
3. Charism of Congregation.....
4. Religious vocation: Priest [] Brother [] Sister []
5. Years of Profession/Ordination 0-5 years [], 10-15 years [], 15 and above years []
6. What are your responsibilities in your religious Congregation?
.....

- 7. Age at entrance into religious community: 20 and below [], 25 and below [] 35 and below [] {please tick}
- 8. Were you raised in a rural or urban setting? Rural [], urban [] {please tick}

Section B: Understanding of African spiritual formation values

- 1. What are some of the African values that you know either from your up-bringing or from lived experience in Africa.(D-R1)

.....

.....

- 2. State some of the African values that are missing and need to be incorporated into religious life in your community today. (D-R1)

.....

.....

Kindly give reasons for your answer in No. 2 above

.....

.....

- 3. Explain how visitors are accorded hospitality in your community. (D-A4,R6)

.....

.....

How would you prefer it done in question 3 above

.....

.....

- 4. Do you include the use of spontaneous prayers from the heart in your daily community prayers? Yes [] No [] (S-R2, A3)

If your answer is Yes or No in (No. 4) explain. (H-R2, A3)

.....
.....

5. What concrete activities do you do to foster the spirit of other –centered in your religious community? (D, H, A5, R6)

.....
.....

6. When have you experience the spirit of family and a deep sense of belonging in your religious community? (D-R4, A2)

Kindly explain your answer in No. 17 above.

.....
.....

7. Do you carry out chores and other house responsibilities in your religious communities? (H-A6, R3) Yes () No ()

i). If Yes, what do you do?

ii). And if Not, who does?

.....
.....

8. What evidence is there that your congregation fosters the African value of hard work among all members? (D-R3, A6)

.....
.....

9. Explain how members of your congregation exercise the African value of respect for elders and authority with examples of how this has been a gift and challenge.

(P-A1, R5)?

.....
10. When is the African value of solidarity reflected in your religious community?

(D, R6, A2)

.....
i) Kindly explain how your answer in No.10 above has helped in community building

.....
.....

11. What activities or projects are the members of your congregation engaged in to promote the African spirit of self-reliance? (P-R3.A6.)

.....
.....

Explain your answer.....

12. Which African value(s) do you think need to be challenged in religious life and why? (D,R1).....

.....

13. What other African values would you wish to see embraced in community life?.....

.....

Kindly give reasons for your answer in No.13 above.

.....
.....

14. Explain how the African value of forgiveness as members of a family is lived out in community among members of your congregation? (H-, A2).

.....
.....

15. In your opinion, is there more that could be done in your religious community to foster African values of family? (P-R4, A2) Yes [] No []

16. Give reasons of your answer in No. 15 above

.....
.....

17. What have you found most challenging in your religious community as an African or as a non African religious as you live community, ministry and prayer life?

.....
.....

18. Explain your answer in No. 17 above (D, R1).

.....
.....

19. How is the spirit of service understood and reflected among members of your religious community today? (D, A5)

.....
.....

20. You have been missioned to a new community and you have observed that on several occasions, Sr. Ann (not true name) comes to the chapel in the morning with a cup of coffee/tea and continues to sip at her tea/coffee throughout prayer time. What is your take on this? Give reasons for your answer. (I-H, R2)

.....
.....

Section C: Program of religious formation today: Africans and non- Africans.

1. Does your religious formation today allow the incorporation of African values?

(S-A2, 5, R3, 4) Yes [] No []

2. If your answer is No in No. 1 above, briefly explain (D-A2, 5, R3, 4).

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

3. Do you agree that there is need for the incorporation of African values into religious formation programs today? (P-R1, A2) Yes () No ()

4. (i) If No, why?

.....
.....

(ii) And if Yes, why?

.....
.....

5. What activities do you do as a congregation to foster the following African aspects in your religious community? (D-H).

.....
.....

(i) Spirit of communal sharing

.....
.....

Sense of belonging

.....
.....

Appendix B

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Interview guide for focused group discussion of religious formators

1. Name of your religious congregation
2. What is the charism of your congregation?
3. Gender of formees in the program: Male [] Female []
4. How many formees have gone through your formation process since you began this work?
5. How long have you been in charge of formation?
6. Do you think it is necessary to incorporate African spiritual formation value in your formation, and why?
7. Name of the African spiritual values you incorporate in your formation program.
8. How does the entire congregation respond to the incorporation of African spiritual formation values in the formation program?
9. How are the African spiritual values impacting on the formees in terms of their commitment to: prayer life, community life and ministry?
10. Do you concur with the statement that, "there is little emphasis on African spiritual formation values in religious formation today?"

Appendix C

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Respondents for face to face and focused group discussion summary

Respondent 1

A young religious priest who did not interact much with African values due to early years in boarding school. He said elders in his community seem to struggle with respect toward younger members who are elected to leadership roles. He also admitted that as men they do not reach out to each other as they would in their natural families. The value for forgiveness as he recalled seemed a problem needing to be addressed.

Respondent 2

A religious brother from indigenous congregation attributed the physical and psychological illnesses of religious men and women to tensions in community due to intergenerational differences resulting in conflicts.

Respondent 3

A religious brother of non- African descent who felt that there is less emphasis on value of forgiveness. He prefers that visitors give prior notice when they come and go so as to help in the proper planning of community activities. He wishes that respect shown toward elders in early years of profession is observed even after final vows. This was not his experience then.

Respondent 4

An African Sister belonging to an international congregation who observed a lack of spirit of stewardship on community property among many Africans. She needs to see hospitality extended to families of sisters in community.

Respondent 5

A religious priest; black Brazillian of African descent who blames lack of recognition of African values by Africans' own poor attitude toward themselves as a race. He approves respect for elders and called them 'moving encyclopedias'' because of their wisdom.

Respondent 6

An older priest of Indian descent in an international congregation who felt that Africans see religious life as a 'society of plenty' and are extravagant in their use of resources in community. However, he sees hospitality as a value in Africa that can be supported if used well though guests need to inform the community when they come.

Respondent 8

An African woman in international congregation who was among the first Africans whose early memories were filled with bitterness on the manner of treatment she received. She recommended that workshops be held in religious houses on the need to embrace African values. More effort be made to build family spirit among religious men and women. She complained of the noisy young religious whose only concern is in watching television. She wishes to see respect for elders upheld .She also decried how visitors are not accorded due respect; an example is when a visitor who brings thing to the community is send back with an empty basket.

Respondents 1, 3, 4 and 5

These respondents from an indigenous congregation of religious priests expressed the need to learn more about their African culture. They did not think it is right to assume that All Africans understand their culture. However, most of them admitted knowledge of some of the African cultural practices.

Respondents 6 and 9

These were non- Africans whose interest in African culture was facilitated by their MISAMU classes. This was an eye opener to them and since they feel a strong need to embrace more of what Africans hold as values.

Respondents 15, 17 and 20

Two of them were from indigenous and 1 from an international congregation though all were Africans. These sisters all expressed a lack of appreciation of their own cultural values due to stereotypes created from colonial and early missionary period that what was African was pagan needing redemption by Christianity.

Respondents 10, 18 and 24

These priests observed a lack of in-depth sharing resulting from lack of trust of each other. The behavior of spying on each other and reporting to superiors was the cause and this kills deepening of family ties in the community.

Respondents 4, 5, 8 and 11

These sisters from an indigenous congregation have experience of love and care shared among their members. However, there still emerge differences based on color, tribe and education level as dividing the community. The attitude they referred to as ‘them and we’ attitude that needs to be addressed.

Respondents 3, 6 and 7

These African sisters from an international congregation complained how of them do not invest in the community especially when they suspect that they do not matter and their ideas are not considered as compared to those from their fellow sisters. The lack of sensitivity to the needs of all is of concern and this exclusion has divided communities and jeopardized family spirit.

Respondents 1, 3, 5 and 9

These were young religious men whose recommendation was to have religious formators to undergo formation in the area of African values. According to them, this lack of knowledge contributes to the slow implementation of integrated formation.

Respondents 4 and 13

Two missionary priests who were honest that their main focus is on the development of the spirit of their founder who was French man in the life of the African men.

Respondents 2, 3, 5, 7 and 9

These were African priests and sisters who expressed knowledge of some of their African values as obedience, spirit of family and hospitality among other values.

Respondents 4, 7, 10 and 19

Complained of misplaced priorities especially among young religious both men and women. They spend too much time watching television programs instead of praying as required. Another area was how they relate with the older members in regard to respect.

Respondent 14 and 18

Young African priests appreciated how the voice of those who are young is represented on their leadership council and also at every General Chapter Meetings to make sure that their interests are heard.

Respondents 4, 5, 8 and 11

These Sisters from an international congregation use 'Prayers of the Church' and there is no room for spontaneous prayers. They have memories of their mother using spontaneous prayers at home but they thought this was not an acceptable approach to prayer since it was not part of their formation.

Respondents 9 and 13

On hospitality, they sisters treasure the presence of a visitor because they believe 'a visitor is a sign of blessing' so they do not view visitors as a burden.

Appendix D

MARYKNOLL INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES
OF SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY, MINNESOTA

Thesis Proposal Approval

Direction: Complete this form, attach to the Thesis proposal, and submit to the MIASMU Program Director.

Student: __Petronilla Lumati Muteshi, SSND_____

Address: ___P.O.Box 2130 Kisumu-40100_____

Phone #'s (mobile) _____ (w) _____ FAX _____

Student's signature Date

Thesis Advisor's signature Date

Thesis proposal approved _____ Thesis proposal not approved _____

Program Director's signature Date

Recommendation:

Appendix E

MARYKNOLL INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES
OF SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY, MN

Research Methods Approval

Directions: Please complete this form in order to secure approval for collecting research data or information from sources external to the Institute. Included are experiments involving human subjects, surveys, structured interviews, and other methods for gathering research information from sources other than published materials. This approval process documents the human subject review function. Attach this form to the Thesis proposal, the data collection instruments, correspondence with the sources, and release forms. Please use the back of this form if additional space is required to complete the following items. Return the completed form to your Program Director. ATTN: If the language of the data collection instruments is not English, then an English translation must be attached.

Student: Petronilla Lumati Muteshi Program MIASMU

Address: P.O. Box 2130 KISUMU-40100, KENYA

Phone #' (mobile) 0721480289 _____ FAX _____

Title of Research: "Integrating African Spiritual Formation Values with Christian Values in the Religious Formation of African men and Women"

Purpose of Research (research questions or objectives): To carry out an in-depth study of if/how much integration of African Spiritual Formation Values with Christian Values has been considered in the Formation of African Men and Women.

Population and Sample: The population consists of professed or ordained African Religious Men and Women and also the non-African Religious Men and Women currently residing in Nairobi (sisters, brothers and priests). These were drawn from 15 male religious congregations and 15 female congregations. A total of 120 were sampled through research questionnaire, 20 through focused group and 10 through face to face interviews were included in the research. The population sampled individuals who are in responsibility as formators currently, those who have once been formators within the past 15 years and those who have not necessarily been in formation responsibility but are either professed or ordained members of the congregation.

How are the sources or subjects chosen? What consent and confidentiality information is to be given to the sources or subjects? The sampling of the respondents was arrived at using three methods namely random sampling, snow ball sampling and purposeful sampling.

How will the results be used? For the writing of a Master's Thesis in African Studies.

Researcher's Signature

Date

Thesis Advisor's Signature

Date

Program Director's Signature

Date

Decision Approved _____ Not approved _____

Remarks:

Appendix FMARYKNOLL INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES
OF SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY, MINNESOTA

Permission to Schedule Colloquium

Student: Petronilla Lumati Muteshi
Address: P.O. Box 2130 KISUMU-40100, KENYA

Phone #' (mobile) 0724700376 (work) _____ FAX: _____

“Integrating African Spiritual Formation Values with Christian Values in the Religious
Formation of African men and Women”

Title of Thesis

We have reviewed this Thesis and agree it is ready for colloquium

(Thesis Advisor's Name) _____
Date

(Thesis Reader's Name) _____
Date

(Program Director's Name) _____
Date