

EFFECT OF CHURCH CLOSURE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON
CHILDREN'S SPIRITUAL NURTURE IN SELECTED EVANGELICAL
CHURCHES IN GICHAGI, KAJIADO NORTH SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

by

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APPROVAL

EFFECT OF CHURCH CLOSURE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON CHILDREN’S SPIRITUAL NURTURE IN SELECTED EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN GICHAGI, KAJIADO NORTH SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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In accordance with Daystar university policies, this thesis is accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

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DECLARATION

EFFECT OF CHURCH CLOSURE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON CHILDREN'S
SPIRITUAL NURTURE IN SELECTED EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN GICHAGI,
KAJIADO NORTH SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
PEFA	Pentecostal Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa
WHO	World Health Organisation

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the effect of closure of churches during the COVID-19 pandemic on the spiritual nurture of children in selected evangelical churches of Gichagi, Kajiado North Sub-county. The study objectives were to: find out children's perceptions on the closure of churches during the COVID-19 pandemic, assess the nature of spiritual nurture experiences of children during the COVID-19 pandemic, establish sources of spiritual nurture accessed by children during the COVID-19 pandemic, and analyze ways the closure of churches during COVID-19 affected children's spiritual nurture. The study adopted Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological and Westerhoff's faith development theories. The study employed a transcendental phenomenological research design purposively selecting 33 participants to data saturation. Interviews conducted included 18 children recruited through snowballing and three pastors. Six Sunday school teachers and six parents had focused group discussions (FGDs). Findings revealed both negative and positive perceptions towards closure of churches. Spiritual nurture of children experiences during the pandemic included reading the Bible, praying, and listening to televangelists. Mothers were the main source of spiritual nurture of children, in addition to Bibles, televangelists, and pastoral visits. The closure of churches resulted in reduced spiritual nurture activities, reduced spirituality, increased zeal for church activities, reduced number of church attendees, missing the faith community, and increased use of technology for spiritual nurture. The study recommends the church have crisis preparedness plans to ensure the continued spiritual nurture of children during emergencies; the government should implement policies that ensure the continued spiritual nurture of children during emergencies and pandemics.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my dear family and all the Sunday school going children of Kenya.

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