

The Drifting of Baptist Youths to Other Denominations in Delta State: Causes and Panacea

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ABSTRACT

The research examined causes and panacea of the drifting of Baptist youths to other church denominations in Delta State. Moreover, the main aim of the study was to sensitize the Baptist youth of the need to remain in the Baptist church. In order to achieve this, the survey research method was explored as a methodology. Questionnaires were used to sample opinion of Baptist youths in Delta State using the cluster sampling methods in some cities and towns of Delta State. The research showed that some Baptist youths in Delta State were gradually drifting to other church denominations like the Pentecostal church and that this is happening more in the campus due to lack of strong Baptist campus ministries in tertiary institutions. However, lack of constant willingness for economic empowerment, insensitivity of the church leadership to youth's spiritual and physical needs were also identified as the causes of the drift. Due to the problems that have been identified, this research work recommended that establishment of strong campus ministries, bridging the gap between the ancient and modern in the Baptist church and positive branding of the Baptist church by members especially parents could be helpful in tackling the problem of Baptist youth's drifts to other church denominations. This work was concluded on the presupposition that when all the tiers of Baptist leadership and memberships in Nigeria, especially in Delta State see the drift of the Baptist youths as a challenge that calls for: prayers, training and retraining through discipleship programmes, more radical campus Baptist youth ministries and the drifting youths to believe Baptist biblical practices and retracing their steps, the problem will be surmounted by the Baptist family.

Key Words: Drift, Baptist Youths, Dominations, Causes,

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The youth ministry of the Baptist church in Nigeria is a very important aspect of the church, hence whatever that is wrong within it has a lot of implications for the Baptist church in Nigeria. The Baptist church is a well spiritually and administratively structured church in Nigeria. It operates under the name; "Nigerian Baptist Convention." In the local Baptist church, the youth wing is called Baptist Youth Fellowship (BYF). In the national level of the Baptist Church, it is called: "The Nigerian Baptist Convention Conference."

The propelling factor that mused this research work was predicated on the observation of the Baptist leadership and membership concerning the drift of the Baptist youths from the Baptist church to other churches like Christ Embassy, Winners Chapel, Redeemed Christian Church of God, etc. This has posed some concerns to the Baptist people in Delta State of Nigeria, especially the Triumphant Baptist Association that called for this paper. Despite the drift of some youths from the Baptist church, the Baptist church is still growing in lips and bounds. Some other youths have also migrated from other church denominations to the Baptist church in Delta State. This churches include; Winners Chapel, Christ Embassy, Anglican Church, Catholic Church, Redeemed Christian Church of God, ect, among others as well. This work does

not intend to give the statistics of the drifts to the Baptist from other church denomination because the focus of this work is on the drift of Baptist youths from the Baptist church to other church denominations. We do not need to fold our arms and watch our youths go away from the church.

Statement of the Problem

The drift of the Baptist youths in Delta State is indeed a problem because it is believed that the Baptist youths are the future of the Baptist church in Delta State of Nigeria. The problem posed by this drift causes the racking and puzzling of the brain for solution. Although, this problem looks physical, we cannot dismiss the spiritual aspect of the matter.

Another issue the Baptist will contend with in this outward drift is the spiritual training that has been impacted into the drifting youths. It is expected that having trained the youth for the future spiritual and physical development of the church, that will remain in the structure but it appears the reverse is the case. The Baptist has a lot of medium of training from childhood to adulthood. This trainings are aimed at the spiritual and emotional development of the person. All of these are being taking away gradually by some youths who ought to train others just the same way they have been trained.

Moreover, being that the Baptist church believe in the Baptist youths, they are given one week in a year to demonstrate how they will lead the Baptist church in future after the exit of the present elders. This is also part of the training of the Baptist youth. The question is: if the youths keep drifting from the Baptist church to other church denomination what becomes the future of the Baptist church? This is a puzzle which the Baptist church must unravel.

Objectives of the Study

Generally, the objective of any research project is to gather data, analyze it based on ones' research question and present such findings and conclusions. This study intends to view the Drifting of Baptist Youths to Other Denominations in Delta State.

Specifically, the study aimed at the following objectives:

- to ascertain whether Baptist youths are actually drifting to other church denominations in Delta State of Nigeria;
- to examine the extent of the drift of Baptist youth to other church denomination in Delta State of Nigeria;
- to assess the causes of the drift of Baptist youths to other church denomination in Delta State of Nigeria;
- to proffer some kinds of solution to the drift of Baptist youths to other church denomination in Delta State; and
- to sensitize the Baptist youth of the need to remain in the Baptist church.

Significance of the Study

- This study will raise consciousness about the reality of the drift of Baptist youths from the Baptist church to other Church denominations in Delta State.
- This study will help create the interest of the Baptist people in the proper handling of the Baptist youth for the future administrative sustenance of the church.
- This study will highlight the spiritual and physical disadvantage of loosing the Baptist youths to other denominations.
- This work shall provide materials for further research on the subject matter.

Definition of Operational Terms

Drift

According to West and Endicott (1976:98), the term drift means to float along slowly or go along having no plan or fixed idea.

Baptist Youth:

A youth according to the Encarta Dictionary (2008) is a young person in the period of human life between childhood and maturity or a young person in his early twenties. This definition does not actually capture the meaning of youth in Nigeria because youthful stage in Nigeria is between ages 17 and 40. The Baptist youth as it is used in this work refers to Baptist young men and women between ages 17 to 40.

Denomination:

The term denomination according to the Oxford Dictionaries means the following: a recognized autonomous branch of the Christian Church (for example, the Presbyterian church, the Baptist church, Anglican church, etc.); a branch of any religion (for example, Orthodox Jewish denominations); the face value of a banknote, coin, or postage stamp; the rank of a playing card within a suit, or of a suit relative to others; a name or designation; and the action of naming or classifying something; the denomination of a consideration as relevant or irrelevant. The word denomination as it used here refers to church denominations.

Cause:

The term cause means the relationship between one event and another (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Causes>). The producer of an effect, result, or consequence. It also means the one, such as a person, event, or condition, that is responsible for an action or result. The term is synonymous with reason, occasion and antecedent.

Panacea:

According to the Encarta Dictionary (2008) the term panacea means a supposed cure for all diseases or problems. In this work, it shall mean some kind of solution to the drift of Baptist youths to other denominations.

DELTA STATE OF NIGERIA

Delta State is a state in Nigeria, comprising mainly Anioma, Urhobo, Isoko, Ijaw and Itsekiri. Okpe is grouped among the Urhobo even though they seek to be recognized as a distinct ethnic group in Delta State. The whole ethnic-groups that comprise Delta State are administratively grouped into three senatorial districts namely Delta North, Delta South and Delta Central for administrative purposes. Delta is an oil producing state of Nigeria situated in the region known as the Niger Delta, South-South Geo-political zone with a population of 4,098,291 (Males: 2,674,306 Females: 2,024,085; see Federal Republic of Nigeria, Official gazette, No. 24, vol. 94, 2007).

The capital city is Asaba located at the northern end of the state with an estimated area of 762 km², while Warri is economic nerve of the state and also the most populated located in the southern end of the state. The state has a total land area of 16,842 km². Delta State was carved out of the former Bendel State on August 27, 1991 by Gen. Ibrahim Babaginda, the then head of state (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delta_State).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Young Exodus: The Church Experience

Kinnaman (2012:1) gives six reasons why youths leave the church. The reasons are as follows:

- **Isolationism.** One-fourth of 18 to 29-year-olds say church demonizes everything outside church, including the music, movies, culture, and technology that define their generation.
- **Shallowness.** One-third call church boring, about one-fourth say faith is irrelevant and Bible teaching is unclear. One-fifth say God is absent from their church experience.
- **Anti-science.** Up to one-third say the church is out of step on scientific developments and debate.
- **Sex.** The church is perceived as simplistic and judgmental. For a fifth or more, a "just say no" philosophy is insufficient in a techno-porno world. Young Christian singles are as sexually active as their non-churched friends, and many say they feel judged.
- **Exclusivity.** Three in 10 young people feel the church is too exclusive in this pluralistic and multi-cultural age. And the same number feel forced to choose between their faith and their friends.
- **Doubters.** The church is not a safe place to express doubts say over one-third of young people, and one-fourth have serious doubts they would like to discuss.

In a research carried out by the Barna Group (2012) in the USA, it was observed that six in 10 young people will leave the church permanently or for an extended period starting at age 15, according to new research by the Barna Group. And for the generation now coming of age, it is more than the usual "driver's license to marriage license" joy ride, according to the pollsters. For church leaders, the question is, what will we do about it? Today's young adults are marrying later, if at all, are technologically savvy, and hold worldviews alien to their upbringing. Barna Research president David Kinnaman, after a five-year-study, declared that church leaders are unequipped to deal with this "new normal."

Their response is mostly at the extremes and both dangerous. Many ignore the situation, hoping young adults' views will be righted when they are older and have their own children. These leaders miss the significance of the shifts of the past 25 years, Kinnaman contends, and the needs for ministry young people have in their present phase-if it is a phase. But the opposite reaction is just as problematic: "using all means possible to make their congregation appeal to teens and young adults." This excludes older members and "builds the church on the preferences of young people and not on the pursuit of God," Kinnaman said.

Kinnaman prescribes intergenerational ministry. "In many churches, this means changing the metaphor from simply passing the baton to the next generation to a more functional, biblical picture of a body - that is, the entire community of faith, across the entire lifespan, working together to fulfill God's purposes."

How to Lead a Successful Youth Ministry

Victor and Herrick (2012) state that Youth Ministries are often the pillar of any Christian church's continuity. If you cannot set teenage hearts on fire with love of God, the Christian population will dwindle. This being a difficult time in most teenagers' lives, it is more important than ever to get a good youth ministry program started, and here is how it can be done. Victor and Herrick (2012) also give eight steps on how to successfully build a youth ministry in the church.

- i. Find a good meeting location. Many churches already have a great hall for their youth group, but if not find some location where everyone will feel comfortable. A large room,

- a park in good weather, or the beach in the summer are great places for teenagers to connect.
- ii. Get the word out. Word of mouth works great, so encourage frequent members to talk to their friends about the youth group. Place an announcement in the church newsletter and Sunday bulletin. If the church has a website, add a link for youth ministry information. Do not forget Facebook and Twitter, as these are very popular with youth.
 - iii. Break the ice. For a lot of these kids, the youth group will evolve into their greatest friends base, and that is a wonderful thing- if you can get it to happen. Play some get-to-know-you games, encourage group discussion and mingling. Get the teens out of their pre-set cliques. Make sure there are no teens left out or uncomfortable.
 - iv. Let the youth lead. The youth know what the youth want. Often, it is best to pick 11th or 12th graders to form a "core" or "leadership" team to plan events and the like. At this age, they will have developed maturity, planning skills, and hopefully a sincere love of God.
 - v. Sing praise to the Lord. Youth love music, and if you can find the right kind of music, even the quiet type will open up eventually. Set a mood, and use song as prayer. Those who are not willing to sing under most circumstances tend to find themselves singing with joy when the Holy Spirit acts through them.
 - vi. If you are a youth, push to effect these changes. Many youth groups are stagnant because the youth just do not care. Love of God is contagious, so let yours show for the benefit of those around you.
 - vii. Sign up for or plan your own retreats. Away from the hustle of routine life, retreats can truly cause amazing spiritual conversions, and encourage youth to attend the regular meetings as well.
 - viii. Pray for the youth of Christianity daily. There is perhaps no more important thing to do for your youth ministry than this.

The Nigerian Baptist Youth

The Baptist youth fellowship is a composition of males and females, students, admission seekers, job seekers, the employed, the singles and the married. The youth ministries division of the Nigerian Baptist Convention is a specialized ministry that has these groups in focus; designing programmes that addresses the teaming needs of the members of the group.

The Baptist Youth Ministries in Nigeria was inaugurated in Iwo in 1973. This was the result of the efforts of some concerned persons like Revd Emmanuel Akingbala, Dr E.A Dahunsi, Oba Samuel Abimbola 11 [Oluwo of Iwo], Bro Noah Iyanda and Late Dr T.A Ayorinde, who preached at the inaugural ceremony. His message admonished the youths to see themselves as Christians. They were made to understand that the convention expects her youth to participate fully in a constructive way and as such, they are also expected to cooperate with the convention to the best of their ability. In the inaugural ceremony, six conferences were represented and 241 youth delegates participated (Lagos Central Baptist Conference, 2012).

During the inauguration ceremony, a threefold objective was unveiled as follows: to help the Baptist youth to recognize their individual opportunities and responsibilities in the church worldwide mission; to inspire Baptist youth commit their lives to continuing Christian witness; and to provide opportunity for Baptist youth to know each other better and thus work co-operatively to fulfill the great commission. The vision was to reach all the youths for Christ, and position them for effective living and service that reflects the glory of God (Lagos Central Baptist Conference, 2012).

From the Constitution of the Nigerian Baptist Convention Youth Conference the objectives for which the youth ministry is constituted by the convention include: to cooperate with the

Nigerian Baptist Convention in emphasizing its declared principles among the youths; to take the whole Gospel of Jesus to all who do not know it or have not received it, wherever opportunity may be found; to encourage and assist in the building and maintenance of Baptist Youth Centres; to afford a united action concerning matters affecting the welfare of youth fellowships in the Convention and to cultivate fellowship by such other means as the conference may adopt; to invest in any financial undertakings that is for the propagation of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and to prepare the youths as a formidable force to take over the mantle of leadership for the next generation.

Baptist Youth Ministries and Its Relationship to the Baptist Church

The Youth ministries division has a single agenda in focus for the church on grounds of relationship–partnership agenda for church empowerment. This agenda is founded on the understanding of the youth’s position in the church, as leaders of today and tomorrow. The youths are helped to discover themselves in the different settings they find themselves outside the church.

Through self discoveries series, leadership development, mission and evangelism orientation, financial empowerment principles, orientations that make for excellence martially and other trainings, they are then positioned to serve in the different capacities they are gifted in, especially as their gifts find outlet in fruitful service to the glory of God. The church is conceived as a test ground for the deposits of God in the believers’ life. With the appropriate motivation, it is expected that the youths would perform (LCBC,2012). In this regard, its mode of operation include to organize conferences; discovery and positioning of gifts for service; working at the sidelines of the church to assist the church ministries with the youths; organizing annual conferences for leadership development and empowerment and providing motivations for the fulfillment of the great commission as written in Matthew 28:19-20.

METHODOLOGY

This aspect deals with the field work of this research work which was carried out in, Agbor, Asaba, Effurun, Eku, and Warri respectively in Delta State of Nigeria. In order to properly carry out this report the researcher gives the following clues before the data presentation and analysis to ease the reader’s understanding.

Research Design

Since this study does not involve experimentation, the survey research method was explored here by using cluster sampling. This is because many variables can be analyzed at the same time using multivariable statistics. Also large amount of data can be collected with ease from a variety of people. The implication of using the survey research method is therefore raising questionnaires and retrieving them from the audience, from a segment of population. This questionnaire was constructed in such a way that reflects the knowledge, interest, impression that respondents have about the subject matter of Baptist youth drift in Delta State.

Description of Research Instrument

The instrument for study was the questionnaire. Questions 1-7 deal with the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Questions 8 to 11 delves on the drifting of Baptist youths to other denominations in Delta State. Questions 12 to 17 is on the causes of the drifting of Baptist youths to other denominations in Delta State. And questions 18 to 21 sought for the panacea to the drifting of Baptist youths to other denominations in Delta State. The questionnaire was structured predominantly in the closed ended format to ease response and quicken the return rate of the instrument.

Population of Sample

At the time of this research, the actual population of Abraka, Agbo, Asaba, Effurun, Eku, and Warri could not be obtained by the researcher but the entire population of Delta State by the 2006 Population Census is 4,098,291. In this research, the population sampled in Agbor, Asaba, Effurun, Eku, and Warri were Baptist youths and there were used to represent the entire Baptist youths in Delta State. In order to ensure a representation of the characteristics present in this audience, the population in this case comprised both male and female between ages 17 to 36 and above.

Sampling Procedure and Actual Questionnaire Retrieved

The sampling procedure for this survey research was a simple random sampling procedure. This was carried out in Agbor, Asaba, Effurun, Eku, and Warri as follows:

Table 1: Distributed and Retrieved Questionnaire

Places	No. of Question Distributed	No. of Question Retrieved
Agbor	30	9
Asaba	30	9
Effurun	30	23
Eku	30	18
Warri	40	33
Total	160	92

Out of the 160 questionnaires distributed, the researcher was only able to retrieve 92 questionnaires.

Method of Data Collection

Data were collected through self administration of the questionnaire. This means that the researcher distributed the instruments personally to respondents and waited to collect them back. The researcher carried out this exercise within three months because of the area of survey to be covered.

Method of Data Analysis

The presentation of data in the random way in which it was gathered, posed a lot of difficulties when drawing conclusion, hence the researcher tends to help present data in a way that will make it easier to interpret. Thus, the simple method of tabulation was used to analyze the responses of respondents, while the simple percentage method was used to interpret the responses from the questionnaire retrieved.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The presentation and analysis of data below are based on the stated research questions. Each research question was followed by the analysis of data and findings.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Sex

Table 2: Sex of Respondents and outcomes

Sex	Number	Percentage
Male	49	53.0%
Female	43	47.0%
Total	92	100%

Table 2 above shows that 53% of the populations sampled were males while 47% of the population were Females. This shows that male responded more.

Age

Table 3: Age Range of the Respondents and Outcome

Ages	Number	Percentages
17- 30	63	68.0%
31-40	19	21.0%
41 and above	10	11. 0%
Total	92	100%

The above table shows that 68%, 21% and 11% of the population sampled were between ages 17-30, 31-40, 41 and above respectively. It can be deduced from the table that younger youths responded more.

Occupation

Table 4: Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Civil servant	16	17.0%
Applicants	9	10.0%
Self Employed	18	20.0%
Students	37	40.0%
Clergy	6	6.5%
Others	6	6.5%
Total	92	100%

The above table shows that 17% of the population sampled were civil servants, while 10% of the population sampled were applicants. Also, 20% of the population sampled were self-employed and 40% of the population sampled were students. While 6.5% of population sampled were clergies, 6.5% comprise of people from other occupations.

Educational Qualification

Table 5: Educational qualification of the respondents

Educational Qualification	Numbers	Percentages
SSCE	42	46.0%
delete	delete	delete
ND	9	10.0%
NCE	11	12.0%
First degree and above	30	32.0%
Total	92	100%

The above table points out that 46%, 10%, 12%, and 32% the population sampled were SSCE, ND, NCE, First Degree Holders and above respectively. This makes it clear that the population of study is literate.

Denominational Group**Table 6: Denominational Groupings of Correspondents**

Group	Number	Percentages
Youth	64	70.0%
Men Missionary Union	15	16.0%
Women Missionary Union	13	14.0%
Total	92	100%

Table 6 indicates that 70% of the population sampled were youths while 16% belong to the Men Missionary Union, 14% of the population of the study belong to the Women Missionary Union of the Baptist church in Delta State. This indicates that majority of the population sampled were Baptist youths.

Marital Status**Table 7: Marital Status of Respondent**

Marital Status	Number	Percentages
Single	61	66.3%
Married	31	33.7%
Divorced	0	0%
Total	92	100%

The above table shows that 66.3% of the population sampled were not yet married. While 33.7% of the population sampled were married, none was a divorcee.

Residence of Respondents**Table 8: Residence of Respondents**

Places	Number	Percentage
Agbor	9	10%
Asaba	9	10%
Effurun	23	25%
Ekuru	18	20%
Warri	33	35%
Total	92	100%

The above table shows that 10% of the population sampled were from Agbor, 10% were from Asaba, 25% were from Effurun, 20% were from Eku, and 35% were from Warri.

Drifting of Baptist Youths to other Denomination in Delta State

Research Question 8: Do you agree that some Baptist youths are drifting from the Baptist Church to other denominations?

Table 9: Respondents views on Question 8

Responses	Number	Percentages
Yes	87	94.6%
No	5	5.4%
Total	92	100%

Table 9 above points out that 94.6% representing 87 respondents agree that some Baptist youths are drifting from the Baptist Church to other denominations and 5.4% representing 5 respondents did not agree.

Research Question 9: *to what extent can you rate the drift?*

Table 10: Respondents Views on Question 9

Reponses	Number	Percentages
Rapidly	23	25%
Gradually	51	55.4%
Minutely	10	10.9%
Undecided	8	8.7%
Total	92	100%

Table 10 shows that 25% representing 23 respondents are of the view that the drift of Baptist youths to other denominations is rapid, 55.4% representing 51 respondents are of the opinion that the drift is gradual. While 10.9% representing 10 respondents say the drift is minute, 8.7% representing 8 respondents were undecided.

Research Question 10: *which group of denomination do you see them drift to?*

Table 11: Respondents views on Question 10

Responses	Number	Percentages
Pentecostal	84	91.30%
Orthodox	4	4.35%
Undecided	4	4.35%
Total	92	100%

Table 11 shows that 91.30% representing 84 respondents are of the view that Baptist youths drifts to Pentecostal church, 4.35% representing 4 respondents are of the opinion that Baptist Youths drift to other Orthodox church and 4.35% representing 4 respondents remain undecided.

Research Question 11: *at what point do they live the Baptist church?*

Table 12: respondents' views on question 11

Reponses	Number	Percentages
Campus	68	74%
Spiritual Programmes	20	22%
Undecided	4	4%
Total	92	100%

Table 12 shows that 74% representing 68 respondents agree that those youths who left the Baptist church to other denomination left while in campus, 22% representing 20 respondents say that those youths who left the Baptist Church to attend spiritual programme in other denominations and remained in the new church but 4% representing 4 respondents were undecided.

5.3 The Causes of the Drifting of Baptist Youths to Other Denominations in Delta State

Research Question 12: what do you think is responsible for the drift of Baptist Youths to other denominations?

Table 13: respondents' views on question 12

Reponses	Number	Percentages
Insensitivity of Church Leadership to the spiritual and physical needs of the Youths	39	42.39%
Sidelining of the youths in the church affairs	21	22.83%
Un-acceptance of indecent dressing among the youths by the church	27	29.35%
Un-acceptance of indecent behaviours by the church	5	5.43%
Total	92	100%

Table 13 shows that 42.39% representing 39 respondents think that insensitivity of Church leadership to the spiritual and physical needs of the youths is one of the thing responsible for the drift of Baptist youths to other denominations, 22.83% representing 21 respondents think that the sidelining of the youths in the Baptist church affairs is one of the reasons for the drift, and 5.43% representing 5 respondents think that the un-acceptance of indecent behaviours by the Baptist church is the reason for the drift.

Research Question 13: Do you agree that the Baptist church is not organizing enough spiritual programmes?

Table 14: Respondent's views on question 13

Reponses	Number	Percentages
Agree	2	2.17%
Strongly Agree	9	9.78%
Disagree	34	36.96%
Strongly disagree	47	51.09%
Total	92	100%

Table 14 shows that 2.17% representing 2 respondents agree that the Baptist church is not organizing enough spiritual programmes. 9.78% representing 9 respondents strongly agree that the Baptist church is not organizing enough spiritual programmes. While 36.96% representing 34 respondents disagree that the Baptist church is not organizing enough spiritual programmes, 51.09% representing 47 respondents strongly disagree that the Baptist church is not organizing enough spiritual programmes. By implication, it means the Baptist church is organizing enough spiritual programmes for its members.

Research Question 14: Do you agree that the unwillingness of some highly placed Baptist people to help the youth is one of the reasons for youth drift from the Baptist church?

Table 15: Respondent's views on question 14

Reponses	Number	Percentages
Agree	31	33.7%
Strongly Agree	30	32.6%
Disagree	21	22.8%
Strongly disagree	10	10.9%
Total	92	100%

Table 15 above shows that 33.7% representing 31 respondents agree that the unwillingness of some highly placed Baptist people to help the youth is one of the reasons for youth drift in the

Baptist church. 32.6% representing 30 respondents strongly agree that the unwillingness of some highly placed Baptist people to help the youth is one of the reasons for youth drift from the Baptist church. Moreover, 22.8% representing 21 respondents disagree that the unwillingness of some highly placed Baptist people to help the youth is one of the reason for youth drift in the Baptist church and 10.9% representing 10 respondents strongly disagree that the unwillingness of some highly placed Baptist people to help the youth is one of the reasons for youth drift from the Baptist church.

This means that some of the youths are being attracted by some highly placed people in their newly found church because of the hope of economic empowerment which they fill cannot be gotten from the highly placed people in the Baptist church.

Research Question 15: Do you think some highly placed people in the denomination they are drifting to have convincingly offer to help them?

Table 16: Respondent's views on Question 15

Responses	Number	Percentages
Yes	55	59.8%
No	37	40.2%
Total	92	100%

Table 16 above points out that 59.8% representing 55 respondents think that some highly placed people in the denomination the Baptist youths are drifting to have convincingly offered to help them and 40.2% representing 37 respondents did not think that some highly placed people in the denomination they are drifting to have convincingly offered to help them.

Research Question 16: Do you agree that lack of strong Baptist campus ministry is one of the causes of the drift?

Table 17: Respondent's views on question 16

Reponses	Number	Percentages
Agree	34	37%
Strongly Agree	26	28%
Disagree	26	28%
Strongly disagree	6	7%
Total	92	100%

Table 17 above shows that 37% representing 34 respondents agree that lack of strong Baptist campus ministry is one of the causes of the drift of Baptist youths to other denominations in campus. 28% representing 26 respondents strongly agree that lack of strong Baptist campus ministry is one of the causes of the drift of Baptist youths to other denominations in campus. Also, 28% representing 26 respondents disagree that lack of strong Baptist campus ministry is one of the causes of the drift of Baptist youths to other denominations in campus and 7% representing 6 respondents strongly disagree that lack of strong Baptist campus ministry is one of the causes of the drift of Baptist youths to other denominations in campus.

Research Question 17: Do you think monotony of activity can be boring enough to make the youths drift?

Table 18: Respondent’s views on question 17

Reponses	Number	Percentages
Yes	62	67.4%
No	30	32.6%
Total	92	100%

Table 18 above shows that 67.4% representing 62 respondents think that monotony of activity can be boring enough to make the youths drift from Baptist church to join another denomination that add varieties to their activities. On the other hand, 32.6% representing 30 respondents do not think so.

5.4 The Panacea to the Drifting of Baptist Youths to Other Denominations in Delta State

Research Question 18: Do you think there is a solution to this problem?

Table 19: Respondent’s views on question 18

Reponses	Number	Percentages
Yes	92	100%
No	0	0%
Total	92	100%

Table 19 above shows that 100% representing all 92 respondents think that there is a solution to this problem of Baptist youths drifting to other denominations. This implies that all the respondents are in agreement that there is a solution to this problem.

Research Question 19: Do you agree that a very strong campus ministry can help to retain our Baptist youths?

Table 20: Respondent’s views on question 19

Reponses	Number	Percentages
Yes	88	95.7%
No	4	4.3%
Total	92	100%

Table 20 above shows that 95.7% representing 88 respondents agreed that a very strong campus ministry can help to retain the Baptist youths in the Baptist denomination. Furthermore, 4.3% representing 4 respondents do not agree that a very strong campus ministry can help to retain Baptist youths in the Baptist church.

Research Question 20: Do you believe that bridging the ancient and the modern in the Baptist church can contribute to the solution of this problem?

Table 21: Respondent’s views on question 20

Reponses	Number	Percentages
Yes	79	86%
No	13	14%
Total	92	100%

Table 21 above shows that 86% representing 79 respondents believed that bridging the ancient and the modern in the Baptist church can contribute to the solution of youth’s drifts

from the Baptist church. Also, 14% representing 13 respondents do not believe that bridging the ancient and the modern in the Baptist church can contribute to the solution of this problem of youth's drifts.

Research Question 21: Do you believe that the positive branding of the Baptist church by Baptist parents and sundry can help our youths to understand the Baptist church better and retain our youths?

Table 22: Respondent's views on question 21

Reponses	Number	Percentages
Yes	89	96.7%
No	3	3.3%
Total	92	100%

Table 22 as shown above tells us that 96.7% representing 89 respondents believe that the positive branding of the Baptist church by Baptist parents and sundry can help our youths to understand the Baptist church better and retain her youths but 3.3% representing 3 respondents do not the positive branding of the Baptist church by Baptist parents and sundry can help our youths to understand the Baptist church better and retain her youths.

FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Findings

From the above statistics the underlisted was deduced from the research work as findings.

- The work ascertained that Baptist youths in Delta State are actually drifting to other church denominations.
- From the examination carried out on the subject matter, the extent of the drift of Baptist youth to other church denomination in Delta State of Nigeria was gradual.
- Lack of strong Baptist campus ministries in tertiary institutions lack of hope for help, leadership insensitivity to youth's spiritual and physical needs were identified as the causes of the drift of Baptist youths to other church denominations in Delta State of Nigeria.
- Establishment of strong campus ministries, bridging the gap between the ancient and modern in the Baptist church and positive branding of the Baptist church by members especially parents have also been identified as panacea to the drift of Baptist youths to other church denomination in Delta State.

Discussion

While other denominations like the Roman Catholic Church, Anglican communion are building chapels and employing Champlain to drive the membership and spiritual stability of their members, the Baptist denomination has no such thing. Although, the Baptist Student Fellowship is viable in campuses in Nigerian tertiary institution like that of Delta State, they are left alone to fund and drive the process which could be more properly done by a trained Baptist pastor.

Apart from all the issues that have identified as the cause of youth's drifts from the Baptist church to other denomination is inter-denominational marriage. It is a common place to see young men from other denominations coming to marry young girls away from the Baptist church. Although, this is one of the major avenues through which the Baptist church have been loosing her female youths to other denomination, it will rather sound wicked and discriminatory to deprive them from marrying their Christians from other denominations.

Conclusion

This research has shown that some Baptist youths are gradually drifting from the Baptist church to the Pentecostal especially during their stay in campus. Although, the Baptist church engage the Baptist youth in meaningful spiritual programmes, some youths still leave for reasons best known to them. Being that the youth of the Baptist church is seen as the future of the Baptist church, the Baptist church carry out spiritual as well as other meaningful training to equip them for the present and future task.

The mobility of some Baptist youths to other denomination is a problem that should not be handled with a wave of the hands. This is a challenge that calls for prayers, training and retraining through discipleship programmes and a more radical campus Baptist youth ministries. For those youths who are leaving as a result of the strict emphasis on holiness, godly dressing and behaviours, they are also challenged to x-ray their lives with the bible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. In order to retain the Baptist youths in the Baptist church, there is the need to sensitize the Baptist youth of the need to remain in the Baptist church. The local church pastor should be economically and materially empowered to do modern discipleship programme for the Baptist youth.
- ii. The Baptist Conferences in collaboration with the Nigerian Baptist Convention should take it as a responsibility to build chapels in tertiary institutions in Delta State and other States in Nigeria and employ Champlain to man them.
- iii. Instead of running down the image of the Baptist church before the youths, every Baptist member should defend the believe and practices of the Baptist church before youths. The members of the Baptist church should also change their bad attitudes especially that of disrespect for the pastor, unconstructive arguments during meetings, etc., so as to create good examples for the youths.
- iv. In order for the Baptist church to retain her vibrant female youths, brothers who are ready for marriage should look inwards in search of wives. However, the leading of the Holy Spirit is paramount in marriage choice.

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