

## CONTRIBUTION OF AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNER TRANSFORMATION IN TEACHING OF BIBLE-BASED COURSES IN CHARTERED CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITIES IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

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### Cite this article in APA

Muhia, M. W., & Kitur, J. (2024). Contribution of authentic relationships to effective learner transformation in teaching of Bible-based courses in chartered Christian universities in Nairobi County, Kenya. *Journal of pedagogy and curriculum*, 3(1), 14-30. <https://doi.org/10.51317/jpc.v3i1.530>



A publication of Editon Consortium Publishing (online)

### Article history

Received: 13.04.2024

Accepted: 17.05.2024

Published: 18.06.2024

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess the contribution of authentic relationships to effective learner transformation in the teaching of Bible-based courses in chartered Christian universities in Nairobi County, Kenya. A lot of resources have been used in training the lecturers to use authentic relationships in teaching, yet little is known about the training impact. The study was based on transformative learning and Biblical worldview theories. The study utilised a descriptive research design to establish the relationship between the use of authentic relationships in the teaching of Bible-based courses and learner transformation. A cross-sectional survey research design was used, focusing on 63 lecturers teaching Bible-based courses. The data was collected using structured, closed-ended questionnaires, which were given to the respondents. The study used regression analysis to find out the relationship between the variables at the 0.05 significance level. The results showed there was a notable correlation between the use of authentic relationships in teaching Bible-based courses and learner transformation. The use of authentic relationships in the learning process provides an educational environment with minimal power distance between the lecturer and learners. This enables students to actively investigate, analyse, and create concepts within real-life situations important to the learner. The researcher recommends that Christian Higher Education should embrace authentic relationships as one of the ways of achieving their vision and mission of transforming learners' knowledge, behaviour, skills, and attitudes.

**Key terms:** Authentic relationships, Bible-based courses, census study, chartered Christian universities, learner transformation.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Christian educational institutions prioritise a biblical worldview in their students. This worldview seeks to transform the way students think and act so that they can honour God with their lives. Despite the challenges of the 21st century, Christians are still expected to serve God in their respective fields. Christian universities have core values that are integral to their mission and differentiate them from other institutions. According to Harvey (2019), lecturers in these institutions have a responsibility to present biblical truths to transform their students' worldviews. The ultimate goal is to produce transformed learners who can serve as agents of change in society.

After examining the goal and vision of theological institutions, now chartered universities, it becomes apparent that their main objective is to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the Bible, regardless of their field of study. This education equips students to navigate the complexities of the world while adhering to God's principles. Chartered Christian universities offer "university core courses" to achieve their goals. These courses, based on the Bible, aim to develop a Biblical worldview among students as they pursue their chosen academic degrees. Given the various philosophical perspectives on the nature of reality, Chartered Christian Institutions are responsible for safeguarding the Christian faith with great care.

Christian universities in Kenya prioritise the development of a Biblical Worldview in their students. This aligns with the government's 4<sup>th</sup> national goal for education, as stated in its mission and vision statements. To achieve this goal, these universities have been training their lecturers on transformative pedagogy, including the use of authentic relationships in teaching. A lot of resources have been used in training the lecturers to use authentic relationships in teaching, yet little is known about the training results. The aim is to fulfil universities' goals and contribute to the national goal number 4 in education. Bible-based courses are designed to transform learners in terms of knowledge, behaviour, skills, and attitude. There haven't been many studies in Kenya done on the assessment of the use of authentic relationships on learner transformation, hence a knowledge gap. The researcher sought to fill this gap.

Higher education institutions have a tremendous effect on the progress of a country across various aspects, including social, economic, spiritual, and cultural development. In response to the challenges of the 21st century, education systems worldwide have been compelled to shift from traditional methods of information transmission to innovative teaching and learning approaches. These tactics aim to foster the development of communities, economic systems, and governance models and apply to both primary and tertiary education. According to Khahro and Javed (2022), the COVID-19 pandemic has further emphasised the need for educators to explore new approaches to prepare students for an unpredictable future.

In Kenya, university education is regulated by the Commission for University Education. As per the University Education Standards and Guidelines (2014), all university programs must be learner-centred. The Basic Education Curriculum Framework, introduced in 2017, promotes the use of transformative pedagogy based on constructivism theory. This approach empowers students to actively build their knowledge and is widely adopted in most chartered universities in Kenya. One of the common transformative pedagogies in these universities is the authentic relationships.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite impacting individual academic achievement, building meaningful relationships with students has the potential to enhance their social and emotional well-being by fostering a sense of community. Fidler and Ramos (2023) recommend that teachers be approachable, knowledgeable, and passionate when cheering their students. The purpose of education should be to prepare students to become responsible adults with strong moral principles and well-developed minds, not to increase test results.

Cranton (2006), who initiated the debate on the need for authentic relationships in transformative learning, observes that teacher-learner interactions seek to establish significant and truthful relationships with the students for learning. With trustworthy interactions, students' confidence is developed through an effective level of learning, which involves feelings, emotions, and attitudes, leading to learners' transformation (Taylor, 2007). Keen and Woods (2016) observe that the use of humour in the classroom could promote trusting relationships between the teacher and the students. In teaching Bible-based courses, lecturers should have minimal power distance as they interact with learners to allow them to freely share information and make inquiries to attain greater understanding (Cranton, 2006). Authentic relationships enable both educators and learners to establish a good starting point for the formation of the learners' Biblical worldview.

A study done in Rhode Island with a sample of 15 teachers on the student and teacher relationships and the effect on students' learning indicated that good interactions allowed positive communication in the teaching and learning process (Gablinske, 2014). Essential components like building a good class climate for them as a group, personal discourse, teacher use of humour, tone of the voice, active listening, use of praise, proximity to students, timely feedback of assessment, availability of the teacher all the time for the students, equitability of all the students to participate in activities for the lesson, among others, promoted authentic relationships and transformation of the learners (Gablinske, 2014).

Throughout the teaching process, it is the responsibility of the instructor to give the learners as many opportunities as possible to collaborate, exchange ideas and experiences, and stay in touch with one another. Taylor (2007) refers to these elements of constructivism using different names such as elements, essential practices, conditions, and components that frame transformative pedagogy environments.

Wood (2008) quotes Riesen, whose research found that Bible doctrines can have great effects on the learners' lives if taught to all in a Christian institution. Based on Riesen's research, Christian universities have common values that include integrity, servant leadership, innovation, and excellence. These core values inform what Christian universities teach in Bible-based courses, which is drawn from the foundational stories for the formation of the learners' Biblical worldview. The content of these courses should shape the learner's thinking; hence, the learner forms a perceptual mental framework that guides him or her in evaluating life experiences, considering the knowledge obtained. The ability to act on the knowledge received will lead to the development of the common values aimed at Christian universities.

Thankfully, Teo (2017) outlines our secular cultures in the 21st century as the newest field for doing missions. The offering of Bible-based courses in Christian universities to all learners is to shape their Biblical worldview so that they may be able to fulfil their different Christian calling, e.g. in the marketplace. Biblical worldview scholars' work focuses on a shared goal. They communicate the basic tenets of the

# Journal of Pedagogy and Curriculum

Christian faith, which distinguishes it from other worldviews even as it divulges Biblical worldview potential to respond satisfactorily to the worldview's basic principles (Esqueda, 2014; Morgan, 2013; Ryken, 2013; McCormack, 2008; Dockery, 2007 and Kanitz, 2006).

As such, an integrated faith and life is touted as one of the factors that may lead to the formation of a biblical worldview. Christian institutions should lead from the front in treating all courses with great importance, even as they link Bible truths to the content of the courses. However, common practice has shown that many educators disengage the two, which results in a life that is disintegrated (Esqueda, 2014). He quotes Naugle, who draws attention to the gap left by the integration failure, which is a tragedy to humanity (Esqueda, 2014). There is a danger of lecturers in Chartered Christian universities pursuing their academic aspirations without practical Biblical knowledge, Christian behaviour, skills, and attitude change. Lecturers working in Christian universities should consider their professions as a calling and not just employment, as they are not only answerable to the university but also to God. Christian university lecturers serve as role models to their learners. Their graduates are expected to be distinct in knowledge, behaviour, skills, and attitude change as they seek to honour God in their different areas of calling in the marketplace (Col. 1:19-23).

Lindemann (2016) notes that the formation of a worldview is dependent in part on the acquisition of ideas regarding data beliefs and control beliefs. Lindemann also observes that ideas obtained in teaching and learning interactions provide a reference point in decision-making as well as in adopting a worldview. Learner's knowledge is tested through coursework assessment (formative and summative assessment), ability to address life issues critically, learners' creativity in offering solutions to problems, and voluntary participation in classroom/online activities (Lindemann, 2016; Palmer, 2003).

In his research in the USA, Teo (2017) found out that the efforts for spiritual formation have expanded beyond the local church to the academic arena, hence the teaching of Bible-based courses in institutions. There is an expectation that Bible knowledge will influence the learners to approach God with integrity of mind, soul, and heart, even as the individual's Biblical worldview is enhanced and expressed through behaviour, skills, and attitude (Teo, 2017).

It has been said that acceptable moral behaviour is deeply influenced by an individual's worldview (The Barna Group Ltd, 2009). When Bible-based courses knowledge becomes the referencing point for every learner who studies at any Christian university, the learners' worldview is successfully formed. The worldview will then provide the framework for ethical thinking. It enables the learners to recognise that people are made in the likeness of God; they are conscientious beings following the answers to questions about where we are, who we are, what has gone wrong, and the solution.

Biblical worldview provides a new way of thinking, seeing things, and doing things based on new knowledge, which, in this case, is the knowledge acquired from the Bible. Hence, the Bible knowledge attained involves deeper aspects than just beliefs, but more importantly, a change of behaviour, such as action with greater integrity and servant hood as informed by Christian universities' core values. These include honesty, respect, Christian living, teamwork, attendance at other university programs that teach Bible knowledge, abstaining from substance abuse, and prosocial relational skills. Such accompanies the modified beliefs with change in how one views the world (Lindeman, 2016). These inform the core values

of Christian universities. Unfortunately, research conducted in Kenya found that the integrity crisis is on the rise, which makes one question the effectiveness of Christian institutions in Kenya's mission (Awiti, 2016).

An attitude is an approach to something. Lewis's (2015) research on the effect of Christian schools on students' worldviews revealed that learners are interested in spiritual matters. Chartered Christian universities should seize the opportunity. Although the research conducted indicates a great need for the integration of faith and life as recommended by Esqueda (2014), the research found that little is known about the best pedagogical approach to teaching Bible-based courses for the development of the Biblical worldview. If the Bible-based courses are taught by well-educated instructors, with their pedagogical and educational abilities, then learners' attitudes towards the courses would be improved, leading to their transformation.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

This was a cross-sectional survey research design. Cross-sectional surveys are known for their usefulness in determining the characteristics of the population at the prevailing moment. The study sought to study the lecturers teaching Bible-based courses at Chartered Christian Universities in Kenya.

#### Target Population

The study population was chartered Christian universities in Kenya. The universities are Pan Africa Christian University, Daystar University, St. Pauls' University, Kenya Assemblies of God Nairobi campus, Methodist University, International Leadership University, and Catholic University of East Africa. The target population of the study were the lecturers teaching Bible-based courses. There are a total of 63 lecturers trained in critical thinking who teach Bible-based courses. As a result of the small size of the target population (63 respondents), the researcher carried out a census study in which all the elements participated. Table 1 indicates the respondents' distribution according to universities.

**Table 1: Target Population**

<b>Identified Universities</b>	<b>No. of lecturers trained in teaching</b>
PAC University	13
St. Paul's University	11
Daystar University	10
Methodist University	1
International Leadership University	10
KAG University	11
Catholic University of East Africa	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>

#### Data Collection

The study used structured closed-ended questionnaires with some open-ended questions to complement quantitative data. The open-ended questions were designed to enable the respondents to explain their opinions with regard to the application and effectiveness of authentic relationships in teaching Bible-based courses on learner transformation. Participants were able to convey their sentiments and attitudes. The

respondents were required to indicate by ticking in the scale provided as 'never', 'less often', 'not sure', 'often', and 'most often'. Likert-type scales are useful when one is measuring latent constructs, that is, characteristics of people such as attitudes, feelings, and opinions. With the assistance of the universities' gatekeepers, the researcher administered a research questionnaire using different methods as advised in each university. Data collection information involved issuing printed questionnaires and sending questionnaires through emails to obtain data. Follow-ups/reminders were carried out by phone, email where applicable, and collection after the lecturers filled them.

## Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were employed to analyse demographic data (age, gender, training attendance, use of authentic relationships training, and lecturer's qualification). The percentages and frequencies were computed to describe the main characteristics of the variables, which include the use of critical thinking (independent variable) and learner transformation (dependent variable). Further, the hypothesis was tested.

## 4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The study analysed the respondents' demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, attendance of training, number of training attended, and level of education. The findings are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Demographic Data**

	Description	Frequency	Per cent
Age bracket	31-35 years	2	3.2
	36-40 years	4	6.3
	41-45 years	13	20.6
	46-50 years	9	14.3
	51 years and above	35	55.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>
Gender	Male	48	76
	Female	15	24
	<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>
Attended training	Yes	63	100
Level of education	Professor	4	6.3
	Doctor	37	58.7
	Master's degree	22	34.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>

The study found that most of the respondents (55.6%) were aged 51 years and above. Results also show that 13(20.6%) respondents were aged between 41 years to 45 years. The results also show that the male respondents were the dominant 48(76%). According to the study results, all the respondents attended the authentic relationships training meant to equip them with the skills for teaching. Most of the respondents had attended the training between one and five times. Most of the respondents, 37(58.7%), had doctorate degrees, while 22(34.9%) had master's degrees.



## Use of Authentic Relationships in Teaching

The researcher sought to determine the application of authentic relationships techniques in teaching Bible-based courses. The authentic relationships were tested using one-on-one support, group support, Christian belief support, and lecturers' self-awareness. The findings are displayed in the subsequent sections.

## One on One Relationship with Learners

The researcher aimed to determine the degree to which the respondents applied one-on-one relationships with learners in teaching Bible-based courses. This was on the scale of never, less often (meaning applied once a month, no sure, often (meaning applicable in teaching) and most often (as applied throughout the teaching and learning process). The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: One-on-One Relationship with Learners**

	<b>Never</b>	<b>Less often</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Most often</b>
Aware of the characteristics and preferences of all my students.		8(12.7%)	4(6.3%)	30(47.6%)	21(33.3%)
Have a weekly schedule where I meet my students for mentorship	6(9.5%)	19(30.2%)	1(1.6%)	21(33.3%)	16(25.4%)
Sometimes, act as a father/mother to students	4(6.3%)	8(12.7%)	3(4.8%)	26(41.3%)	22(34.9%)

The results show that 16(25.4%) lecturers stated that they most often had weekly schedules to meet students for mentorship. The results thus mean that the respondents mostly have weekly schedules where they meet students for mentorship. Further, 26(41.3%) respondents indicated that they often acted as father/mother to the students. Results further show that 22(34.9%) respondents stated that most often, they sometimes acted as father/mother to the students. The results thus mean that the respondents often acted like fathers/mothers to the students.

The researcher sought to determine the viewpoints of the lecturers on how, in their opinion, the use of authentic relationships has promoted learner transformation. Twelve respondents stated that because of the authentic relationships, students felt accepted and understood. They equally noted that due to this teaching approach, tension and fear are melted, and as such, the learning process runs smoothly. Four lecturers noted that the approach was very good. Overall results suggested that one-on-one relationships helped the lecturers to understand their learners.

## Group Support Relationship

The study sought to determine the extent to which lecturers applied for group support in teaching Bible-based courses. The results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Use of Group Support in Teaching**

	Never	Less often	Not sure	Often	Most often
While teaching, I share my good and bad life experiences from time to time with my students to learning	0(0%)	2(3.2%)	0(0%)	29(46.0%)	32(50.8%)
Sometimes, I identify students' issues and share similar personal experiences as a form of encouragement.	0(0%)	5(7.9%)	2(3.2%)	28(44.4%)	28(44.4%)
Providing practical activities to encourage students to share their personal experiences.	0(0%)	8(12.7%)	0(0%)	26(41.3%)	29(46.0%)

The results show that 32(50.8%) respondents indicated that most often while teaching, they shared good and bad life experiences from time to time with students for learning, while 29(46.0%) respondents stated that they often had good and bad life experiences with students for learning purposes. Further, 28(44.4%) respondents indicated that they largely identified students' issues that relate to what they ever went through to guide and walk alongside such students. The study also found that 29(46%) respondents indicated that most often, they gave students activities to encourage them to share their life experiences during the teaching and learning process. The results show that 26(41.3%) state that they often did this. The results mean that respondents generally often gave students activities to encourage them to share their life experiences during the learning process.

Lecturers had different opinions as they explained through an open-ended question that sought to establish the viewpoint of the lecturers on how the use of authentic relationships had promoted learner transformation. Two lecturers noted that the approach established genuine connections with the students because of the relationships between the lecturer and the learners and between the learners themselves. The lecturers also noted that the approach creates an environment of trust. Eleven respondents stated that being open to the students helps them see that they can make it in life the same way the teacher does. This encouraged the learners to view life positively, with the knowledge that what they are going through, someone else has gone through and overcome. However, the lecturers noted that because of the big classes, the implementation of the approach was very challenging. This seemed to suggest that the use of authentic relationships could be more effective if there were no barriers.

### **Christian Belief Support**

The study sought to determine the extent to which Christian belief support was used in teaching Bible-based courses. This was tested on a scale of never, less often, not sure, often and most often. Table 5 shows the findings.



**Table 5: Christian Belief support in teaching**

	Never	Less often	Not sure	Often	Most often
Helped learners in evaluating wrong Bible beliefs while I was teaching.	0(0%)	2(3.2%)	1(1.6%)	15(23.8%)	45(71.4%)
I helped learners compare Christian beliefs while I was teaching so they could decide what they believed in.	2(3.2%)	3(4.8%)	1(1.6%)	25(39.7%)	32(50.8)
Corrected wrong doctrines among my students through teaching Bible-based courses	0(0%)	2(3.2%)	1(1.6%)	10(15.9%)	50(79.4%)

The findings show that 45(71.4%) lecturers indicated that they most often helped the learners in weighing wrong Bible beliefs while teaching. In addition, 15(23.8%) respondents stated they often helped the learners evaluate wrong Bible beliefs. Based on the results, the lecturers assisted the students in evaluating wrong Bible beliefs while teaching them. Further, most of the respondents, 32 (50.8%), indicated that most often, they helped the learners to evaluate Christian beliefs in teaching Bible-based courses. Based on the study findings, respondents generally helped their learners with an evaluation of Christian beliefs while teaching so that they could decide what to believe in. The results show that the majority of the lecturers, 50(79.4%) lecturers, stated that most often they corrected wrong doctrines through teaching Bible-based courses. Ten lecturers (15.9%) indicated that they often corrected wrong doctrines through their teaching. From the results, the respondents often corrected wrong doctrines among students through the teachings of the Bible-based courses. Generally, the study results indicate that the respondents applied Christian support largely in their teaching of the students.

For the open-ended question that inquired about lecturers' viewpoints on how, in their opinion, the use of authentic relationships had promoted learner transformation, eight lecturers stated that authentic relationships reckon that a learner is affected by life issues beyond the classroom. Lecturers further noted that integrating authentic relationships in teaching is very effective as it targets the whole person intellectually, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Further, lecturers reported that integrating authentic relationships with learners reduced power distance and hence created a healthy learning environment. Based on the findings, the use of authentic relationships can contribute to helping learners achieve their full potential. This is the focus of transformative learning theory (Cranton, 2016), a learner-centred environment as opposed to a teacher-centred environment.

### **Lecturers Self-Awareness**

The study sought to establish the extent to which lecturers applied self-awareness in teaching Bible-based courses. The results are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6: Self-Awareness of Lecturers**

	Never	Less often	Not sure	Often	Most often
A practicing Christian.	1(1.6%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3(4.8%)	59(93.7%)
Not only have a set of values, but I live up to them.	3(4.8%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	60(95.2%)
Practice relational transparency	3(4.8%)	60(95.2%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

The study sought to find out whether the respondents practised self-awareness as lecturers. The results show that nearly all the respondents, 59(93%), were most often practising Christians. Only one respondent stated that he was never a practising Christian. The study findings, however, show that nearly all lecturers, 60(95.2%), most often had values that they lived up to. Finally, the results show that 60(95.2%) lecturers stated they practised relational transparency less often. The findings indicate that the respondents hardly practised relational transparency. Based on these findings, lecturers in Christian universities generally practice self-awareness partially.

The open-ended question that inquired about lecturers' viewpoints on how the use of authentic relationships had promoted learner transformation had eight lecturers note that teaching is a very relational task. One must, therefore, intentionally aim at the development of the whole person—intellectually, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Five lecturers pointed out that discussions on integrated lives are necessary so that the dualism of life that sees secular and spiritual aspects of life is removed. Faith needs to be demonstrated in all aspects of the believer for societal transformation. Finally, two lecturers stated that they teach who they are. The findings indicated that the majority of the lecturers understood the task of being a lecturer in Christian Higher education.

### **Learner Transformation Analysis**

The researcher sought to determine learner transformation resulting from the application of authentic relationships. The learner transformation was measured in terms of knowledge change, behaviour change, skills change, and attitude change. The literature review indicated that there should be an expectation that Bible knowledge would influence the learner's Biblical worldview, which is expressed through behaviour, skills, and attitude (Teo, 2017). The results are shown in the subsequent sections.

### **Knowledge Change**

The respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with the statements regarding the observed learner transformation and particularly knowledge change. The findings are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7: Knowledge Change**

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
While handling case studies in class, students apply Bible knowledge to respond to the issues in case studies.		1(1.6%)	1(1.6%)	26(41.3%)	35(55.6%)
Students ask questions for clarification where they have not understood	1(1.6%)	1(1.6%)	1(1.6%)	22(34.9%)	38(60.3%)
Students find it difficult to believe the Bible is the final authority	23(36.5%)	18(28.6%)	4(6.3%)	9(14.3%)	9(14.3%)
Controlling the class during class discussions is usually hard as students raise questions for clarity, making it difficult to finish the syllabus	22(34.9%)	24(38.1%)	1(1.6%)	7(11.1%)	9(14.3%)
Students do not shoot down Bible principles in favour of other worldviews	4(6.3%)	9(14.3%)	2(3.2%)	27(42.9%)	21(33.3%)
The class is usually lively as students engage in ideas on how to apply biblical knowledge.	1(1.6%)	0(0%)	3(4.8%)	26(41.3%)	33(52.4%)
Sometimes, the class ends late as the discussions around Bible knowledge get captivating.	8(12.7%)	9(14.3%)	5(7.9%)	27(42.9%)	14(22.2%)
Some students do their personal research on the Bible and ask for help to understand it even if it's not part of the class topic for the day.	1(1.6%)	1(1.6%)	8(12.7%)	31(49.2%)	22(34.9%)

There were differences in how lecturers perceived learner knowledge change. It was found that 35(55.6%) lecturers strongly agreed that while handling case studies in class, students applied Bible knowledge in responding to the issues in case studies. Meanwhile, 26(41.3%) agreed with the statement. One lecturer was not sure, and another disagreed with the statement. Additionally, 38(60.3%) lecturers strongly agreed that students asked questions for clarification where they had not understood. Other 22(34.9%) lecturers agreed with the statement. The findings further revealed that 21(33.3%) lecturers strongly agreed that students did not shoot down Bible principles in favour of other worldviews. Twenty-seven (42.9%) lecturers agreed that students were not shooting down the Bible. However, 11(20.6%) lecturers reported that there were students who preferred other worldviews as opposed to the biblical worldview. This could be attributed to many worldviews that are opposed to the biblical worldviews in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Fifty-nine respondents (93.7%) at least agreed that the classes were lively as students engaged in ideas on the application of biblical knowledge. Lecturers equally noted that sometimes the classes ended late because

of the discussions about Bible knowledge. Although the trends of this study's findings revealed there was a demonstration of knowledge change among the students, there were instances reported where the students did not believe the Bible was the final authority. Christian universities do not consider this to be the culmination of teaching Bible-based courses. It was hence interpreted to mean that just because Christian universities offer compulsory Bible-based courses, it does not guarantee the formation of their learners' biblical worldview unless other approaches are utilised to achieve these university's vision and mission.

## Behavioural Change

The study sought to establish whether there were behavioural changes among the students. Respondents were thus asked to state a level of agreement with the statement. Results are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8: Behavioural Change**

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
Observed teamwork spirit among students		2(3.2%)	5(7.9%)	21(33.3%)	35(55.6%)
There are no cases of dishonesty among students who have taken Bible-based courses	12(19%)	17(27%)	13(20.6%)	13(20.6%)	8(12.7%)
There are cases of dishonesty among the students who have taken Bible-based courses	7(11.1%)	12(19%)	15(23.8%)	18(28%)	11(17.5%)
There are no moral cases among the students who have taken bible-based courses	13(20.6%)	20(31.7%)	13(20.6%)	5(7.9%)	12(19%)
Students attend Bible-based courses classes because there is a class attendance list to be signed out	12(19%)	19(30.2%)	14(22.2%)	10(15.9%)	8(12.7%)
Observed making upright moral decisions when faced with moral dilemmas	1(1.6%)	7(11.1%)	12(19%)	25(39.7%)	18(28.6%)
There are no cases of indiscipline among bible-based course students	9(14.3%)	22(34.9%)	8(12.7%)	14(22.2%)	10(15.9%)
Observed growth in obedience among some students.	2(3.2%)	1(1.6%)	5(7.9%)	37(58.7%)	18(28.6%)

The study established that there was teamwork among the students, as was noted by 56(88.9%) respondents, while 5(7.9%) lecturers were not. The students made upright moral decisions when in a dilemma, according to 43(68.3). Consequently, moral cases were observed, as reported by eight lecturers (12.7%). Further, 31(49.2%) lecturers reported some students attended Bible-based courses because there

were class registers to be signed. Fifty-five (87.3%) respondents reported to have observed growth in obedience in some students. However, a sizable proportion of the respondents (45.5%) noted that there were still cases of dishonesty among students who had taken Bible-based courses, as noted by 29 lecturers. We may conclude that even though there was a change in behaviour among the students, the study established that some vices were persistent in the institutions.

## Skills Change

The study sought to establish whether there was any learner transformation in terms of skills change. The results are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9: Skills Change**

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
Some of these students serve with boldness as Christian leaders here at this university	1(1.6%)	1(1.6%)	2(3.2%)	27(42.9%)	32(50.8%)
Students volunteer to read Bible texts during Bible core classes	1(1.6%)	5(7.9%)	1(1.6%)	23(36.5%)	33(52.4%)
Students do Bible-based courses because it is a requirement in the university curriculum.	6(9.5%)	12(19%)	5(7.9%)	19(30.2%)	21(33.3%)
Have observed that students respect themselves in decision-making as they are made in the image of God.	0(0%)	1(1.6%)	5(7.9%)	36(57.1%)	21(33.3%)
Have observed students grow spiritually in reference to God.	1(1.6%)	0(0%)	2(3.2%)	34(54%)	26(41.3%)
Have observed students respect others as they are made in the image of God.	0(0%)	0(0%)	5(7.9%)	34(54%)	24(38.1%)
Have observed servant leadership among some of the students.	0(0%)	0(0%)	2(3.2%)	34(54%)	27(42.9%)
Have observed the integration of Bible knowledge and learning among some students.	0(0%)	0(0%)	4(6.3%)	34(54%)	25(39.7%)

Regarding skills change, 59(93.7%) out of 63 lecturers reported that some students served with boldness as Christian leaders. Results show that 56(88.9%) lecturers noted that students volunteered to read the Bible in classes. Forty (63.5%) lecturers reported that the students did Bible-based courses because it is a requirement in the university curriculum. Results revealed that students had respect for others in decision-making, as noted by 57(90.4%) lecturers. Additionally, 60(95.3%) out of 63 lecturers indicated that in reverence to God, the students exhibited growth. Further, the findings indicated that students had respect for others since they were made in the image of God, with 61(96.9%) reporting that some students exhibited servant leadership. Although lecturers reported observing skills change among their students, the findings revealed there were challenges with some of the students.

## Attitude Change

The researcher sought to establish the learner transformation measured in terms of attitude change. The findings are in Table 10.

**Table 10: Attitude Change**

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
Students who initially had a bad attitude toward Bible-based courses classes change to become the best students in the university.	0(0%)	4(6.3%)	14(22.2%)	30(47.6%)	15(23.8%)
Do not have struggles with students' class attendance in Bible core classes	4(6.6%)	10(15.9%)	13(20.6%)	18(28.6%)	18(28.6%)
Have observed some students participate in benevolence in caring for the needy	0(0%)	2(3.2%)	6(9.5%)	29(46%)	26(41.3%)
Have observed students helping other students as they are made in the image of God	0(0%)	2(3.2%)	5(7.9%)	32(50.8%)	24(38.1%)
Have observed students appreciate the history of creation	2(3.2%)	0(0%)	7(11.1%)	23(36.5%)	31(49.2%)
Have observed some students revered God in their lives	0(0%)	1(1.6%)	2(3.2%)	24(38.1%)	36(57.1%)
Have observed students develop a positive attitude towards the Christian faith.	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	28(44.4%)	35(55.6%)
I have observed students standing up for the Christian faith when challenged.	0(0%)	1(1.6%)	6(9.5%)	26(41.3%)	30(47.6%)

According to the results, 47.6 per cent of the lecturers agreed that students who initially had a bad attitude to Bible-based courses changed to become the best students in the university, with 23.8 per cent strongly agreeing with the statement. This implies that the students who initially had a bad attitude to Bible-based courses classes changed for the better. This is supported by 28.6 per cent of the lecturers who agreed that they do not have struggles with students' class attendance in the Bible core classes. In regard to Christian universities in Nairobi County instilling core values in their students, 46 per cent of the lecturers agreed that they had observed some students participate in benevolence in caring for the needy. Findings showed that 26(41.3%) strongly agreed with the statement. This implies that authentic relationships were useful in teaching of the Bible based courses.

Overall, the open-ended question about lecturers' opinions incorporating authentic relationships in teaching Bible-based courses revealed the approach was effective. Although 22 lecturers reported that they found the approach effective as it helped learners to be creative, think critically and apply effectively



what they have learnt, lecturers pointed out that it was cumbersome. This was because they had transitioned from a lecture style of teaching to problem-solving, as stated by 22 lecturers.

## Hypothesis Testing

The researcher tested the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the use of authentic relationships and learner transformation. The test was done using linear regression. The results are presented below.

### a) *Use of Authentic Relationships and Learner Transformation Summary Model*

According to the results in Table 11, the coefficient of determination (R-squared) of 0.231 indicates that 23.1 per cent of learner transformation can be explained using authentic relationships. The adjusted R-squared of 21.9 per cent implies that the authentic relationships alone without the constant variable explains only 21.9 per cent of learner transformation; the remaining percentage can be explained by other factors excluded from the model.

**Table 11: Use of Authentic Relationships and Learner Transformation Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.481 <sup>a</sup>	.231	.219	.339

### b) *Use of Authentic Relationships and Learner Transformation - ANOVA*

The study displays the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in Table 12 for the regression coefficient. The results show that the use of authentic relationships is statistically significant in explaining the learner transformation. An F-statistic of 18.342 indicates that the model is significant, which was supported by a probability value of (0.000). The reported probability of 0.000 is less than the conventional 0.05, hence significant.

**Table 12: Authentic Relationships and Learner Transformation - ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.108	1	2.108	18.342	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	7.011	61	.115		
	Total	9.119	62			

### c) *Use of Authentic Relationships and Learner Transformation Regression Weights*

The study hypothesised that the use of authentic relationships has no significant relationship to the learner transformation. From the findings, the use of authentic relationships has a positive effect on learner transformation ( $\beta = 0.454$ ,  $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ ). The results, therefore, can be interpreted to mean a unit change in the use of authentic relationships will result in an increase in learner transformation by 0.454. Since the  $p$ -value was less than 0.05, as indicated in Table 13, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. From the results of the study, it can be said that the use of authentic relationships had a significant effect on the learner transformation.

**Table 13: Authentic Relationships and Learner Transformation - Regression Weights**

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.109	.414		5.099	.000
	Authentic relationships	.454	.106	.481	4.283	.000

## Discussion

Although the study findings showed that lecturers shared their life experiences, both good and bad, which created a healthy environment with minimal power distance between the lecturers and the learners, observations were made. The self-reported data could have potential biases as opposed to if the learners were the respondents. This is because students are beneficiaries of the teachings of Bible-based courses, and they can provide an account of how these teachings have influenced them. This limits the generalisation of this study's findings. Further, the context of this study limits the findings to Christian universities in Nairobi and specifically to the teaching of Bible-based courses.

Additionally, the results suggested that the lecturers, during the teaching of Bible-based courses, helped the learners to compare Christian beliefs while being taught so that they would be able to decide on what to believe. Of concern, it was reported that some students attended the Bible-based classes because there was a class register to be signed, while still, other students shot down the Bible as the word of God. The emerging wrong doctrines should concern Christian universities and provoke a need to apply effective approaches to achieve their vision and mission. It is important to equip the students with practical tools so that they can stand the test of time, as the 21<sup>st</sup> century is ailed with many worldviews that are a threat to the Biblical worldview. Nevertheless, the fact that the students can raise issues of wrong Bible beliefs while being taught is a clear pointer that the use of authentic relationships provided the students with an environment to improve knowledge. This strengthens the learners' decision-making, which is further demonstrated in a student's behaviour, skills, and attitude.

## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

**Conclusions:** The study found that the Chartered Christian Universities in Kenya often applied authentic relationships in teaching Bible-based courses. It was established that authentic relationships had a positive effect on the learner's transformation. With the use of authentic relationships, the learners experienced knowledge change. Besides, there was a behavioural change among the learners. The study also found that the learners' skills, such as analytical and research skills, improved. Lastly, there was a change in the attitude of the learners because of the use of transformative pedagogy, particularly authentic relationships, which mainly focus on life experiences and the person as a whole. The study concludes that the use of authentic relationships has a positive and significant correlation with the learner's transformation.

**Recommendation:** This study recommends that Kenyan chartered Christian universities increase the use of authentic relationships in teaching Bible-based courses, which would assist these universities in achieving their vision and mission successfully.

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## Journal of Pedagogy and Curriculum

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