Youth Identity Crisis in the Diaspora: Christian Zimbabweans in the United Kingdom

Nomatter Sande
ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4177-8391

Daniel Manyanga
ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2363-6311

Abstract

The settlement of Zimbabweans in the United Kingdom happened alongside the severe, continual, and repeated fear of deportations, in the context of deceitfulness, excessive working patterns and culture shock. Immigrant parents were attracted to African Pentecostal churches whose innovative 'victorious theology' identified their congregations as 'the blessed of God', thereby inspiring them to deal with the complex issues of migration. However, there is a gap in the youth identity theology. Young immigrants experience multiple socio-psychological challenges, which not only confuse them but struggle to understand their identity. This case study explores the effect of migration processes on the Zimbabwean Christian youth in the United Kingdom. The study uses qualitative empirical data, the transnational migration theory and the identity theory as theoretical frameworks. Findings show that culture, parental relationships, the sense of belonging, social pressures, self-image and the church are factors that influence the identity crises faced the youth in the diaspora. The case study contributes to the understanding that migration processes cause second-generation youth to have 'hybrid identities' while their first-generation parents have 'dual identities'. Further, for the church to restore healthy youth identity, they should use the youth identity theology which emphasises 'sameness', 'renewal of mind' and 'belonging'.

Keywords: migration, youth identity theology, transnationalism, diaspora

Introduction

The Zimbabwean Christian migrant youth growing up and living in the multicultural society of the United Kingdom (UK), experience multiple challenges — not only separation from parents, mental health issues, substance abuse and stress, but these problems bedeviling them results in identity crisis. Identity crisis is a phenomenon caused by insecurity and worries amongst teenagers, creating confusion around their present and future roles (Erikson 1968; Shaffer 2009). Previous studies have theorised that the economic crisis of Zimbabwe led to Zimbabweans migrating to the UK and the migration started early 2000 (Pasura 2012). According to Samushonga and Sande (2020:3) 'it is not easy to establish exactly how many Zimbabwean born nationals live in the United Kingdom', but there is scant studies have focused on the identity crisis endured by Zimbabwean youth in diaspora.

It is possible that the Zimbabweans who remained in their home country, view their counterparts who emigrated to other nations as having escaped poverty and economic hardships. However, the migration and settlement process has had its share of challenges, particularly for youth identity. A person's identity is influenced by a number of factors which include, but are not limited to culture, society and family. The value system of the Shona people in Zimbabwe provided supporting structures which mould youth identity. The Shona people are highly moral people which contributes to their individual personality (Mararike 2012). Good behaviour is encouraged and the society detests antisocial acts. According to Magosvongwe (2016:158) the Shona people hold *unhu/hunhu*, as 'as mutually beneficial, undergirded by reciprocity and respect for human life and dignity'. Therefore, the Shona social virtues are socially constructed and there are a variety of values which constitute identity; the concept of '*hunhu*' or character is central to describing the identity of an individual. Some of the virtues which help sustain a good character and identity are self-control, humility, and truthfulness. The communal living of the Shona culture inevitably helped to sustain and reinforce the identity of the people.

Any migration process which includes but not limited to receiving paperwork for settlement in the host nation, economic empowerment and social adaptations to local culture is likely to disrupt certain values, depending on the societies. This study suggests that the environment in the UK affects both the parents and youth; with the youth more prone to experiencing lasting

effects, that have a bearing on their future identity. Strategic theological reflections have the potential to help restore youth identity in the diaspora. Therefore, African churches in the diaspora which understand both the culture of the sending nations and the receiving host nations have a role to create an appropriate youth identity theology to meet the needs of migrant youth in diaspora. The 'identity theology' in this study refers to Christian teachings which frame identity as 'sameness', 'renewal of mind' and ' experiential sense of belonging'. As such, this study uses the Apostolic Faith Mission International Ministries (AFMIM UK) from Zimbabwe as a case study. The reason for this was the fact that the AFMIM UK is a growing African Pentecostal church in the UK. The church has a membership of about 3 500 (Sande 2019a). The AFMIM UK traces its history from the Azusa Street Revival of 1906, which then became established in South Africa in 1908. The movement reached Zimbabwe in 1915 and is regarded as the mother of all Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe (Sande 2016). Migrant members of the Zimbabwean church in the UK gathered and started the AFMIM UK in 1998 (Sande 2019c). The AFMIM UK has about 500 youth who attend and participate at the Open Heavens Youth Conference annually[1].

African Churches and Migration Matters in Europe

Current scholarship shows that there is a keen interest in the role of religion on migration, transnationalism and diaspora matters in Europe. African migrant churches have created space in Europe as a vibrant form of Christianity (Burgess 2009; Währisch-Oblau 2009; Adedibu 2013). For instance, the African Pentecostal churches use warfare prayers to get breakthrough on issues like visa applications, work permits and student grants (Kalu 2008). Findings by Adogame (2013) demonstrate that African Pentecostal churches in the diaspora are critical wellsprings of social, cultural and spiritual resources. The Christianity from the Global South has a voracious journey to becoming a new world Christian standpoint.

Jenkins (2006) contends that the West does not have any desire to acknowledge the effect of the Global South Christianity and by 2050 the centre

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[1] Open Heavens is an AFMIM UK conference for the youth, which is hosted annually in August. The conference intends to provide space for the youth to express worship and receive teachings and ministration to meet their needs.

of Global Christianity will be in Africa and the African diaspora. Also, Asamoah-Gyadu (2008) argues that Pentecostals have become an excellent driving force which is sensitive to the political, religious, cultural, financial and the social landscape. In any case, the planting of churches in new regions is not a simple venture. As put by Zeleza (2010:3), the diaspora rewires 'Africanness' to the dispersed populace and globalises Africans. Pasura (2012) argues that African diaspora churches are creating space, identity and alternative forms of belonging in host nations. The Zimbabwean Catholic church in Britain maintains a distinct identity through the use of Zimbabwean dialects in church services. Therefore, in this regard African diaspora churches are creating space, identity and alternative forms of belonging in host nations.

However, there is a gap in the development of youth identity theology in order to deal with migrant youth in the diaspora. The defining question is: how is religion helping the youth to maintain their identity in the diverse multicultural context of the UK? Most of the youth were either born in the UK or came from Zimbabwe while they were young (primary school-going age) and this article refers to them as second generation in the UK. Most parents of the youth are first-generation Zimbabwean migrants (all born outside the host nations).

Theoretical Framework

This article uses two theoretical frameworks; first the transnational migration theory and second, the identity theory propounded by Erikson (1968) before and after 1968. The transnational migration theory focuses on the process of movement and settlement across national borders but maintaining the networks between the country of origin and the new host nations (Fouron & Glick Schiller 2001). The transnational migration theory helps to explain that diasporic communities are influenced by shifting landscapes and identity. Also, the theory helps to understand that the host culture becomes a dominant culture, making the Zimbabwean culture a sub-culture, thus demonstrating how this dominant culture in the UK influences the youth identity. Further, this study uses the transnational theory to show how settling in the UK affects the identity of Zimbabweans.

Second, the identity theory is a central construct in developmental psychology. From a social perspective, McLeod (2019) defines identity theory

is a 'person's sense of who they are based on their group membership'. Identity is not an end in itself but is tied to all the life stages (Syed 2017). The identity theory is important to this study because it helps to specify how the meanings of identities are negotiated and managed within religious interactions. In this case, religion can benefit a lot from the identity insights described in psychology. The identity theory helps to suggest that the concept of youth identity crisis in the diaspora should focus on how the youth identity is shaped by specific social interactions embedded within society. Stets and Serpe (2013: 31) argue that, 'identities relate to performance (or behavior), affect (feelings), physical and mental health (stress, anxiety and depression), the self-concept (self-esteem, efficacy and authenticity) and social structure'.

Methodology

This study used the case study research method. The research was conducted in the AFMIM UK using a qualitative paradigm. Forty (40) youth, (22 females and 18 males), participated in the study, chosen on the basis that they were either born in the UK or Zimbabwean-born but grew up in the UK and had come to the UK when they were of school going age. The age group of the participants was 13-30 years. The reason for choosing this age group was that as per their constitution, the AFMIM UK defines their youth from the age of thirteen to thirty (Constitution of the AFMIM UK 2015). The AFMIM UK is a Pentecostal church which relies on the literal interpretation of the Bible, and it is possible that this influenced this age limit for the youth. The Jewish youth period is between the ages of 12 to 20, whilst for the Romans empire youth spanned the ages of 17 – 38 years; further the Greek youth covers from 24 to 40 years and a (*neaniskos*) was from 21 to 28 years (Overstreet 2009).

Anonymous electronic questionnaire was designed to gather data throughout the 26 assemblies (congregations) in the UK (Assemblies of AFMIM UK 2019). The information about the research and electronic information about the survey was shared on relevant WhatsApp Groups (Youth fora)[2]. Open-ended questions were used to gather data for the study. Questions

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[2] WhatsApp is arguably the most popular messaging application (app). WhatsApp Groups are the most used medium for communicating general and non-sensitive information within the AFMIM UK (within the bounds of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018).

asked were meant to aid in the understanding of the key areas contributing to the challenges affecting youth relationships with African parents. The relevance or irrelevance of African upbringing on how the youth view life in the UK was asked. The youth were asked to note the areas that cause stress in their life or in the life of their friends, that may lead to substance abuse, mental health issues, and the breakdown in relationship with their parents. Also, questions were posed about what shapes their sense of identity and how they are connected to the African culture and the challenges associated. The other question asked was about how youth describe identity-crisis among the young African people in the diaspora. Further questions sought to find understand the way(s) in which the church community had helped the youth of African origin to know who they are, in terms of their identity.

The data analysis of this study was continual and reiterative as research was being conducted. The data was analysed through thematic categorisation. Trustworthiness of this study was established by using purposive sampling as a recruitment strategy and descriptions of the findings about youth identity crisis. To ensure an appropriate ethical strategy, the distributed questionnaires notified that by participation in the research they were giving consent. The questionnaires and their data was for academic purposes only. Ethical clearance to use the AFMIM UK was granted by the church. The study was conducted in 2019.

Findings
This section presents the findings through major themes which emerged:

African Culture and Tradition
When asked about issues contributing to the challenges affecting their relationship with the parents, the youth gave diverse challenges. About a quarter of the participants cited that the parents do not trust youth when they go out, and they do not support them to date other nationalities. Further, the youth explained that that there is too much traditional mentality. In this view, a young man explained the following: '*culture differences: growing up in different cultures results in different ways of thinking, thus causing differences in dealing with situations. Technology and lack of family time due to work and school also perpetuate the differences*'. The youth bone of contention was from

that parents' cultural perspectives, which the youth called '*old ways and mentalities*', make parents think they know best what is good for youth based on their upbringing. In collaboration with the above, half the youth feel that parents lack of communication, understanding and support, results in them being over protective. One youth dismissed African culture as too strict as it does not allow parents to approach things with an open mind. The youth that grow with parents with transnational optic are both influenced by the objects, practices and their parents but are able to negotiate with the challenges that are posed by the ancestral homes and negotiate these institutions (Levitt 2009).

The youth who grew in Africa but later came to the UK were asked about the relevance or irrelevance of their African upbringing on how they view life in the UK. About a third of the youth indicated that they are grateful for the way of life in the UK as compared to that of Africa. Some youth noted that an African upbringing helped them to appreciate opportunities around them and feel they have more respect for people as compared to youth brought up in the UK. One of the participants mentioned issues related to identity and said: '*my African upbringing was relevant in knowing who I am and where I come from, allowing me to be proud of my culture*'. Agreeing with the above, another youth elaborated that: '*being raised in Africa has given me morals and values that have given me a step ahead such as good work ethic, hard work, appreciation of every opportunity (having lived in a less economically developed country almost gives this unique outlook on life in the UK by giving a deep rooted sense of appreciation for life)*'. However, this has sometimes meant that in certain situations I have been less prone to take risks as it has felt like just being successful in education is the only goal and has been hard to fully embrace the UK as my home as there has been an arguably false sense of returning to Africa one day.

On the contrary to this view, some youth feel there is a clash of traditions. This is supported by the theory on contested cultures which show that cultures clash (Coombe 1998). One youth put it succinctly as, '*I know what it means to struggle and live a minimalistic life*'. Some youth felt that African parents tend to stick to the old school methods of upbringing and discipline. Parents need to realise that we now live in a more diverse society where things are slightly different. Sticking with the old methods only draws us further from the parents. These findings are in line with the identity theory which suggests that there is a relationship between adolescents' identity and the adults' generativity (Rogers 2018).

Challenges Bedevilling Youth Identity

As a young person, what are the key causes of stress in your life (or in the lives of your mates) that may lead to the use of drugs, substance abuse, mental health issues and breakdown in their relationships with their parents. The youth aptly remarked that issues of misunderstanding and feeling lone trap them to substance abuse. This view was echoed by one youth who explained that; '*youth end up doing drugs because parents have no time for bonding, always telling us off and not explaining why it is wrong – whatever we would have done*'. Half of the youth explained that their parents are always shouting, not understanding even if people are gossiping about them. The youth commented that there are mental health issues associated with some youth in higher education for example University. One youth remarked that; '*there is a lot of academic pressure for young people and parents make it seem like the grades that they get define who their children are, when it [they] does [do] not*'. Some youth aired that there are no mentors and role models in the church. Further, there is lack of community to do life with; almost feels like one interacts only with parents throughout the week then church members only on a Sunday and the occasional relatives' visits. The youth blamed their parents for wanting them to do their career versus what they want to explore. Dysfunctional families and lack of guidance is triggering youth to abuse drugs. This is coupled by peer pressure the youth experience as they want to fit in the society.

Sources of Youth Identity

The youth were asked what they think shapes their identity. The findings were diverse but most of the youth alluded to the issue of upbringing, morals and behaviour. Those who quoted the Bible as a source of their identity said, '*identity comes from what God says I am*'. Also, others said, that identity comes from upbringing coupled with relationship with God, Christian faith, and Christian moral values. Those who thought identity comes from within themselves stressed that '*what motivates me and [the] attributes that make the person I am, would be things I would say shape my identity*'. Also, some youth felt that they are unique and because where they are in life today and their future depend on God. In the same line of thought one youth vividly commented that '*confidence and determination believing in myself*'.

On describing how the African Culture is connected to them, some of the youth responded that it is through speaking home languages, and eating

some traditional food during various celebrations. One of the youth explained that African culture promotes respect for elders, and she has been rooted in that since young age. Those who were not born in Zimbabwe explained that they enjoy the fact that they are now able to speak 'Shona' – the popular indigenous language of Zimbabwe and they enjoy listening to Shona music. Some youth appreciated some things embedded within the African culture but cautioned that they did not feel connected to the African culture as some of the traditions in these African cultures are overwhelming and constricting. Although this youth did not explain in what ways the African culture is overwhelming and restricting but a fitting answer came from another youth who explained that, '*African culture is a little bit hard in terms of grooming*'. One youth explained in detail that, '*having parents connected to it has kept me connected too and I can speak and understand the language. Having family still there has kept a conversation going between here and there. Travelling there almost feels like going home*'. This finding supports the transnational migration which argues that communities experiences 'shifting landscapes of belonging and identity' and these are caused by 'globalised and transnational challenges tied to home nation state' (Anthias 2006: 25).

When asked about specific challenges the youth face in sticking to their African culture while living in the UK, the youth said it is difficult to express themselves without their African elders not feeling offended. Dressing was a challenge because parents did not tolerate the wearing of revealing clothes. The fear of most youth was being looked upon as being different or people not being able to understand certain aspects of the given British culture. Also, the youth said sometimes it can be difficult to stick to their African culture when the media is portraying other things as the 'normal cultures'.

The youth were asked to describe the identity crisis among the African young people in the diaspora. One youth said that when African young people are embarrassed by their culture, they end up trying to fit in with the European culture. The youth are shaped by people around them. One youth argued that in my view; '*the challenge is adapting to parents' culture. Most of the time your parents do not understand you as well as the environment [in which] you are living. Identity crisis comes when trying to deal with challenges that calls for individual identity*'. The other challenge is that the youth are confused by not knowing whether to stick to their African roots or adapt or conform to what is around them. Similarly, another youth said, '*it is very difficult, young Africans are trying so hard to be accepted*'. Another important contribution

came from one youth who said, '*feeling like you are not good enough and wanting to fit in can sometimes sway you to do things that you would not normally do. Also, trying to be 'cool' and peer pressure from schools and universities affects us as young people*'.

Discussion of the Findings

The evidence from the findings showed that identity comes from family values. These findings are supported by Levitt (2009), who argued that children brought up in homes where parents emphasise the objects, practices and know-how of their home country are socialised into their values and norms and children should negotiate these institutions. Further, the findings showed that some youth feel connected to the African culture. In this way, identities are patterned by ongoing social relations with the Zimbabwean context. The youth face challenges in trying to keep their African culture while living in the UK. This resonates with finding by Coombe (1998) who argued that the cultures compete with one another. In this study, the youth that negotiate two different social contexts produce a hybrid of identity. Despite the benefit of African culture to cultivate identity, some youth noted some confusing cultural issues embedded within the culture. Further, the findings showed that some youth blame their parents for their traditional African mentality, which is not explained fully. This resonates with McGregor (2008) who argued that the first-generation Zimbabweans identify themselves in ethnic, national and pan-African terms. In this notion, the youth are faced with an identity crisis trying to make sense of African culture which they do not understand due to lack of participation.

The findings showed that the youth relationships their parents are affected by cultural differences and how they both deal with different situations. These sentiments suggest that relations between youth and parents have a direct impact on the youth sense of identity. This finding supports work done by Bhugra (2004), who noted that the youth feel isolated when parents do not provide sufficient support to their situation, thus destroying their self-esteem. This therefore confirms the identity theory which argues that secure attachment within relational contexts help to produce a positive sense of identity (Kerpelman & Pittman 2018). In the context of this study, the absence of parental support hinders the development of a sense of belonging within the UK culture. Africans believe that it is the community that raises the children. It is believed that many immigrant parents do not understand the UK context.

who argued that most African parents in the UK experience culture shock (Sande 2019b). Further, McGregor (2008a) noted that the presence, or absence, of children's parents in Britain affects the parents' approach to 'identity and belonging'.

A question that is fundamental to this article is why some parents who have stayed in the UK for a length of time are failing to adapt to and operate in the dominant UK culture. It is not a far-fetched idea to assume that the emotional attachment of some parents to Zimbabwe may make some of them dismiss the British element of their identities. Such a position suggests that the first-generation immigrants struggle to let go of their tribal identities. By extension, first-generation parents do struggle with identity crises. In this case, transnationalism makes first-generation parents experience from identities; attempting to keep ethnic identities whilst cultivating a sense of belonging in the new environment. For instance, most first-generation immigrants continue to refer to their country of origin as 'home', rather than the UK, and often speak of the desire to return 'home' in the future which militates against healthy identity formation within the youth.

The findings show that because of peer pressure, some youth get involved in substance abuse that can lead to mental health issues. As Wessendorf (2016 shows, youth in the diaspora often resort to drugs in order to fit in with the community and as a way of dealing with their pressures. On the other hand, there is evidence that the source of negative attitudes and challenges affecting the youth could be emanating from peers, school and the society (Hawkins *et al.* 1992). Similarly, migration processes — which include but not limited to receiving paperwork to settlement in the host nation, economic empowerment and social adaptations to local culture experienced by the parents cause the youth to suffer and subsequently abuse substances as they attempt to cope with the stress and storms of 'non-belonging' and exclusion. Zimbabwean Christians in the United Kingdom live in dual homes; the Zimbabwean and the United Kingdom, which can result in a confusing sense of identity to the youth.

This study shows that the youth believe that identity comes from God, self or societal values. This finding resonates with Marcia (1966) who argued that identity is a combination of beliefs, values and roles which propel people towards their future. Thus, parents mostly marshal a sense of identity through the notion of 'African values' which include but are not limited to respect for parents and the elderly. Negotiating the values from home and those in the UK

society causes the youth to display hybrid identities. The view that identity comes from God or who God says they are was of interest because it shows that the AFMIM UK helps the youth in defining themselves.

Most of the youth interviewed in this study showed that they are Zimbabweans with British citizenship. Immigrant children are encouraged to identify themselves as Zimbabweans. The Zimbabweans have an advantage of language and education system because Zimbabwe was once a British colony. It is possible that the impact of colonisation helps in terms of settlement, communication and education. However, this can be different when it comes to identity formation because of issues relating to segregation, discrimination and racism in the UK. The influence of colonisation is embedded in the struggle against racism and discrimination for the first generation parents. In the UK, racism affects Africans and Asians and the youth are among those attacked and targeted (Macpherson 1999). Therefore, the youth who go into the diaspora and choose to keep their own culture find a conflict with European culture. In this case, the host culture becomes a dominant culture influencing youth identity.

Towards a Youth Identity Theology
The findings and discussions in the preceding discussion pave the way to develop a youth identity theology to deal with this crisis in the UK. Effective youth identity theology should benefit from other disciplines such as psychology. Psychologists explain the importance of identity through life development stages, specifically how the youth think about themselves in the context of cultural demands and social norms. In the context of Pentecostalism, responding to the challenge of youth identity crisis ought to be framed on the premise of God's identity plan from the account of creation. 'Religion provides a distinct setting for identity through offering ideological, social, and spiritual context' (King 2003). Youth identity theology frames identity as 'sameness', 'renewal of mind' and 'sense of belonging'.

Identity as Sameness
Since some youth believe that identity comes from God, then identity it follows that is formed by Jesus. The identity plan is founded on the concept of image and likeness. Genesis 1:26 says, '*then God said, 'let us make man in our image,*

according to our likeness ...'. It is from this position that we propose that the youth ministry should interpret the crisis of the youth identity in the light of the image and likeness of God. This article uses the concept of image and likeness to refer to 'sameness'. To have the image and likeness of God suggests sameness with God. The foregoing discussion in this article showed that the identity of youth in the diaspora is mainly shaped by a strong desire to look the same as others or to fit in with others. It is a strong silent desire of wanting to be identified by what is perceived as the standard or the norm in a given environment.

Identity crises in the Bible can be traced to this aspect of sameness. When Nebuchadnezzar took the Hebrew boys into slavery, his initial approach was to change their identity and indoctrinate them. Among other things, this entailed change of language, literature, food and names. In the book of Daniel, the change of identity was designed to make the Hebrew boys assimilate with the local people. It was a move intended to make them 'Chaldeans'. Coming to the New Testament, the common denominator of the identity of Christians is this aspect of sameness, a call to be like Christ. The apostle Paul used the phrase 'in Christ' to authenticate his identity. Christians suffer identity crises as they forget their identity in Christ.

While there are many ways in which identity can be defined and described, youth identity theology defines identity as the fact of being who or what a person is and it depicts the quality of being the same. It is the sameness of one's soul to the spirit (Manyanga 2016). This definition holds the position that humans are three-part beings. Humans are spirit beings that possess a soul and live in a body. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 says: '*may the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*'. Given the above primary presupposition, the youth identity theology therefore demands that the church in the diaspora understands that the initial challenge of the youth is finding a culture which they can identify themselves. Guidance, therefore, is of paramount importance in directing the youth and aligning them to the right source of their primary identity. The aspect of sameness ought to be applied both within the social and the spiritual context.

Identity as Mind Renewal
In fighting the identity crisis of youth in the diaspora, the youth identity theo-

logy suggests that the next stage be the renewal of the mind. Proverbs 23:7a: '*for as he thinketh in his heart, so is he ...*'. Also, Romans 12:2, '*and be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God*'. In winning and rightly influencing the minds and hearts of youth in the diaspora, it is vital to embrace the fact that influence is more powerful than control. This is a call to facilitate mind renewal through meaningful interactions with young people. The principle underlying the renewal of the mind can be applied both within the spiritual and social contexts. One youth interviewed noted that there is a lack of role models and mentors. The findings above highlight that the youth struggle with a parenting approach that tends to be controlling. Some youth indicated an excessive traditional mentality which does not take cognisance of the change of environment. A radical shift in restoring a sense of family and community where meaningful interactions take place will be of paramount importance. According to Deuteronomy 6:6–9:

> And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

The minds of youth in the diaspora are slowly losing the guiding voice of the family. Youth are being raised by technology and friends are increasingly becoming more influential than parents. Openly engaging the minds of young people has the greatest potential to touch and win their hearts. When minds and hearts are won, restoration of identity can be achieved.

Identity as Belonging

The youth identity is practically shaped by the youth's craving for a sense of belonging. The youth identity theology therefore demands that the church in the diaspora fosters home, social and spiritual environments that promote a sense of belonging. This is a call to a proactive approach of building environments where youth feel they are participants and contributors rather than spectators or recipients, which is essential in the youth identity theology. Youth in the diaspora will go to great lengths to feel accepted by their friends even if it means compromising their family and faith values. To 'belong',

requires that the church must become a place for creativity. Religious creativity in appealing rituals and models of worship draws many young people to the church. The impact of the youth ministry is measured by knowing what these young adults really need. As such, putting youth in close age groups helps to mitigate the challenges they are facing. Pentecostals strive to have music and religious artefacts as part of teaching religious worship (Cox 1996). Approaching the Christian fellowship with an aura that causes freedom, joy and context which facilitates socialisation, makes room for youth to develop a sense of belongingness. The youth are naturally attracted by big crowds, with opportunities to mix and mingle. The church should be intentionally focused on utilising this energy of the youth in a way that enhances their identity moulded by church perspectives, through social activities that enhance team building.

Conclusion

The settling of the youth in the diaspora calls for negotiating socio-cultural dynamics. Findings of this article showed factors causing youth identity crisis includes cultural differences, parental relationships, peer pressure and sources of identity. This article argues that the migration process makes the youth vulnerable to identity crisis. In this case, the impact of migration processes causes the youth (second generation) to have hybrid identities while parents (first generation) have dual identities. Psychologists frame the issue of identity by focusing on life development stages which help the youth to understand cultural demands and social norms. The article showed that there is a clash of cultures, between the parents African Zimbabwean culture with the new culture that the youth has assimilated in the UK. Therefore, the lives of the youth are shaped by the social, cultural and economic issues of their context. The Zimbabwean Christian youth in the UK should use the youth identity theology to address the youth identity crisis in diaspora. The youth identity in diaspora frame identity as 'sameness', 'identity as renewal of mind' and 'identity as belonging'. 'Identity as sameness' show that the source of identity comes from the image of God. 'Identity as renewal of mind' encourages the youth to have mind renewal through meaningful interactions. 'Identity as belonging' suggests that the identity of youth is enhanced when the church foster the home, social and spiritual environments to promote a sense of belonging.

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Nomatter Sande
Research Fellow
Research Institute for Theology and Religion (RITR)
College of Human Sciences
University of South Africa (UNISA)
Pretoria
pastornomsande@yahoo.com

Daniel Manyanga
Pastor and Theologian
Apostolic Faith Mission International Ministries, UK (AFMIM UK)
Milton Keynes
daniel.manyanga@afmim.org.uk