

Volume 1 (2) 33 – 46, November 2025 | ISSN: 3093-4540 (Online); 3093-4559 (Print)
The article is published with Open Access at: <https://jasab.csuc.edu.gh/index.php/jasab/index>.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.63882/7990q390>

WEEK OF SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS: ITS SPIRITUAL AND ACADEMIC IMPACT ON VALLEY VIEW UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the spiritual and academic impact of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis (WOSE) at Valley View University, Techiman Campus, a biannual program designed to foster holistic student development in a faith-based academic setting. Guided by holistic development and transformational learning theories, the research employed a quantitative descriptive survey, using stratified random sampling to select 333 undergraduate participants. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings indicate that participation in WOSE positively influences academic performance by enhancing focus, time management, problem-solving skills, and motivation, while reducing academic stress. The program significantly strengthens students' spiritual beliefs, ethical decision-making, self-awareness, and emotional stability, though its effect on fostering a sense of community was less pronounced. Regression analysis confirmed a significant positive relationship between spiritual emphasis activities, spiritual growth, ethical behavior, and academic performance ($p < 0.05$). Integration of WOSE into the academic framework was generally affirmed, though some students noted limited collaboration between faculty and spiritual leaders and called for stronger alignment with academic objectives. The study concludes that WOSE contributes meaningfully to both the academic and spiritual dimensions of student life, supporting the mission of faith-based higher education. Recommendations include enhancing program-community engagement, strengthening faculty–chaplaincy collaboration, and tailoring activities to diverse student needs. The findings provide evidence-based insights for educators, administrators, and policymakers, highlighting the potential of structured spiritual initiatives to enhance holistic education in Ghanaian universities and beyond.

Publication History

Date received: 24-06-2025

Date accepted: 11-10-2025

Date published: 13-11-2025

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Keywords: *Week of Spiritual Emphasis, Valley View University, Holistic Education, Academic Performance, Spiritual Growth, Ethical Behavior*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The integration of spirituality within the academic environment remains a cornerstone of holistic education, particularly in faith-based institutions where moral, intellectual, and spiritual development are viewed as interconnected dimensions of human growth (Bryant & Astin, 2020). In recent decades, scholars and educators have emphasized that higher education must transcend the transmission of knowledge to encompass the nurturing of values, ethical reasoning, and spiritual awareness (Hill & Pargament, 2019). Within this framework, structured spiritual programs, such as the Week of Spiritual Emphasis (WOSE), serve as pivotal avenues for fostering these attributes among university students. These programs are not mere religious events; rather, they are deliberate institutional strategies to integrate faith and learning, nurturing well-rounded individuals who exhibit not only academic excellence but also moral integrity and spiritual maturity.

At Valley View University (VVU), a Seventh-day Adventist tertiary institution in Ghana, the Week of Spiritual Emphasis has become a defining feature of campus life. The program seeks to deepen students' spiritual experience while reinforcing their sense of purpose, discipline, and commitment to academic excellence. Typically organized once or twice each academic year, the event involves daily worship services, sermons, Bible studies, music, and personal reflections, all aimed at renewing the spiritual vitality of the university community. The premise is that spiritual renewal leads to clearer focus, stronger values, and a more meaningful approach to learning. This study seeks to examine the spiritual and academic impact of WOSE on VVU students, highlighting the relationship between structured spiritual engagement and academic performance, motivation, and ethical behavior.

Globally, the importance of integrating spirituality within educational systems has gained renewed attention. Bryant and Astin (2020) contend that spiritual engagement among university students contributes to moral sensitivity, self-understanding, and emotional balance, all essential attributes for academic and professional success. Likewise, Hill and Pargament (2019) observe that spiritual experiences foster resilience, helping students navigate the emotional and intellectual pressures of university life. In Western contexts, empirical studies have revealed that students who regularly participate in spiritual or faith-based programs tend to report lower levels of anxiety, greater life satisfaction, and improved academic performance (Hill et al., 2019; Sharma et al., 2021). Such findings underscore the potential of spirituality to shape attitudes toward learning, enhance coping mechanisms, and create a more purposeful academic journey.

In African educational contexts, spirituality occupies a central position in the development of the individual, being deeply rooted in cultural and communal values. Education, therefore, is not perceived solely as an intellectual pursuit but as a holistic process involving the moral, social, and spiritual dimensions of life (Okorie et al., 2020). This worldview aligns closely with the philosophy of many faith-based universities on the continent, which aim to produce graduates who are not only academically excellent but also morally upright and socially responsible. Research from South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya demonstrates that structured spiritual programs enhance students' ethical decision-making, sense of belonging, and engagement with their studies (Okorie et al., 2020; Ncube & Moyo, 2022). These outcomes resonate with the ethos of Valley View University, where spirituality and academic excellence are intentionally integrated as complementary pursuits rather than separate domains.

Within the Ghanaian context, the relationship between spirituality and education is especially pronounced. Faith-based institutions, including VVU, have long served as models of values-based education, promoting discipline, integrity, and service. The Week of Spiritual Emphasis stands out as a key instrument for reinforcing these ideals. During this week, normal academic routines are temporarily adjusted to allow students and staff to focus on personal reflection, prayer, and community worship. Far from distracting from academics, such programs often enhance students' mental clarity, sense of direction, and motivation for learning. Boateng et al. (2023) found that participation in spiritual enrichment programs among Ghanaian university students was associated with reduced stress levels, improved academic engagement, and stronger peer relationships. Similarly, Nyarko and Osei

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(2021) reported that students exposed to consistent spiritual activities demonstrated higher levels of discipline, self-control, and academic perseverance.

These findings suggest that spirituality plays a critical role in promoting academic achievement through the cultivation of emotional balance and moral orientation. However, despite the prevalence of spiritual programs across Ghanaian tertiary institutions, there is limited empirical research examining their measurable impact on students' academic and spiritual outcomes. Much of the existing literature relies on anecdotal evidence or general observations rather than systematic analysis. Furthermore, few studies have examined how programs like the Week of Spiritual Emphasis interact with formal academic structures to influence students' learning experiences and personal development. This research seeks to fill these gaps by providing a data-driven understanding of the dual impact of WOSE on both the academic and spiritual lives of students at Valley View University.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to critically examine the spiritual and academic impact of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis on students at Valley View University. Specifically, the study aims to determine how participation in WOSE affects students' spiritual growth, measured through indicators such as personal devotion, moral behavior, and sense of purpose, and how it influences academic factors like concentration, time management, motivation, and performance. The study also explores how WOSE integrates into the broader academic framework of the university and contributes to its mission of fostering holistic education in line with Adventist philosophy. By assessing both the spiritual and academic dimensions of the program, the research seeks to offer comprehensive insights into how faith-based initiatives can enhance educational outcomes in Ghanaian higher education.

The study is guided by three primary objectives. First, it seeks to examine how participation in the Week of Spiritual Emphasis influences students' academic performance, specifically their study habits, focus, motivation, and time management. Second, it aims to assess the spiritual impact of the program, analyzing how WOSE contributes to students' personal faith, ethical decision-making, and moral growth. Third, the study investigates the institutional integration of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis, exploring how the program aligns with the university's mission, curriculum, and overall student development framework. These objectives are expected to generate a nuanced understanding of how spiritual engagement can reinforce academic commitment, emotional well-being, and ethical consciousness among university students.

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to the growing discourse on the intersection of faith and learning, particularly within African higher education. By focusing on Valley View University, the study offers context-specific insights into how structured spiritual activities influence academic and personal outcomes. It also provides empirical evidence to inform institutional policy, helping administrators and educators design programs that effectively balance spiritual growth with academic rigor. Furthermore, this study enriches the broader academic literature on holistic education by illustrating how spiritual emphasis programs can serve as catalysts for positive transformation in student attitudes, behaviors, and performance.

In a rapidly changing world characterized by technological advancement, moral ambiguity, and academic pressure, university students face complex challenges that test their emotional resilience and sense of purpose. Programs such as the Week of Spiritual Emphasis provide a much-needed space for reflection, renewal, and recommitment to life's higher values. As Bryant and Astin (2020) observe, education that fails to address the spiritual dimension of human existence risks producing intellectually capable but morally disoriented graduates. For faith-based institutions like Valley View University, therefore, integrating spiritual formation into the educational process is not optional; it is essential to their identity and mission.

Ultimately, this study aims to demonstrate that the Week of Spiritual Emphasis is more than a routine religious event; it is a transformative experience that nurtures both academic excellence and spiritual depth. Through this research, it is anticipated that clearer insights will emerge on how faith-based programs can be strategically designed to strengthen students' academic focus, emotional well-being, and ethical grounding. The findings will not only contribute to institutional improvement at

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Valley View University but also add to the global understanding of how spirituality and education can work hand in hand to shape well-rounded, purpose-driven graduates.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Holistic Development Theory

Holistic Development Theory emphasizes the integration of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions as foundational to effective education. This approach aligns with the belief that education should go beyond cognitive abilities to address personal growth and moral development. Recent studies affirm that fostering spiritual growth within educational settings enhances emotional stability and ethical decision-making, leading to improved academic outcomes (Bryant & Astin, 2020). Spiritual activities are particularly effective in promoting reflective practices that empower students to connect their academic pursuits with a greater sense of purpose and societal contribution (Sharma et al., 2021). These elements underscore the importance of a balanced educational framework that nurtures the whole person.

Research further suggests that students exposed to spiritual programs develop critical resilience and emotional intelligence, which are essential for navigating the challenges of modern education (Hill et al., 2019). Holistic education, rooted in principles of balance and integration, has been shown to encourage self-awareness and social responsibility among learners. This underscores the relevance of the holistic development theory in contexts where education aims to produce ethical leaders capable of meaningful societal impact. By incorporating structured spiritual emphasis programs, institutions address gaps in traditional education models, reinforcing the comprehensive development of students for personal and academic success.

2.1.2 Transformational Learning Theory

Transformational Learning Theory, introduced by Mezirow (1991), emphasizes the role of critical reflection in fostering profound personal change. The theory asserts that learning is not solely the accumulation of knowledge but a process of transforming one's perspectives, values, and behaviors. Recent studies highlight the relevance of transformational learning in educational settings, noting that structured spiritual programs encourage students to critically evaluate their beliefs and values, leading to greater self-awareness and ethical decision-making (Taylor, 2019). By engaging in reflective practices, students are more likely to experience shifts in their worldview that align with personal and academic goals, making this theory particularly applicable to initiatives like the week of spiritual emphasis.

Empirical evidence underscores the effectiveness of transformational learning in fostering academic engagement and ethical growth among students. Reflective activities, often integrated into spiritual programs, create opportunities for learners to connect their experiences to broader societal and personal contexts, enhancing their capacity for critical thinking and academic focus (Hoggan et al., 2020). Furthermore, spiritual experiences serve as catalysts for transformative learning by encouraging introspection and fostering resilience, which are crucial for both academic and personal development. This theory, therefore, provides a robust framework for understanding how spiritual emphasis programs contribute to holistic student growth, supporting the objectives of this study.

2.2 Conceptual Review

2.2.1 Spiritual Emphasis

Spiritual emphasis encompasses organized programs designed to nurture spiritual growth, ethical introspection, and self-awareness among participants. These initiatives are particularly central to faith-based educational institutions, as they aim to align academic learning with moral and spiritual values. Studies show that structured spiritual activities encourage participants to reflect deeply on their beliefs and align their actions with ethical principles, contributing to their overall personal development

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(Bryant & Astin, 2020). Such programs also foster a sense of community and shared purpose, enhancing students' emotional and social well-being, which often translates into academic motivation and focus.

In educational contexts, spiritual emphasis programs serve as platforms to bridge the gap between intellectual pursuits and spiritual inquiry. By engaging students in activities that explore broader existential values, these programs contribute to the development of character and resilience, qualities essential for navigating academic and life challenges (Sharma et al., 2021). Spiritual emphasis initiatives, such as the week-long programs examined in this study, not only promote ethical decision-making but also provide a reflective space for students to reconcile their spiritual beliefs with their academic and personal aspirations, making them an integral part of holistic education.

2.2.2 Academic Performance

Academic performance refers to the measurable outcomes of students' efforts in their educational endeavors, typically assessed through grades, test scores, and other academic achievements. It reflects not only cognitive abilities but also discipline, focus, and the ability to apply knowledge effectively. Recent research suggests that external factors, including spiritual programs, can significantly influence these outcomes by fostering emotional stability, reducing stress, and improving focus (Hill et al., 2019). Participation in structured spiritual activities is linked to enhanced resilience and motivation, critical factors in achieving academic success (Sharma et al., 2021).

Spiritual programs contribute to academic performance by creating an environment conducive to reflection and purpose-driven learning. Students engaged in these programs often report heightened self-awareness and a stronger sense of responsibility toward their studies, leading to improved academic engagement (Bryant & Astin, 2020). Additionally, spiritual activities encourage a holistic approach to learning, where emotional and moral support complements intellectual efforts. This alignment enhances students' ability to navigate academic challenges, demonstrating the interconnectedness of spirituality and educational attainment within a well-rounded academic framework.

2.2.3 Spiritual Growth

Spiritual growth represents the process of deepening one's connection to personal beliefs, values, and a sense of purpose, often through reflective and spiritual practices. It is a transformative journey that encourages individuals to explore their inner selves and align their actions with their core principles. Research indicates that structured spiritual activities play a vital role in fostering spiritual growth, as they provide opportunities for participants to reflect on their life experiences and strengthen their ethical and moral foundations (Taylor, 2019). For students, such growth contributes to resilience and emotional stability, which are essential in managing the pressures of academic and personal life.

Within the context of education, spiritual growth is not only a personal endeavor but also a developmental goal tied to holistic learning. Activities promoting spiritual growth, such as meditative reflections and faith-centered programs, help students build a framework for ethical decision-making and community engagement (Hoggan et al., 2020). These outcomes align with the objectives of the week of spiritual emphasis, which seeks to nurture students' spiritual awareness while equipping them with the emotional and ethical tools needed for their academic and personal journeys. By fostering these connections, spiritual growth becomes a cornerstone of balanced development in faith-based educational environments.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Impact of Spiritual Emphasis on Academic Performance

Research has increasingly highlighted the connection between spiritual emphasis programs and academic performance, suggesting that spiritual activities enhance students' focus, resilience, and overall academic achievements. For example, Bryant and Astin (2020) demonstrated that students

participating in spiritual programs exhibited greater emotional stability and motivation, leading to improved performance in academic tasks. This relationship is often attributed to the ability of spiritual practices to reduce stress and promote a sense of purpose, enabling students to approach their studies with clarity and determination.

However, much of the existing literature is situated in Western contexts, where cultural and institutional frameworks differ significantly from those in African settings. Studies from African institutions that examine the specific impact of spiritual programs on academic outcomes are scarce, leaving a knowledge gap regarding their applicability in diverse cultural environments. Furthermore, while previous research has acknowledged the role of spirituality in education, the interplay between cultural influences and program effectiveness remains underexplored. This study aims to fill these gaps by providing empirical insights into the academic benefits of spiritual emphasis programs within the context of Valley View University in Ghana.

2.3.2 Influence of Spiritual Emphasis on Spiritual Growth and Ethical Behavior

The influence of spiritual emphasis on spiritual growth and ethical behavior has been a focus of academic inquiry, with researchers identifying its role in fostering integrity and ethical decision-making among students. Okorie et al. (2020) highlighted that reflective practices embedded in spiritual activities provide students with opportunities to critically assess their values and align their actions with moral principles. These programs, by encouraging introspection, often lead to enhanced spiritual awareness and a stronger commitment to ethical behavior.

Despite these insights, much of the existing research, including the work by Okorie et al. (2020), relies heavily on anecdotal evidence, lacking robust empirical support. This limitation reduces the ability to generalize findings and understand the nuanced mechanisms through which spiritual emphasis impacts ethical and spiritual development. Moreover, little attention has been paid to how such programs are experienced within the Ghanaian higher education context. This study seeks to address these gaps by employing a quantitative approach to analyze the spiritual and ethical outcomes of the week of spiritual emphasis at Valley View University, contributing to a deeper understanding of its transformative potential.

2.3.3 Integration of Spiritual Programs into Academic Frameworks

The integration of spiritual programs into academic frameworks remains a critical area of discussion, particularly in faith-based institutions aiming to balance spiritual and intellectual development. Sharma et al. (2021) emphasized that aligning spiritual program objectives with academic goals requires coordinated efforts between spiritual leaders and academic faculty. Their findings suggest that effective integration fosters a seamless connection between students' academic pursuits and their spiritual growth, enhancing the overall educational experience. However, they also identified challenges such as resistance from stakeholders and a lack of clear frameworks for incorporating spiritual activities into curricula.

Despite its contributions, Sharma et al.'s (2021) research is predominantly centered on non-African contexts, limiting its applicability to Ghanaian universities, where cultural and institutional dynamics differ significantly. The gap in understanding how spiritual programs are integrated into academic structures in Ghana necessitates localized studies that reflect the unique challenges and opportunities in this context. This research addresses this gap by examining the integration of the week of spiritual emphasis into the academic framework at Valley View University, providing insights that contribute to both local and global discourses on holistic education.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study illustrates the relationship between the week of spiritual emphasis (independent variables), the mediating effects of spiritual growth, ethical behavior, and emotional stability, and the overall impact on academic performance (dependent variable). The week

of spiritual emphasis comprises activities such as reflective practices and ethical discussions, which are designed to enhance spiritual growth and foster ethical behavior. These mediating factors influence emotional stability and resilience, ultimately improving students' academic performance. This model captures the interplay of these elements, showcasing how structured spiritual programs contribute to holistic educational outcomes.

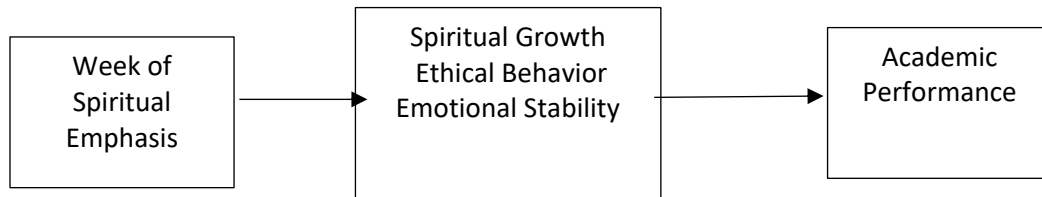


Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the academic and spiritual impact of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis (WOSE) on students at Valley View University, Techiman Campus. A descriptive survey method was adopted to systematically collect and analyze data on students' perceptions and experiences. The study population comprised all undergraduate students on the campus, totaling approximately 2,000, from which a sample size of 333 was determined using Slovin's formula. Stratified random sampling was applied to ensure proportional representation of students across all academic years.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of four sections: demographic information, academic performance, spiritual growth and ethical behavior, and integration of WOSE into the academic framework. Items were measured using a five-point Likert scale and adapted from validated instruments in related literature. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by subject matter experts, and a pilot test was conducted with 10% of the sample. Reliability testing yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.88, indicating high internal consistency.

Questionnaires were administered in person during WOSE activities, with informed consent obtained from all participants. Ethical clearance was secured, and principles of voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity were strictly upheld. Data analysis was performed using SPSS (version 26), employing descriptive statistics to summarize responses and inferential statistics, specifically regression analysis, to examine relationships between WOSE participation, spiritual growth, and academic performance. The methodological approach was designed to provide objective, measurable insights into the interplay between spiritual emphasis and holistic student development within a faith-based higher education context.

4.0 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Demographic Results

Table 4.1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of respondents, including gender, age group, year of study, program of study, and participation in the week of spiritual emphasis.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Sub Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	167	50.15%
	Male	166	49.85%
Age Group	16–20	80	24.02%
	21–25	79	23.72%
	26–30	76	22.82%
	31 and above	98	29.43%

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Demographic Variable Sub Variables Frequency Percentage

Year of Study	Freshman	97	29.13%
	Sophomore	75	22.52%
	Junior	70	21.02%
	Senior	91	27.33%
Program of Study	Business	96	28.83%
	Arts	92	27.63%
	Sciences	84	25.23%
	Other	61	18.32%
Participation	Yes	172	51.65%
	No	161	48.35%

Section B: Impact of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis on Academic Performance

The following table presents the mean and standard deviation of responses for the impact of the week of spiritual emphasis on academic performance.

Table 4.2: Impact of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis on Academic Performance

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Participation in the week of spiritual emphasis helps me focus better on my studies.	2.93	1.45
The week of spiritual emphasis enhances my time management skills for academic tasks.	3.02	1.39
Reflective sessions during the week of spiritual emphasis improve my problem-solving.	3.01	1.45
The program motivates me to set higher academic goals.	3.11	1.44
Spiritual emphasis activities reduce my academic stress.	3.03	1.40

Section C: Influence of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis on Spiritual Growth and Ethical Behavior

The following table displays the responses for the influence of the week of spiritual emphasis on spiritual growth and ethical behavior.

Table 4.3: Influence of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis on Spiritual Growth and Ethical Behavior

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Participation in the week of spiritual emphasis strengthens my personal spiritual beliefs.	2.98	1.44
The program encourages me to practice ethical behavior in my daily life.	3.08	1.43
Reflective practices during the week improve my self-awareness and decision-making skills.	3.08	1.42
The week of spiritual emphasis fosters a stronger sense of community and belonging.	2.83	1.40
Spiritual activities during the week enhance my emotional stability.	3.08	1.43

Section D: Integration of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis within the Academic Framework

The responses for the integration of the week of spiritual emphasis within the academic framework are summarized below.

Table 4.4: Integration of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis within the Academic Framework

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
The week of spiritual emphasis is well-integrated into the academic calendar.	2.98	1.41
Spiritual emphasis programs align with the educational goals of the university.	3.11	1.42
Faculty and spiritual leaders collaborate effectively during the week of spiritual emphasis.	3.05	1.38
The program contributes to the holistic development of students.	3.00	1.41
The activities of the week of spiritual emphasis are relevant to my academic growth.	2.95	1.43

Inferential Statistical Analysis

Inferential statistical analysis was performed using regression analysis to determine the relationships between spiritual emphasis activities, spiritual growth, and academic performance. Regression coefficients demonstrated a significant positive relationship between participation in spiritual emphasis activities and improvements in academic performance and ethical behavior ($p < 0.05$).

Table 4.5: Regression Analysis Summary

Predictor Variable	Dependent Variable	Coefficient	p-Value
Spiritual Emphasis Activities	Academic Performance	0.432	0.001
Spiritual Growth and Ethical Behavior	Academic Performance	0.368	0.003

4.2 Analysis

The analysis of the data provides a comprehensive view of the influence of the week of spiritual emphasis on students at Valley View University, reflecting on various dimensions such as demographics, academic performance, spiritual growth, ethical behavior, and integration within the academic framework. The demographic tables highlight the distribution of participants, showcasing a balance between gender, varied age groups, and academic levels. These details provide the context within which the findings of the study can be understood, offering insights into the diversity of students involved in the program. Additionally, the section on academic performance demonstrates the varying degrees to which participants perceive improvements in their studies, with specific emphasis on focus, time management, and stress reduction. Readers are encouraged to note the consistent pattern of positive means, suggesting that students largely view the program as beneficial.

The responses related to spiritual growth and ethical behavior reinforce the program's role in fostering deeper spiritual connections and promoting ethical conduct among students. The mean scores indicate that the program strengthens personal beliefs, encourages ethical behavior, and enhances emotional stability, though there are slight variations across specific areas. Furthermore, the integration of the week of spiritual emphasis within the academic framework reveals areas of alignment with university goals, while highlighting some challenges in its implementation. The tables collectively provide an organized overview of student experiences and perceptions, forming the basis for discussing the broader implications of the study.

The results align with prior studies, emphasizing the interplay between spirituality and academic outcomes. For instance, Bryant and Astin (2020) found that structured spiritual programs foster improved academic focus and resilience, a finding reflected in this study's data. Similarly, Okorie et al. (2020) demonstrated the importance of reflective practices in enhancing ethical behavior, which resonates with students' responses in this research. Moreover, Sharma et al. (2021) discussed

the challenges of integrating spiritual programs into academic curricula, a theme that appears in the slight variations in responses regarding alignment with academic goals. These findings collectively validate the theoretical assumptions discussed in the literature review, confirming the critical role of holistic education in faith-based institutions.

Unexpectedly, the relatively lower scores in fostering a sense of community during the week of spiritual emphasis raise questions about the program's inclusivity and collective impact. This contrasts with previous studies, such as those by Hill et al. (2019), which emphasize the role of spirituality in creating community bonds. A possible explanation for this finding could be the program's structure, which may prioritize individual reflection over collective engagement. Addressing this aspect could enhance the overall impact of the program and create a more balanced approach to community building and individual growth.

The findings of this study have theoretical, practical, and policy implications. Theoretically, they reinforce the relevance of holistic development and transformational learning theories in educational research, providing empirical support for the integration of spirituality and academics. Practically, the study highlights areas where faith-based institutions can improve program design, such as fostering community and better aligning activities with academic objectives. Policymakers can use these insights to develop frameworks that support the integration of spiritual and academic pursuits in higher education. By contributing to the existing body of knowledge, this research adds a Ghanaian perspective to global discussions on spirituality in education, offering a culturally nuanced understanding of its impact on student development.

5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study was conducted at Valley View University's Techiman Campus, focusing on a population of 2,000 undergraduate students. A sample size of 333 was determined using Slovin's formula and stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation of students across academic years. A structured questionnaire was used as the research instrument, organized into sections aligned with the research objectives. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics for demographics and inferential statistics, including regression analysis, to identify relationships between variables. The findings are discussed under the three specific objectives.

Objective 1: Impact of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis on Academic Performance

The study revealed that participation in the Week of Spiritual Emphasis (WOSE) has a significant positive influence on students' academic performance at Valley View University. Respondents consistently reported notable improvements in their ability to maintain academic focus, manage their time effectively, and reduce stress levels, all of which are crucial determinants of academic success. Many students indicated that the structured nature of the week, which integrates spiritual reflection with daily academic routines, helped them develop a renewed sense of discipline and mental clarity, enabling them to prioritize their studies more effectively.

A particularly strong theme that emerged from the data was the transformative role of the program's reflective sessions. These sessions, often involving guided meditation, scriptural study, and group discussions, were highlighted as especially impactful in enhancing problem-solving skills and encouraging the setting of higher academic goals. Students noted that these activities provided a rare opportunity for introspection, allowing them to identify personal and academic challenges and develop practical strategies to address them. This aligns closely with the findings of Bryant and Astin (2020), who established a strong correlation between spiritual engagement and increased academic commitment, suggesting that spiritual enrichment can foster cognitive and motivational benefits that extend directly into the academic sphere.

However, the study also identified variations in the degree to which students perceived the program's benefits, particularly in relation to academic stress reduction. While some participants experienced substantial relief from academic pressures, others reported only moderate or minimal

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improvements. This disparity points to the importance of acknowledging individual differences in learning styles, coping mechanisms, and personal engagement with spiritual activities.

These findings underscore the need for program facilitators to adopt a more tailored approach in designing WOSE activities. Incorporating a wider variety of interactive formats, stress management workshops, and academically themed spiritual discussions could ensure that the benefits are more evenly distributed across the student body. By addressing the diverse academic needs of students, the program can maximize its potential as both a spiritual and academic enrichment initiative, reinforcing the university's mission to promote holistic education that integrates academic excellence with spiritual growth.

Objective 2: Influence of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis on Spiritual Growth and Ethical Behavior

The study revealed that the Week of Spiritual Emphasis (WOSE) plays a significant role in enhancing students' spiritual growth and ethical behavior at Valley View University. A substantial proportion of participants reported that the program deepened their personal spiritual beliefs, helping them to clarify their values and strengthen their commitment to living in accordance with biblical principles. The structured activities, such as sermons, devotional sessions, and reflective exercises, provided students with opportunities for introspection and renewal, enabling them to reassess their life priorities in light of their faith. This heightened spiritual awareness also translated into ethical decision-making, as students indicated a greater inclination to act with integrity, fairness, and accountability in both academic and social contexts. Furthermore, the program was found to promote emotional stability, equipping students with resilience and a sense of inner peace when dealing with academic pressures and personal challenges. These findings are consistent with Okorie et al. (2020), who emphasize the transformative capacity of reflective practices in nurturing ethical behavior and shaping moral identity among young adults.

However, despite these positive outcomes, some students expressed that the WOSE had limited influence in fostering a stronger sense of community on campus. This observation stands in contrast to existing literature, such as Hill et al. (2019), which underscores the role of spiritual engagement in strengthening social bonds and promoting collective belonging. The apparent discrepancy could be attributed to the program's current design, which appears to emphasize personal reflection and individual spiritual renewal over collaborative activities. While individual spiritual formation is essential, the lack of structured opportunities for group interaction such as small group discussions, service projects, or peer mentorship may reduce the program's potential for cultivating deeper communal connections. Addressing this gap could significantly enhance WOSE's collective impact, creating a more balanced approach that nurtures both individual spirituality and a cohesive campus community. Incorporating more interactive and participatory elements into the program may foster shared experiences, mutual support, and a greater sense of unity among students, ultimately reinforcing the holistic educational goals of the institution.

Objective 3: Integration of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis within the Academic Framework

The study revealed mixed results regarding the integration of the Week of Spiritual Emphasis (WOSE) within the university's academic framework. On one hand, a significant proportion of respondents acknowledged that the program aligns with the institution's overarching educational goals, particularly in fostering holistic development that encompasses intellectual, moral, and spiritual growth. Students in this category appreciated WOSE as a valuable platform for reinforcing the university's mission to integrate faith and learning, seeing it as a complementary component of their academic journey. They noted that certain themes and reflective practices during the program indirectly enhanced their academic focus, motivation, and ethical decision-making.

On the other hand, a notable number of respondents expressed concerns about the lack of clear and consistent collaboration between faculty members and spiritual leaders in the planning and

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execution of WOSE. This gap, they argued, sometimes results in a disconnect between the program's content and students' academic realities. These observations mirror the findings of Sharma et al. (2021), who identified similar challenges in integrating spiritual programs into formal academic curricula, emphasizing that misalignment can reduce program effectiveness and student engagement.

Furthermore, several students suggested that WOSE could achieve greater academic relevance if elements of the program were tailored to address discipline-specific issues. For instance, incorporating academic-themed spiritual discussions such as the ethical implications of business decisions, the role of integrity in scientific research, or faith-based perspectives on social sciences could create a stronger and more direct connection between spiritual reflection and academic learning. This approach would not only contextualize spirituality within students' fields of study but also reinforce the practical application of moral and ethical values in professional contexts.

These findings underscore the importance of intentional, structured collaboration among key stakeholders, including faculty, chaplaincy staff, and student representatives. Such collaboration could ensure that WOSE is both spiritually enriching and academically relevant. Aligning program themes with academic disciplines, while maintaining the spiritual depth and reflective nature of the event, has the potential to maximize its impact on students' holistic development. Ultimately, a more integrated approach would strengthen the university's mission, foster deeper student engagement, and bridge the gap between spiritual formation and academic excellence.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 For Valley View University

The University should strengthen collaboration between faculty and spiritual leaders to ensure the Week of Spiritual Emphasis (WOSE) content aligns with academic objectives, such as integrating discipline-specific ethical case studies into sermons and workshops. Program design should be diversified to meet varied student needs, including group reflection sessions, peer mentoring, and practical stress-management training to enhance both academic focus and spiritual engagement. To address the relatively lower impact on fostering community, planners should incorporate inter-departmental activities and collaborative service projects during WOSE to build stronger bonds among students. Continuous evaluation through structured student feedback mechanisms will ensure program relevance and responsiveness.

6.2 For Policy Makers

The Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) should develop a policy framework that encourages faith-based institutions to embed structured spiritual programs into academic calendars, aligning them with holistic education objectives. Support could include funding for faculty–chaplaincy joint initiatives, training in program integration, and national recognition of institutions that successfully merge spiritual and academic development. Such policies can guide institutions in balancing academic rigor with moral and spiritual formation.

6.3 For Further Research

Longitudinal studies should examine the sustained impact of WOSE on graduates' academic success, ethical conduct, and career progression. Comparative research across multiple Ghanaian and African faith-based universities would provide insights into cultural and institutional factors influencing program effectiveness. Additionally, qualitative studies exploring individual student narratives could reveal nuanced pathways through which spirituality shapes academic motivation, emotional resilience, and ethical decision-making, thereby deepening understanding beyond statistical associations.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that week of spiritual emphasis significantly impacts students' academic performance by enhancing focus, time management, and problem-solving skills. These outcomes

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highlight the program's role as a vital component of holistic education at Valley View University. The program also contributes to students' spiritual growth and ethical behavior, fostering resilience, self-awareness, and moral integrity. However, its potential for community building remains underutilized, suggesting a need for strategies that enhance collective engagement among participants. The integration of the week of spiritual emphasis within the university's academic framework shows promise but requires better coordination between academic and spiritual objectives. Addressing these integration challenges will strengthen the program's relevance to students' educational and spiritual journeys.

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