

Evangelism Approaches and Church Member Retention a Case of Kabwohea Archeadeconary, Diocese of West Ankole. Uganda.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of evangelism approaches on church member retention in Kabwohe Parish, Diocese of West Ankole. Specifically, it examined the roles of evangelistic outreach programs, Bible study and discipleship, and youth evangelism activities in enhancing spiritual commitment, active participation, and sustained church membership. A cross-sectional research design was employed, with data collected through self-administered questionnaires from 234 Christian congregants and in-depth interviews with church leaders. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, employing descriptive statistics and correlation analysis, while thematic analysis was used for qualitative data. The findings revealed that all three evangelism approaches significantly contributed to member retention, with Bible study and discipleship having the strongest influence on spiritual growth and sustained membership. Youth evangelism was found to be vital for engaging and retaining young church members. The study recommends strengthening evangelistic outreach, enhancing discipleship programs, and expanding youth ministry activities to improve overall retention.

Keywords: Evangelistic outreach, Bible study, discipleship, and youth evangelism.

INTRODUCTION

Evangelism in the Anglican Church should result not only in conversions but also in sustained spiritual growth, active participation, and long-term retention of church members. Effective evangelism approaches such as structured outreach programs, discipleship, and youth engagement are critical for deepening spiritual commitment and integrating converts into the church community (McGavran, 2020; Stetzer & Putman, 2016). In a healthy church context, new believers are systematically nurtured through follow-up, Bible study groups, and fellowship, fostering steady or increasing membership (Smith, 2017).

Theoretical review

This study was guided by the Church Growth Theory, originally developed by Donald A. McGavran in 1955. McGavran, often regarded as the father of modern church growth studies, posited that the expansion and sustainability of a church were largely dependent on intentional, strategic, and culturally sensitive evangelism efforts. He argued that churches experienced growth not merely by attracting converts but through nurturing and retaining these new members via discipleship, follow-up, and integration into a supportive community (McGavran, 1970). This approach required a deep understanding of social and cultural dynamics, data-driven evangelistic strategies, and effective training of lay leaders to foster environments conducive to spiritual growth.

In the context of this study, McGavran's Church Growth Theory was highly applicable for several reasons. First, its focus on culturally relevant and structured evangelistic outreach was directly linked to exploring how evangelism approaches influenced church member retention in Kabwohe Parish. Second, the theory supported the importance of discipleship and Bible study in sustaining spiritual commitment, which aligned with the study's second objective. Third, the theory's advocacy for age-specific evangelism strategies validated the examination of youth evangelism activities and their role in enhancing young Christians' spiritual growth. Lastly, McGavran's emphasis on post-conversion follow-up and integration mechanisms spoke directly to challenges identified in Kabwohe Parish, where declining retention was attributed to weak support systems for new converts. Church Growth Theory, as developed and popularized by McGavran and further advanced by

scholars like Wagner and Hunter, provided a robust, comprehensive framework. It helped explain how strategic, context-sensitive evangelism efforts could significantly enhance church member retention and foster deeper spiritual commitment, making it particularly relevant for understanding and addressing the issues faced by the Anglican Church in the Diocese of West Ankole.

METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional research design was employed. This design was appropriate for studying the relationship between evangelism practices and turnover at a single point in time, allowing for the examination of existing patterns and behaviors among Christians in the Anglican Church without requiring longitudinal follow-up.

Sample size and Sampling Techniques

From a population of 608, a sample size of 242 respondents participated in the study, comprising Christian congregants, bishops, archdeacons, and church leaders. This sample size was determined based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling table guide, ensuring it was statistically sufficient for drawing reliable conclusions from the population of interest. Selecting this sample size balanced the need for robust data with practical considerations of time and resources.

Table 1: Study population, sample size and sampling techniques

Category	Population	Sample size	Sampling technique
Bishops	01	01	Purposive sampling
Archdeacon	01	01	Purposive sampling
church leaders	06	06	Purposive sampling
Christian congregants	600	234	Snowball sampling
Total	608	242	

Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling. In this study, purposive sampling was used to select church leaders within Kabwohe Parish, including the Parish Priest, lay readers, evangelism coordinators, youth leaders, and Mothers' Union leaders. These individuals were selected based on their roles in designing and implementing evangelism strategies and overseeing membership retention programs.

Snowball sampling involved starting with a few known individuals who met the inclusion criteria and then asking them to refer others within their network (Noy, 2008). This method was especially valuable in church settings where congregants were not formally registered or easily identifiable through documentation.

Data analysis

Quantitative data collected through questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS software to calculate frequencies and percentages, summarizing Christian participants' responses. The use of SPSS was justified as it allowed for efficient, accurate, and systematic processing of large datasets, enabling the researcher to identify patterns and trends in attitudes and behaviors related to evangelism and church turnover (Pallant, 2020). Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages generated by SPSS provided a clear overview of general trends within the congregation, facilitating straightforward interpretation and presentation of results (Bryman, 2016).

Qualitative data obtained from interviews with church leaders were analyzed using thematic analysis. This method involved systematically identifying, coding, and quoting significant statements to capture leaders' perspectives and experiences regarding evangelism and turnover.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Background Information of Respondents

Demographic characteristics of the respondents included gender, age group, marital status, education level, and role in the church. Understanding these variables provides context for interpreting the main study findings.

Table 2: Background Information of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	123	52.6%
	Female	111	47.4%
	Total	234	100%
Age Group	Below 18	21	9.0%
	18–30	66	28.2%
	31–45	72	30.8%
	46–60	49	20.9%
	Above 60	26	11.1%
	Total	234	100%
Marital Status	Single	79	33.8%
	Married	128	54.7%
	Widowed	15	6.4%
	Divorced	12	5.1%
	Total	234	100%
Education Level	No formal education	18	7.7%
	Primary	59	25.2%
	Secondary	89	38.0%
	Tertiary	68	29.1%
	Total	234	100%
Church Role	Ordinary Member	119	50.9%
	Lay Reader	46	19.7%
	Youth Leader	23	9.8%
	Choir Member	28	12.0%
	Other	18	7.7%
	Total	234	100%

Table 2 presents the background information of the respondents who participated in the study.

In terms of gender, out of the 234 respondents, 123 (52.6%) were male, while 111 (47.4%) were female. This shows a fairly balanced gender representation, with males slightly outnumbering females.

Regarding age distribution, 21 (9.0%) were below 18 years, 66 (28.2%) were between 18 and 30 years, 72 (30.8%) fell within the 31 to 45 age group, 49 (20.9%) were between 46 and 60 years, and 26 (11.1%) were above 60 years. The majority of respondents were adults in the prime working and active age bracket of 18 to 45 years.

Marital status data indicates that 128 (54.7%) were married, making up the largest group. Singles accounted for 79 (33.8%), widowed were 15 (6.4%), and divorced made up 12 (5.1%). This suggests that most participants had stable family situations, which could influence their level of involvement in church activities.

In terms of educational attainment, 18 (7.7%) had no formal education, 59 (25.2%) had completed primary education, 89 (38.0%) had secondary education, and 68 (29.1%) had attained tertiary education. This indicates that a majority of the respondents had attained at least secondary education, which could enhance their understanding and engagement with church programs. With respect to their roles in the church, 119 (50.9%) identified as ordinary members, 46 (19.7%) as lay readers, 23 (9.8%) as youth leaders, 28 (12.0%) as choir members, and 18 (7.7%) served in other capacities. This diversity reflects participation from various groups within the church community, enriching the data on evangelism and member retention.

Evangelistic Outreach Programs and Church Member Retention

This presentation analysis of the relationship between evangelistic outreach programs and church member retention.

Evangelistic Outreach Programs and Church Member Retention

Statement	1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	Std. Dev
The church organizes regular evangelistic outreach programs.	5 (2.1%)	9 (3.7%)	18 (7.4%)	104 (43.0%)	106 (43.8%)	4.22	0.88
Outreach programs have attracted new converts to the church.	6 (2.5%)	10 (4.1%)	20 (8.3%)	108 (44.6%)	98 (40.5%)	4.17	0.87
I was brought to church through an outreach program.	11 (4.5%)	15 (6.2%)	27 (11.2%)	103 (42.6%)	86 (35.5%)	3.98	1.01
Outreach activities increase members' spiritual commitment.	3 (1.2%)	5 (2.1%)	16 (6.6%)	111 (45.9%)	107 (44.2%)	4.29	0.78
Outreach programs help in retaining church members.	4 (1.7%)	8 (3.3%)	21 (8.7%)	109 (45.0%)	100 (41.3%)	4.22	0.83

Table 3 presents the respondents' perceptions regarding evangelistic outreach programs and their influence on church member retention, measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

For the statement "The church organizes regular evangelistic outreach programs," a combined total of 210 (86.8%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed, with 104 (43.0%) agreeing and 106 (43.8%) strongly agreeing. A smaller number, 18 (7.4%), were neutral, while 14 (5.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.22 and standard deviation of 0.88 indicate strong agreement with moderate variability in responses.

Regarding "Outreach programs have attracted new converts to the church," 206 (85.1%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed (108 (44.6%) and 98 (40.5%), respectively). Neutral responses were provided by 20 (8.3%), and 16 (6.6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean of 4.17 and standard deviation of 0.87 support the perception that outreach programs are effective in attracting new members.

For the statement "I was brought to church through an outreach program," 189 (78.1%) agreed or strongly agreed (103 (42.6%) and 86 (35.5%) respectively). However, 27 (11.2%) were neutral and 26 (10.7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, reflecting slightly more variability. The mean score of 3.98 and a higher standard deviation of 1.01 suggest that while outreach programs are significant, personal experiences vary.

The statement "Outreach activities increase members' spiritual commitment" garnered strong positive responses, with 218 (90.1%) agreeing or strongly agreeing (111 (45.9%) and 107 (44.2%), respectively). Neutral responses were 16 (6.6%), and disagreement was minimal at 8 (3.3%). The mean of 4.29 and the lowest standard deviation of 0.78 in this section indicate strong and consistent agreement.

Finally, for "Outreach programs help in retaining church members," 209 (86.3%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed (109 (45.0%) and 100 (41.3%) respectively). Neutral responses were 21 (8.7%), and only 12 (5.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean of 4.22 and standard deviation of 0.83 reinforce the belief that outreach programs play a key role in retaining church members. The data reveal that evangelistic outreach programs are widely perceived as effective tools for attracting, spiritually engaging, and retaining church members.

During interviews, Respondents reported that their parishes conduct several evangelistic outreach programs such as door-to-door evangelism, open-air crusades, radio ministry, and community service evangelism. These are conducted on a monthly or quarterly basis depending on the resources and calendar of the church.

"We conduct door-to-door evangelism every last Saturday of the month and occasionally hold open-air crusades during special church events," said an Archdeacon.

Most respondents agreed that evangelistic outreach programs are effective in attracting new members and keeping them engaged.

“Our outreach programs have brought many souls to Christ. We’ve seen many converts who later join discipleship classes,” a Church Leader noted.

Key challenges included limited funding, low volunteer turnout, lack of transport, and poor follow-up mechanisms.

“Our main limitation is the lack of transport to reach remote areas. Also, some people are reluctant to participate,” shared a Bishop.

Respondents suggested providing training to evangelism teams, increasing funding, using modern technology, and strengthening follow-up systems.

“To be effective, we need trained teams and resources. We also need to involve the youth and use platforms like radio and social media,” suggested a Church Leader.

Bible Study, Discipleship and Spiritual Growth

This section explores the correlation between Bible study and discipleship programs and the spiritual growth and retention of church members.

Table 4. Bible Study and Discipleship

Statement	1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	Std. Dev
I regularly attend Bible study and discipleship sessions.	9 (3.7%)	14 (5.8%)	25 (10.3%)	110 (45.5%)	84 (34.7%)	4.02	0.95
Bible study sessions are well-organized and engaging.	10 (4.1%)	12 (5.0%)	28 (11.6%)	114 (47.1%)	78 (32.2%)	3.98	0.93
I have grown spiritually through discipleship classes.	3 (1.2%)	5 (2.1%)	17 (7.0%)	115 (47.5%)	102 (42.1%)	4.27	0.74
Bible study deepens my commitment to remain in church.	2 (0.8%)	6 (2.5%)	19 (7.9%)	117 (48.3%)	98 (40.5%)	4.25	0.74
Discipleship programs are key to retaining new converts.	4 (1.7%)	7 (2.9%)	18 (7.4%)	112 (46.3%)	101 (41.7%)	4.24	0.79

Table 4 presents respondents’ perceptions of Bible study and discipleship programs and their impact on spiritual growth and church member retention, based on a 5-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

For the statement “I regularly attend Bible study and discipleship sessions,” a combined total of 194 (80.2%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed, with 110 (45.5%) agreeing and 84 (34.7%) strongly agreeing. Meanwhile, 25 (10.3%) were neutral, and a smaller portion of 23 (9.5%) disagreed or strongly disagreed (9.5% combined). This yields a mean score of 4.02 and a standard deviation of 0.95, indicating generally high participation with some variation.

Regarding “Bible study sessions are well-organized and engaging,” a total of 192 (79.3%) agreed or strongly agreed (114 (47.1%) and 78 (32.2%), respectively). Neutral responses accounted for 28 (11.6%), while disagreement was noted by 22 (9.1%) respondents. The mean score of 3.98 and standard deviation of 0.93 reflect a positive perception of session quality.

The statement “I have grown spiritually through discipleship classes” received 217 (89.6%) positive responses, with 115 (47.5%) agreeing and 102 (42.1%) strongly agreeing. Neutral responses were 17 (7.0%), and only 8 (3.3%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. This is reflected in a higher mean of 4.27 and a lower standard deviation of 0.74, showing strong consensus on spiritual growth.

For “Bible study deepens my commitment to remain in church,” 215 (88.8%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed (117 (48.3%) and 98 (40.5%), respectively). Neutral responses were 19 (7.9%), and 8 (3.3%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean was 4.25 with a standard deviation of 0.74, indicating strong agreement.

Finally, “Discipleship programs are key to retaining new converts” had 213 (88.0%) positive responses with 112 (46.3%) agreeing and 101 (41.7%) strongly agreeing. Neutral responses were 18 (7.4%), and 11 (4.6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean of 4.24 and standard deviation of 0.79 emphasize the perceived importance of discipleship. These findings reveal that most respondents recognize Bible study and discipleship as vital for their spiritual growth and sustained membership in the church.

During interviews, Respondents indicated that their churches hold regular Bible study sessions, usually weekly, and structured discipleship programs targeting new converts.

“We have weekly Bible study every Wednesday and monthly discipleship seminars for new believers,” an Archdeacon shared.

Bible study and discipleship were seen as foundational for spiritual development and understanding of scripture.

“These sessions have helped believers grow in their faith and develop a personal relationship with God,” said a Bishop.

Respondents acknowledged that these programs strengthen members’ connection to the church and reduce dropout rates.

“When members are grounded in the Word through discipleship, they rarely leave the church,” noted a Church Leader.

Challenges included inconsistent attendance, limited teaching materials, and lack of trained facilitators. “We struggle with commitment; people attend irregularly, and we lack enough facilitators,” stated an Archdeacon.

Respondents recommended mentorship, use of small groups, contextualized teachings, and involvement of more facilitators.

“We should establish mentorship groups and train more leaders to support discipleship,” advised a Bishop.

Youth Evangelism and Participation of Young Christians

This section examines the relationship between youth evangelism activities and the participation of young Christians in church life.

Youth Evangelism Activities and Participation

Statement	1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	Std. Dev
The church organizes regular youth evangelism activities.	7 (2.9%)	10 (4.1%)	23 (9.5%)	108 (44.6%)	94 (38.8%)	4.13	0.89
Youth evangelism programs are attractive to young Christians.	5 (2.1%)	9 (3.7%)	22 (9.1%)	109 (45.0%)	97 (40.1%)	4.17	0.84
Youth feel more committed to church because of targeted activities.	6 (2.5%)	11 (4.5%)	25 (10.3%)	107 (44.2%)	93 (38.4%)	4.11	0.89
Youth evangelism has increased youth participation in church.	4 (1.7%)	6 (2.5%)	17 (7.0%)	115 (47.5%)	100 (41.3%)	4.25	0.78
More young people are retained in church due to youth programs.	5 (2.1%)	8 (3.3%)	20 (8.3%)	112 (46.3%)	97 (40.1%)	4.19	0.84

Table 5 presents respondents’ perceptions regarding youth evangelism activities and their influence on the participation and retention of young Christians in the church. Responses were collected using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

For the statement “The church organizes regular youth evangelism activities,” a total of 202 (83.4%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed, with 108 (44.6%) agreeing and 94 (38.8%) strongly agreeing. Neutral responses accounted for 23 (9.5%), while disagreement was expressed by 17 (7.0%) respondents. The mean score of 4.13 and standard deviation of 0.89 indicate a generally positive perception of the frequency and organization of youth evangelism.

Regarding “Youth evangelism programs are attractive to young Christians,” 206 (85.1%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed, with 109 (45.0%) agreeing and 97 (40.1%) strongly agreeing. Neutral responses were given by 22 (9.1%), and 14 (5.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean of 4.17 and standard deviation of 0.84 reflect that youth find the programs appealing.

For the statement “Youth feel more committed to church because of targeted activities,” 200 (82.6%) agreed or strongly agreed (107 (44.2%) and 93 (38.4%) respectively), while 25 (10.3%) were neutral and 17 (7.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.11 and standard deviation of 0.89 highlight that targeted youth activities are linked to increased commitment.

The statement “Youth evangelism has increased youth participation in church” received a strong positive response, with 215 (88.8%) agreeing or strongly agreeing (115 (47.5%) and 100 (41.3%) respectively). Neutral responses were 17 (7.0%), and disagreement was minimal at 10 (4.2%). This is reflected in the highest mean of 4.25 and a low standard deviation of 0.78, showing a consistent perception that youth evangelism boosts participation.

Finally, “More young people are retained in church due to youth programs” had 209 (86.4%) positive responses, with 112 (46.3%) agreeing and 97 (40.1%) strongly agreeing. Neutral responses accounted for 20 (8.3%), and 13 (5.4%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean of 4.19 and standard deviation of 0.84 reinforce the positive impact of youth programs on retention.

the findings suggest that youth evangelism activities are well-organized, appealing, and effective in enhancing young Christians’ participation and retention in church activities.

During interviews, Churches implement youth-focused programs like youth fellowships, gospel music concerts, Bible quizzes, sports evangelism, and youth-led crusades.

“Our youth ministry runs fellowships every Friday and organizes gospel concerts to attract their peers,” said a Church Leader.

These activities were credited for boosting spiritual enthusiasm and church involvement among youth. “Such programs make church exciting and relevant for young people, and they grow spiritually,” mentioned an Archdeacon.

Respondents affirmed that youth are increasingly active in ministry, though some still hesitate due to fear or lack of mentorship.

“Youth are involved, but some shy away because they feel not well-equipped,” noted a Bishop.

Barriers included lack of guidance, peer pressure, academic commitments, and minimal church investment in youth programs.

“The youth need mentors and support to stay focused and involved,” emphasized a Church Leader.

Suggestions included forming youth leadership teams, offering training, creating attractive programs, and giving youth roles in church governance.

“We need to involve youth in leadership and support their ideas for evangelism,” shared an Archdeacon.

Church Member Retention

This section presents the concept of church member retention as a key outcome of effective evangelism approaches.

Church Member Retention

Statement	1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	Std. Dev
I have remained in this church for a long time because of evangelism.	5 (2.1%)	6 (2.5%)	18 (7.4%)	106 (43.8%)	107 (44.2%)	4.26	0.84
I actively participate in church programs and activities.	3 (1.2%)	7 (2.9%)	19 (7.9%)	112 (46.3%)	101 (41.7%)	4.25	0.76
My spiritual life has grown since joining the church.	2 (0.8%)	4 (1.7%)	17 (7.0%)	108 (44.6%)	111 (45.9%)	4.34	0.71
Church programs have deepened my faith and sense of belonging.	1 (0.4%)	5 (2.1%)	16 (6.6%)	113 (46.7%)	107 (44.2%)	4.32	0.70
I feel spiritually committed and connected to the church.	2 (0.8%)	4 (1.7%)	14 (5.8%)	116 (47.9%)	106 (43.8%)	4.32	0.69

Table 6 presents respondents' views on church member retention, focusing on their long-term commitment, active participation, spiritual growth, and connection to the church, measured on a 5-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

For the statement "I have remained in this church for a long time because of evangelism," a combined total of 212 (88.0%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed, with 106 (43.8%) agreeing and 107 (44.2%) strongly agreeing. Neutral responses were given by 18 (7.4%), while only 11 (4.6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. This is reflected in a mean score of 4.26 and a standard deviation of 0.84, indicating strong retention attributed to evangelism efforts.

Regarding "I actively participate in church programs and activities," 213 (88.0%) agreed or strongly agreed (112 (46.3%) and 101 (41.7%) respectively). Neutral responses accounted for 19 (7.9%), with 10 (4.1%) expressing disagreement. The mean of 4.25 and standard deviation of 0.76 suggest active involvement among members.

The statement "My spiritual life has grown since joining the church" attracted the highest positive responses, with 219 (90.5%) agreeing or strongly agreeing (108 (44.6%) and 111 (45.9%), respectively). Neutral responses were 17 (7.0%), and only 6 (2.5%) disagreed. The mean score of 4.34 and the lowest standard deviation of 0.71 show consistent and strong spiritual growth among members.

For "Church programs have deepened my faith and sense of belonging," a total of 220 (90.9%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed (113 (46.7%) and 107 (44.2%) respectively). Neutral responses were 16 (6.6%), and disagreement was minimal at 6 (2.5%). The mean of 4.32 and standard deviation of 0.70 emphasize the effectiveness of church programs in fostering faith and belonging.

Lastly, the statement "I feel spiritually committed and connected to the church" had 222 (91.7%) positive responses, with 116 (47.9%) agreeing and 106 (43.8%) strongly agreeing. Neutral responses accounted for 14 (5.8%), and only 6 (2.5%) disagreed. The mean of 4.32 and standard deviation of 0.69 reinforce the strong spiritual commitment among church members. The data indicate that members feel deeply connected, spiritually empowered, and actively engaged in church activities, with evangelism playing a significant role in their long-term retention.

During interviews, Respondents cited spiritual nourishment, fellowship, follow-up, leadership, and inclusive programs as key to retention.

"Members stay when they feel spiritually fed, loved, and involved," explained a Bishop.

Several parishes use call-back teams, home visits, and integration classes for new members. "After every new member joins, we assign someone to follow them up and help them settle," shared a Church Leader.

Respondents emphasized that consistent evangelism builds lasting spiritual connections and keeps members involved.

“Evangelism is not a one-time event; ongoing engagement keeps people committed,” said an Archdeacon.

Churches have welcome teams, orientation classes, and small groups to support new converts. “We assign every new member to a small group for fellowship and growth,” noted a Church Leader.

Proposals included improving hospitality, offering personalized pastoral care, expanding small groups, and equipping lay leaders.

“Let’s strengthen our follow-up, show genuine love, and ensure every member is spiritually nurtured,” advised a Bishop.

Correlation between Evangelism Approaches and Church Member Retention Dimensions

This section presents the correlation analysis conducted to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between evangelism approaches and various dimensions of church member retention.

Table 7: Correlation between Evangelism Approaches and Church Member Retention Dimensions

Variable	Sustained Church Membership	Active Participation in Church Activities	Spiritual Commitment and Growth
Evangelistic Outreach Programs			
• Pearson Correlation	.615 **	.596 **	.582 **
• Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
• N	234	234	234
Bible Study and Discipleship			
• Pearson Correlation	.702 **	.688 **	.715 **
• Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
• N	234	234	234
Youth Evangelism Activities			
• Pearson Correlation	.639 **	.623 **	.647 **
• Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
• N	234	234	234

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients measuring the strength and direction of relationships between different evangelism approaches and key dimensions of church member retention, including sustained church membership, active participation in church activities, and spiritual commitment and growth. The sample size for all correlations is 234 respondents.

Evangelistic Outreach Programs show a positive and statistically significant correlation with all three retention dimensions. The correlation with sustained church membership is strong at $r = 0.615$ ($p < 0.001$), indicating that more active outreach programs are associated with higher retention of members. Similarly, outreach programs correlate with active participation ($r = 0.596$, $p < 0.001$) and spiritual commitment and growth ($r = 0.582$, $p < 0.001$), demonstrating a consistent positive influence across these areas.

Bible Study and Discipleship exhibit the strongest correlations with church retention dimensions among the three evangelism approaches. The relationship with sustained church membership is very strong ($r = 0.702$, $p < 0.001$), while active participation also shows a strong association ($r = 0.688$, $p < 0.001$). The highest correlation is observed between Bible study and spiritual commitment and growth ($r = 0.715$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that engagement in Bible study and discipleship significantly promotes spiritual development and long-term church membership.

Youth Evangelism Activities also show strong positive correlations with all dimensions of retention. The correlation with sustained church membership is $r = 0.639$ ($p < 0.001$), with active participation at $r = 0.623$ ($p < 0.001$), and spiritual commitment and growth at $r = 0.647$ ($p < 0.001$). This indicates that youth-focused evangelism initiatives are effective in maintaining youth involvement and spiritual growth within the church.

All correlations are statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), confirming that these evangelism approaches are strongly and positively related to church member retention outcomes.

Regression Analysis

The regression analysis conducted to determine the extent to which various evangelism approaches predict church member retention in terms of sustained membership, active participation, and spiritual commitment.

Table 8: Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Evangelism Approaches on Church Member Retention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig. (p-value)
Constant	1.112	—	3.765	.000
Evangelistic Outreach Programs	0.328	0.374	5.498	.000 **
Bible Study and Discipleship	0.402	0.423	6.103	.000 **
Youth Evangelism Activities	0.291	0.351	4.872	.000 **

Table 8 presents the results of a multiple linear regression analysis that examines how evangelism approaches—namely Evangelistic Outreach Programs, Bible Study and Discipleship, and Youth Evangelism Activities—affect church member retention.

The regression model's constant (intercept) is 1.112, indicating the expected baseline level of church member retention when all independent variables are zero. This constant is statistically significant ($t = 3.765$, $p < 0.001$), confirming the model's validity.

Each of the three evangelism approaches significantly predicts church member retention. Evangelistic Outreach Programs have a positive standardized beta coefficient of 0.374, with a statistically significant effect ($t = 5.498$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that an increase in the frequency or quality of outreach programs is associated with a corresponding increase in member retention.

Bible Study and Discipleship emerge as the strongest predictor among the variables, with a standardized beta of 0.423 and a highly significant t-value ($t = 6.103$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that involvement in Bible study and discipleship programs has the greatest positive influence on sustaining church membership.

Youth Evangelism Activities also contribute significantly to member retention, with a standardized beta of 0.351 and a significant t-value ($t = 4.872$, $p < 0.001$). This underscores the important role of youth-focused evangelism in fostering active participation and long-term commitment among young church members. The findings confirm that all three evangelism approaches positively and significantly influence church member retention in the Diocese of West Ankole, with Bible study and discipleship having the most substantial impact.

Table 9: Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.812	.659	.654	0.537

Table 9 provides the overall summary statistics for the regression model that examines the influence of evangelism approaches on church member retention.

The multiple correlation coefficient (R) is 0.812, indicating a strong positive correlation between the combined evangelism approaches (Evangelistic Outreach Programs, Bible Study and Discipleship, Youth Evangelism Activities) and church member retention.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.659, meaning that approximately 65.9% of the variation in church member retention can be explained by the combined effect of these three evangelism approaches. This shows that the model has a good explanatory power.

The Adjusted R^2 is slightly lower at 0.654, which adjusts for the number of predictors in the model and still indicates a robust model fit.

The standard error of the estimate is 0.537, reflecting the average distance that the observed retention values fall from the regression line. A lower value suggests good precision in the model's predictions. The model summary confirms that evangelism approaches collectively have a strong and significant influence on church member retention, explaining a substantial portion of its variability in the Diocese of West Ankole.

Table 10: ANOVA Summary

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	126.213	3	42.071	146.095	.000 **
Residual	65.387	238	0.275		
Total	191.600	241			

Table 10 presents the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results used to test the overall significance of the regression model examining the influence of evangelism approaches on church member retention.

The regression sum of squares is 126.213 with 3 degrees of freedom, reflecting the variation explained by the independent variables (Evangelistic Outreach Programs, Bible Study and Discipleship, Youth Evangelism Activities). The residual sum of squares, which measures unexplained variation, is 65.387 with 238 degrees of freedom. The total sum of squares is 191.600 with 241 degrees of freedom.

The mean square for regression is 42.071, calculated by dividing the regression sum of squares by its degrees of freedom. The mean square for residuals is 0.275, which is the residual sum of squares divided by its degrees of freedom.

The F-statistic is 146.095 with a significance value (p-value) of .000 (less than 0.01), indicating that the overall regression model is statistically significant. This means that the combined evangelism approaches reliably predict church member retention. The ANOVA results confirm that the regression model fits the data well and that the independent variables significantly explain variations in church member retention within the Diocese of West Ankole.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that evangelism approaches play a vital role in church member retention within the Diocese of West Ankole. Based on the findings, the study concludes that evangelistic outreach programs significantly contribute to attracting new converts and enhancing their spiritual commitment, thereby supporting sustained church membership. Bible study and discipleship have the most substantial influence on spiritual growth and the retention of church members, affirming the critical role of continuous spiritual formation. Youth evangelism activities are essential in fostering the participation and retention of young Christians, which is vital for the church's long-term sustainability. Overall, a comprehensive evangelism approach that combines outreach, discipleship, and youth programs is necessary to effectively retain church members and promote their active participation in church life.

RECOMMENDATION

The study recommended that church leadership should enhance the planning and frequency of evangelistic outreach programs to continuously attract and engage new members. It emphasized the importance of investing in training church workers and volunteers to equip them with the skills necessary for effective outreach, ensuring these programs are impactful and sustainable.

The study recommended strengthening Bible study and discipleship programs by making them more inclusive, interactive, and relevant to the spiritual needs of church members. It also suggested developing mentorship initiatives that specifically nurture new converts, helping them to grow in faith and remain committed to the church.

The study recommended expanding and diversifying youth evangelism activities by incorporating relevant and creative approaches that resonate with young people. Additionally, it encouraged promoting youth leadership and actively involving young Christians in church decision-making processes to increase their sense of ownership and participation.

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