

Toward Meeting the Needs of Upper Class Youth in Private Universities in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study attempted to ascertain the needs of the upper class youth in private universities in Nigeria, using undergraduate students at Babcock University as samples. A self-structured questionnaire, consisting of simple and direct questions, was administered to 400 randomly selected students. The students were asked to rank some general youth needs, identified through review of literature, according to their preferences. The responses were analyzed, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Utilizing the simple percentile and weighted mean score, the needs of the upper class youth in private universities in Nigeria were ascertained, in descending order of importance, as follows: devotion to and closer relationship with God, self discovery, empowerment, affection, attention, involvement, deliverance from evil forces and role models/mentors. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the management of private universities in Nigeria should go beyond the routine academic and social activities and emphasize intentional acquisition of basic life skills as well as character and spiritual development geared toward enhancing deeper devotion to and relationship with God among the students.

Keywords: character development, private universities, self discovery, skill acquisition, spiritual development, youth empowerment, youth needs

1. Introduction

There is general dissatisfaction among the Nigerian citizens over government involvement in the educational sector, largely because efforts of various governments in Nigeria to revive the educational sector have been unsuccessful (Nwosu *et al.* 2009). Along the line, the near monopoly which public universities enjoyed in providing university education in Nigeria was truncated in 1999 (Ajadi 2010), when the first private universities (Babcock, Igbinedion, and Madonna) were established (Obasi 2006). Since then, there has been tremendous growth of private universities in Nigeria (Akpotu & Akpochafo 2009). As at 2012, there were about 50 government-approved private universities in Nigeria (NUC 2012). Among these, Babcock University, one of the first three private universities established in 1999, usually ranks among the top three best private universities (Naijagists 2013).

In spite of the exorbitant fees charged by private universities in Nigeria, the promise to promptly deliver quality education in safe and conducive environment (Universities of Nigeria 2011) has attracted the upper class Nigerian families to private universities. This, in essence, implies that a large number of students in private universities in Nigeria come from the upper class of the society. It has been observed that most children from upper class families generally are unable do basic things of life by themselves (Odewumi 2011; Nwosu *et al.* 2009; Akpa 2001). Worse still, Dopamu (2010) argues that most of the students from upper class families seek to transfer this attitude from home to the school and society, if left unchecked and uncontrolled.

In view of the issues raised above, the question is how can the educational system especially in private universities identify and meet the needs of the upper class youth in their universities? Using Babcock University—a private university in South-West Nigeria—as a case, this study ascertained the needs of the upper class youth in private universities in Nigeria and made suggestions regarding how these needs could be met through the general operations of the private universities.

2. Review of Literature

Johnson (2011) observes that morality is fast being eroded from the African society. In relation to this, Ademola (2011) proposes a total approach to the development of the Nigerian youth for a meaningful living and better future. This can happen only when the educational system in Nigeria, especially in the private universities, take into cognizance the needs of the upper class youth who constitute a greater part of their student population.

2.1 Need for Self Discovery

Akpa (2001) points out that most young people in tertiary institutions of learning, who are in their late teenage years, experience crisis in almost every aspect of their life. It is at this stage that their search for identity and meaning in life intensify, leading them to try as many available alternatives to success as possible. If left unguided, most youth at this stage go astray and subscribe to various forms of deviant behaviors to gain acceptance among their peers. Such deviant behaviors engaged in by Nigerian youth include examination

malpractices, cultism, violence, hostage taking, cyber crimes, sexual immorality, robbery, attacking teachers and classmates, murdering parents, persecuting others out of viciousness, avarice, rape, vandalism, and cheating of all sorts (Agboluaje 2011; Dopamu 2010). Akpa (2001) observes that if the youth are not offered adequate assistance and guidance by responsible adults, their struggle for self discovery (identity crisis) usually leads to either of the two extremes of exaggerated self-concept: low self-concept or high self-concept.

2.2 Need for Attention and Affection

Most young people in private universities desire attention and audience from their parents and other adults. However, most of them are deprived of this very important benefit due to the perpetual absence of parents from home and from the lives of the youth. Dopamu (2010) bemoans the fact that most upper class Nigerian parents have relegated and delegated their responsibilities to other people and agencies such as schools and housemaids in search of contracts and material wealth. Most of such parents resort to sending their children to boarding schools early in life, as early as from primary school years. Reacting to this phenomenon, Akpa (2001) points out to parents and adults that success attained in business and life's endeavors at the expense of giving adequate attention and training the children does not last, since such young people grow up without family and societal values inculcated in them.

2.3 Need for Empowerment and Involvement

Odewumi (2011) observed that most children from upper class families generally are unable to rise early from sleep, fetch water, wash their clothes, make their beds, do household chores, or do their assignments by themselves. Unfortunately still, according to Nwosu *et al.* (2009), some of them are not able to write examinations by themselves. Furthermore, Akpa (2001) points out that most upper class Nigerian parents "consider it a matter of status symbol to employ the services of gardeners, care-takers, cooks and stewards, house helps and gate men to take care of every aspect of the services in their home while their own children while away their time, wallowing in ignorance, and perhaps discovering vices" (p. 77; see also Dopamu 2010). Tenibiaje and Smith (2009) affirm that even the government of Nigeria has been under-utilizing the potentials of the largely youth population.

Akpa (2001) indicates that most upper class parents choreograph the lives of their children to the extent that the children play little or no part in making such important decisions that affect and shape their future as education, career, love, courtship, and marriage. Ultimately even in later years of life, such young people usually experience conflicts between family expectation and personal ambition in most areas of their lives. Also, they experience difficulty in making tough personal decisions, playing leadership roles, executing tasks entrusted to them by others and lack the confidence required to wade the uncharted waters in life, since they are afraid of making mistakes.

2.4 Need for Role Models and Mentors

Since parents are expected to serve as mirrors to their children (Dopamu 2010), most young people look up to their parents and other adults to serve as role models and mentors and give them guidance and direction on how to navigate the rough waters of life. Unfortunately, most parents are not available to play this crucial role for their children.

To make matters worse, most affluent and upper class parents nowadays have little or nothing positive to model to their children. Tunde (2011) asserts that many young people from upper class families have become aware of the fact that their parents are involved in corrupt practices to enrich themselves. Hence, the claim that "parents do not always present perfect examples for their children to copy" (Akpa 2001, p. 49) stands undisputed. According to Johnson (2011), when parents show bad examples in their homes to children, such children in turn have nothing good to offer to the society.

Even acclaimed professors and spiritual leaders often betray the trust of the young people and belittle themselves by demanding sexual gratifications and material gifts from students in exchange for grades (Nwosu *et al.* 2009) and pastoral services. As a result, most parents and adults have lost the *locus standum* to model uprightness and integrity before the younger generation. There is therefore the need for parents and other adults to be role models and mentors for young people and guide them to maturity.

2.5 Need for Deliverance from Evil Forces

Due to the demands of empiricism, people are prone to relegate to the background the fact that most young people today are trapped by satanic and evil forces that require divine deliverance to set them free. Being a sensitive issue, the submission that people should be wary of two extreme reactions to demon possession is instructive. According to Akpa (2013), "One extreme attributes every little human problem to demon possession and calls for deliverance and anointing service. . . . The other extreme tends to deny that demons actually possess people. . . . Both extremes are anomalous in view of the scope and attitude of Jesus in His ministries to people under demonic forces and control" (p. 9). However, it is undeniable that some young people today are hooked to immoral addictive habits such as substance abuse, pornography, premarital sex, gambling, violence, and cheating

that require reprogramming of their lives to set them free (Agboluaje 2011; Ogunkunle 2011; Dopamu 2010; Akpa 2001).

2.6 Need for Devotion to and Closer Relationship with God

Parents are expected to lead their children to God and help them establish close relationship with Him. However, it has been observed that many parents, including spiritual leaders, are so busy with their careers, businesses, and ministries to the neglect of the overall welfare and spiritual development of their children (Ogunkunle 2011; Dopamu 2010; Akpa 2001). Consequently, parents and spiritual leaders have been advised to take appropriate measures to forestall or correct acts of ungodliness in children at early stages in life before such ungodly acts get out of control (Agboluaje 2011). There is therefore the need for every young person to have a close relationship with God, especially in view of this need and the other needs identified earlier which include self discovery and deliverance from evil forces.

3. Biblical Foundations for Training Upper Class Youth

The task of meeting the needs of children and youths from infancy to adulthood is a responsibility entrusted to parents. This is rooted in the biblical principles of child training which include nurturing, education, skill acquisition (Nwaomah & Dickson 2012), discipleship and discipline (Exod 2; Deut 6:4-9; 21:18-21; 1 Sam 2; Prov 22:6; Isa 54:13). Riley (2003) notes that the Hebrews taught that nothing was more important than the rearing of a child in godliness and discipline (Exod 6: 4-7; Prov 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14). Therefore parents were enjoined to train their children in the ways of God (Deut 6:4-9).

Records of formal training in the Old Testament era are apparently limited. Warren (2003) observes that most teaching and learning in the biblical times consisted of informal training and concentrated on the goal of passing along an approach to life centered on guidance for a moral and religious lifestyle. He identifies three major informal and semiformal types of learning mentioned in the Bible with different emphasis for each setting; namely, the home, the use of scribes by political elites, and the education of the elites. This adequately fits into the Mosaic requirements for parents to teach their children when they sit down, stand up, lie down, walk on the way among others (Deut 6:7-9). Nevertheless, Warren (2003) opines that formal education which included the sense of reading and writing appears restricted to the elites (upper class) of society such as the rulers and their immediate workers throughout most of the biblical period.

Packer and Tenney (1980) agree that by the New Testament time, the Jews had adopted a more formal approach to education. However, they assert that classrooms and qualified teachers were set aside to instruct all the children in the village. This implies that although the Synagogue Schools may have been dominated by children of the elite, those from the rural areas also had an opportunity, a situation that is akin to the general operation of private universities in Nigeria today. Edersheim (1974), Alexander and Alexander (2000), and King and Stager (2001) agree that in addition to the knowledge of the *torah*, the Jewish boy had to learn a trade or business supposedly from the father, although this was not to divert him from study.

Dickson (2012) points out that besides religious duties, daughters learned domestic chores required to run the household. Girls also shared the duties at harvest time (Ruth 2:2, 8); fetched water (Gen 24:11; 1 Sam 9:11), and also watered the Camel (Gen 24:19). Alexander and Alexander (2000) observe that during the time of Christ, a girl's education was still entirely in her mother's hand, but every boy went to the school, except for unique reasons such as in the case of Jesus Christ who was taught of his mother. The major reason for this holistic education is to equip both boys and girls in all aspects of life for total devotion to God and the workaday world (Packer & Tenney 1980).

The review of literature and survey of biblical foundations above have identified eight needs of upper class Nigerian youth as need for (1) self discovery, (2) attention, (3) affection, (4) empowerment, (5) involvement, (6) role models and mentorship, (7) deliverance from evil forces, and (8) devotion to and closer relationship with God. These needs were tested among students at Babcock University.

4. Research Methodology and Design

This study utilized descriptive survey research design to ascertain the perception of selected students on the needs of upper class youth in private universities in Nigeria. The population for the study consisted of approximately 7,500 registered students at Babcock University as at the time of conducting the survey. Thus, the sample size (n) was determined, using the formula for determining the sample size from a finite population postulated by Yamane (1967), where $n = N/[1+N(e)^2]$. Thus, given that $N=7,500$ and $e=0.05$, $n=390$. Ultimately, the sample size for the study was increased to 400.

The research instrument for gathering data for the study was a self-structured questionnaire, consisting of three (3) sections: (A) Demographic Information, (B) Specific Needs of Upper Class Nigerian Youth, and (C) General Needs of Upper Class Nigerian Youth. Section (B) of the instrument adopted a five-point Likert style rating method of questionnaire to obtain information from the respondents, i.e., Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4,

Slightly Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 1. In Section (C) of the instrument, the respondents were asked to rank the eight general needs identified in the review of literature according to their preferences.

The validity of the research instrument was ascertained by subjecting the questionnaire to the scrutiny of research experts and colleagues. In order to ascertain the reliability of the research instrument, a pilot test was conducted in which 30 copies of the questionnaire were randomly distributed to students. These were retrieved and analyzed, using Cronbach's Alpha reliability tests. The results were as follows: (a) reliability for the entire questionnaire was 84.2%; (b) reliability for the general needs of the students was 78.0%; (c) reliability for the specific needs of the students was 82.4%. In sum, both the questionnaire and its content are considered valid and reliable.

Data for the study was collected through the distribution of 400 copies of the questionnaire to randomly selected students. A total of 340 copies of the questionnaire (85%) were completed and returned. All 340 copies returned (100%) were valid and used for analysis of data. Minimal inferences to participant observation were utilized to buttress some issues raised in the discussion of findings.

5. Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Data obtained from the survey were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. Descriptive statistics (frequencies) were used to analyze the demographic profile and specific needs of the respondents in Section (A) of the questionnaire as well as to ascertain the perception of the students on their specific needs in Section (B) of the questionnaire. One-Sample T-test was used to ascertain the mean score of the ranking of the general needs of the respondents in Section (C) of the questionnaire. A summary of the presentation, interpretation of data and discussion of research findings are presented below.

5.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Section (A) of the questionnaire on demographic information contained five items bordering on gender, age, religion, marital status of parents, and history of dormitory life of the respondents. A summary of the demographic profile of the respondents indicates that there were more male respondents (187 or 55%) than female (153 or 45%). A majority of the respondents (240 or 70.6%) were 16-20 years old while the rest were more than 20 years old. This has significant positive implication for the responses to the questions since a majority of the respondents are young and within the conventional university age bracket in Nigeria. A majority of the respondents (301 or 88.5%) were Christians whereas the rest (39 or 11.5%) were Muslims. This is expected since Babcock University is a Christian University, even though her admission policies are not discriminatory in nature (Babcock University 2009). The marital status of the parents of the respondents indicates that the parents of 240 respondents (70.6%) are married and live together; parents of 44 respondents (12.9%) are married but live in different places including overseas; parents of 19 respondents (5.6%) are co-habiting; while the parents of the rest (37 or 10.9%) are divorced, separated or single parents.

The dormitory life history of the respondents showed a mosaic pattern. Significant data reveal that 160 (47.1%) of the respondents have lived in the dormitory from Secondary to University levels of education. However, it is pertinent to point out that 12 (3.5%) of the respondents have lived in the dormitory from Nursery, Primary, Secondary to University levels of education. This implies that these respondents hardly have lived with their parents since childhood. Findings of Dopamu (2010) that many upper class Nigerian parents abandon their children in pursuit of contracts and material wealth corroborate this.

5.2 Specific Needs of the Upper Class Youth in Private Universities

Section (B) of the questionnaire contained fourteen (14) statements on the specific needs of the upper class youth in private universities. These statements were based on the eight general needs established from review of literature. Table 1 shows the responses of the students to the questions. Responses from "Strongly Agree" to "Agree" were grouped together as "Agree" whereas responses from "Slightly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" were grouped together as "Disagree".

Table 1. Respondents' Perception of the Specific Needs of Upper Class Youth in Private Universities in Nigeria

Needs	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Total N	Mean <i>M</i> =5.0
<i>Self Discovery</i>				
I desire to know my true identity, potentials, strengths and weaknesses.	322 (95%)	18 (5%)	340	4.69
<i>Attention and Affection</i>				
I need my parents and others to listen to me and hear me out before shouting at me.	318 (93%)	22 (7%)	340	4.61
I desire to feel the tender love and care of my parents and others around me.	309 (91%)	31 (9%)	340	4.57
I desire the physical presence and touch of my parents and others more than gifts.	263 (77%)	77 (23%)	340	4.19
I desire to spend quality time with my family than long overseas trips during holidays.	235 (69%)	105 (31%)	340	3.91
<i>Involvement and Empowerment</i>				
I desire to be trusted and given tasks and responsibilities and be allowed to do them.	309 (91%)	31 (9%)	340	4.46
I desire to be allowed to make mistakes while doing tasks and learn from them.	275 (81%)	65 (19%)	340	4.19
I desire to be involved in making decisions about my life (education, love and career).	309 (91%)	31 (9%)	340	4.56
I desire to learn to do things (laundry, cooking, class assignments and examinations) by myself instead of always having them done for me by others.	294 (86%)	46 (14%)	340	4.42
<i>Role Model and Mentorship</i>				
I desire to have my parents, teachers, pastors, and leaders in high places of authority as exemplary role models and mentors who I can emulate.	289 (85%)	51 (15%)	340	4.33
<i>Deliverance from Evil Forces</i>				
I desire to be delivered from evil and satanic forces.	273 (80%)	67 (20%)	340	4.21
I desire to be delivered from immoral behaviors such as gambling, sex, and violence.	262 (77%)	78 (23%)	340	4.06
<i>Devotion to and Closer Relationship with God</i>				
I desire to have deeper devotion to and closer relationship with God and accept Christ as my Savior.	326 (96%)	14 (4%)	340	4.81
I desire to study the Word of God, pray and tell others about the love of God more than I do now.	327 (96%)	13 (4%)	340	4.75

Table 1 shows that most of the upper class students at Babcock University perceive themselves as experiencing all the needs identified in the literature review that are characteristic of upper class Nigerian youth, with the lowest percentage of agreement as 69% ($M=3.91$; >3.50).

Most of the findings in Table 1 are corroborated by findings of other researchers. First, the desire of majority of the respondents to know their true identity, potentials, strengths and weaknesses, is consistent with the claim that young people at the age of university education usually experience the need for self discovery and often experiment with so many habits (Agboluaje 2011; Akpa 2001).

Second, the desire of a majority of the respondents for attention and affection from parents and family members, even in place of overseas trips during holidays, is a clear indication that they do not enjoy the attention and affection of their parents. This is further complicated by findings from the demographic profile where many of the respondents have spent a considerable portion of their life in dormitories while some of the parents do not

live together. This lends credence to the lament that most upper class parents relegate and delegate their parental responsibilities to other people and entities (Dopamu 2010; Akpa 2001).

Third, a majority of the respondents desire to be empowered and involved by their parents in making vital decisions on such life issues as career, education and love even if they would make mistakes and learn from them. They also desire to be allowed to do things (e.g. laundry, cooking, class assignments, examinations) by themselves instead of always having them done for them by others. This confirms the assertions that most children from upper class families are not brought up to do things by themselves and for themselves (Odewumi 2011; Dopamu 2010; Akpa 2001).

Fourth, most of the respondents desire to have their parents, teachers, pastors, and leaders in high places of authority as exemplary role models and mentors who they can emulate. This is consistent with the views expressed that because parents, teachers, spiritual leaders and other adults act as mirrors for the younger generation (Dopamu 2010), they should be careful in what they model before the young people so as to retain the *locus standum* to correct and guide the young people through their turbulent years of life (Johnson 2011; Nwosu *et al.* 2009).

Fifth, the need expressed by a majority of the respondents to be delivered from evil forces and addictive habits and lifestyles lends credence to the caution that young people are the target of satanic attacks and that they are trapped and chained by immoral and addictive behaviors, especially if left unguided (Ogunkunle 2011; Agboluaje 2011; Dopamu 2010; Akpa 2001). Sixth, the yearning of a vast majority of the respondents for devotion to and closer relationship with God is an indication that they feel estranged from God and unfortunately, parents are not always there to guide them in the ways of God because they are very busy with their businesses or doing God's work, a phenomenon that has been established even in the homes of spiritual leaders (Agboluaje 2011; Ogunkunle 2011; Dopamu 2010) right from Bible times as in the case of Eli and his sons (1 Sam 2:22-4:22).

5.3 General Needs of the Upper Class Youth in Private Universities

Section (C) of the questionnaire contains eight (8) items that were identified through the review of literature as the general needs of the upper class youth in private universities. The respondents were asked to rank the items in descending order of importance, based on their preference. Table 2 shows the ranking of the needs based on the mean scores. The rankings are indicators of the perception of the respondents on the level of priority placed on each need.

Table 2. Ranking of the General Needs of Upper Class Youth in Private Universities in Nigeria

Need	Mean Score ($M=8.0$)	Overall Rank
Devotion to and Closer Relationship with God	7.39	1st
Self Discovery	6.64	2nd
Empowerment	6.02	3rd
Affection	5.82	4th
Attention	5.80	5th
Involvement	5.80	6th
Deliverance from Evil Forces	5.67	7th
Role Models and Mentors	5.59	8th

Table 2 shows that the mean scores of all the needs are high. This indicates that the respondents regarded each need as top priority, in spite of the ranking. This is significant and consistent with the findings and discussions under the Specific Needs of the upper class youth in private universities in Nigeria. Table 2 reveals that Babcock University students place topmost priority on the need for devotion to and closer relationship with God. This is followed by the need for self discovery, empowerment, affection, attention, involvement, deliverance from evil forces, and role models/mentors.

6. Recommendations for Meeting the Needs of Upper Class Youth in Private Universities in Nigeria

In order to meet the needs of the upper class youth in private universities in Nigeria, an educational system that places high premium on the total development of the student is needed. Therefore, this study makes five recommendations.

First, proprietors of private universities in Nigeria need to understand and implement the principles underlying balanced education: the total development of the student. "True and all-round education should be able to develop the young people to become self-employed if no one else would employ them. This is where Christian education makes the difference" (Akpa 2001, p. 88). This is because the philosophy on which Christian education operates goes beyond academic achievement and emphasizes acquisition of basic life skills and development of the character of the student. Onwuasoanya (2011) submits that the development of human character is "a worthy educational ideal" that can only be achieved through the process of Christian education,

pointing out that “good character involves moral responsibility, sound ethical and moral behavior, capacity for discipline, a deep sense of values and goals” (p. 288).

Second, it is surprising that the upper class youth desire devotion to and closer relationship with God as the topmost priority need. The implication of this is that the Division of Spiritual life of every private university in Nigeria, especially Babcock University as a Christian university, should, in collaboration with the University Administration, be very intentional in leading the students to be devoted to God in their daily lives and experience a closer relationship with God. Intensive and well structured Bible study and moral teachings should be given prominent slots in the religious and worship activities on the campuses. Once this is achieved, all other needs, expressed and not expressed in this study will fall in place. It is by getting closer with God that one understands one’s true self.

Third, since findings of this study confirm that most students from the upper class families express the need to be able to do things by themselves and for themselves, all private universities in Nigeria should make provisions for curricular and extra-curricular activities that would provide the opportunities for students to try their hands on acquiring and practicing some basic life skills such as doing laundry, sewing, cooking, doing minor electrical, electronic and plumbing repairs, general home making and gardening. Although the curriculum of Babcock University, for example, includes a general course in Agricultural Science, whereby students are required to do practical farming, there is the need for on-site supervision of this project to ensure that each student does his/her work by him/herself. Participatory observation reveals that more than half of the students do not cultivate the portions assigned to them by themselves. Some of them, especially girls, pay others to cultivate their portions or persuade their boyfriends to do it for them while they stand by and chat with them at work.

Also, private universities in Nigeria should introduce (where absent), strengthen (where weak) and restore (where lost) work-study and community service programs and make them compulsory for all students. Babcock University should bring back her lost culture of involving all the students in some hours of general community service every week. When this culture was sustained, many students were able to do by themselves several tasks they were never allowed to do at home; for example, washing dishes, mowing the lawns, picking and packing trash, fetching water in buckets, flushing and clearing gutters and drainages, and clearing bushes, and many of them were happy. During the early years of Babcock University, more than a decade ago, an upper class female student who saw cassava plants and tubers for the first time during community service confided in a fellow student that had she not come to Babcock University, “she would not have known what the cassava plant looked like” even though she regularly ate meals prepared from cassava without knowing what the plant and tubers looked like (Akpa 2001, p. 77).

Fourth, since most of the students expressed the need for role models and mentors, the authorities of private universities in Nigeria should acquaint the students with the various opportunities they have to adopt a mentor or role model. The course advising process, pastoral services, and counseling activities provide windows for students to discover trusted adults they can adopt as mentors or emulate as role models. Such exercises could be done from a close contact perspective or from a distance, depending on the students’ preference and the willingness of the adults to adopt the students as mentees.

Finally, parents should be made to understand that it is their primary God-given responsibility to ensure that their children are raised up well in a balanced manner and in the fear of God. The role of other individuals and agencies such as private universities is to complement, not compete with or replace the effort of parents in the development of their children (Akpa 2001). In light of this, parents of most students at private universities need to make serious adjustments in their parenting habits. They should be readily available to their children when they are away from school. Participant observation experience confirms that some of the students hardly spend quality time with their parents in their homes. During weekends, holidays and vacation periods, some of them take turns to visit the father in London, the mother in Canada, and an uncle or auntie in Abuja, Lagos, or Port-Harcourt. Therefore, in addition to making money and buying gifts and gadgets for the youth, parents should be physically present at home at regular times so that their children can see, hear, feel and talk with them. All these contribute to the balanced development of the youth. Ultimately, upper class parents should be careful so that what makes them upper class today (plenty of money and material wealth) would not make their future generations lazy and return them to the gutters of lower class life tomorrow.

7. Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the needs of upper class youth in private universities in Nigeria. Literature review and survey of biblical foundations indicated that the needs of upper class youth include need for self discovery, attention, affection, empowerment, involvement, role models and mentorship, deliverance from evil forces, and devotion to and closer relationship with God. The perception of these needs among upper class youth in private universities in Nigeria was tested, using Babcock University students as samples. Findings reveal that the needs of upper class youth in Babcock University are consistent with the general needs of upper

class youth identified above. However, the ranking of the needs by the students in order of preference revealed that although the students rated each of the needs as top priority, the topmost need expressed is need for devotion to and closer relationship with God, followed by the need for self discovery, empowerment, affection, attention, involvement, deliverance from evil forces and role models/mentors.

It was recommended that parents, who hitherto were not adequately playing their God-given role in the total development of their children, should make the necessary adjustment in their parenting habits so as to be physically available to their children whenever they return from school. Also, parents and proprietors of private universities should collaborate and provide the enabling environment that will encourage the upper class youth to acquire basic life skills and try their hands on some tasks that hitherto are performed for them by house helps and hired servants. Finally, parents are called upon to make a radical decision between wealth, career and fame on one hand, and the total character and spiritual development of their children on the other. There is no sitting on the fence in this issue.

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