

MAINTAINING CHRISTIAN VIRTUES AND ETHOS IN CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITIES IN GHANA: THE REALTY, CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD

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INTRODUCTION

- Corporate world search for people with strong moral integrity, honesty and hard work apart from academic credentials;
- Most public universities are less concerned about such Christian values;
- Christian universities are established for a holistic Christocentric education – integrating sound Christian virtues into academic training;
- **What makes a university a Christian University?**
 - Christ-centeredness;
 - Mission mindedness;
 - Discipleship focused;
 - Staff appointment regarded as a call;

Introduction (Con't)

- **Christ-centeredness:**

- Jesus Christ seen as the centre of every activity in the University;
- Helps staff and students build personal relationship with Christ;
- Helps articulate faith in real life experiences in today's changing world;

- **Mission mindedness:**

- University campus seen as mission field where everyone is heaven candidate;
- Calls for spiritual discernment to design mission focused strategies and programmes;

- **Discipleship focused:**

- Creating enabling environment to help staff/students have continuous relationship with Christ;

- **Staff appointment regarded as a call**

- University staff see their appoint as a call to ministry than a career;
- Staff see Christ as their employer;

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To examine the realities and challenges of maintaining Christian virtues and ethos in universities in the light of secularization and modernity in contemporary society;
- To recommend some helpful practical ways in addressing the challenges.

METHODOLOGY

- Mixed method was used for data gathering;
- Primary data collected from a sample of 72 selected from students (45), lecturers (15) and administrators (12) from 3 Private universities;
- SPSS used for data analysis using descriptive statistics;
- Sources of secondary data: websites, student's handbooks, policy documents of the universities

University	Tradition	Established as theology school in:	Started as University College in:
CSUC	Evangelical	1974	2006
PUC	Pentecostal	1954	2004
MUC	Orthodox	1835	2000

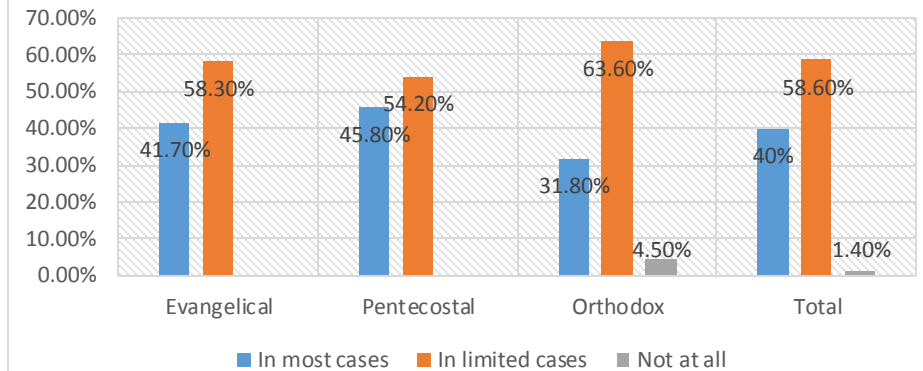
LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Possibility of biases in the self assessment which were subjective;
- Lack of common understanding about issues such as discipline, modesty, opposite sex relationship -Thus, differences in responses may be perceptual.

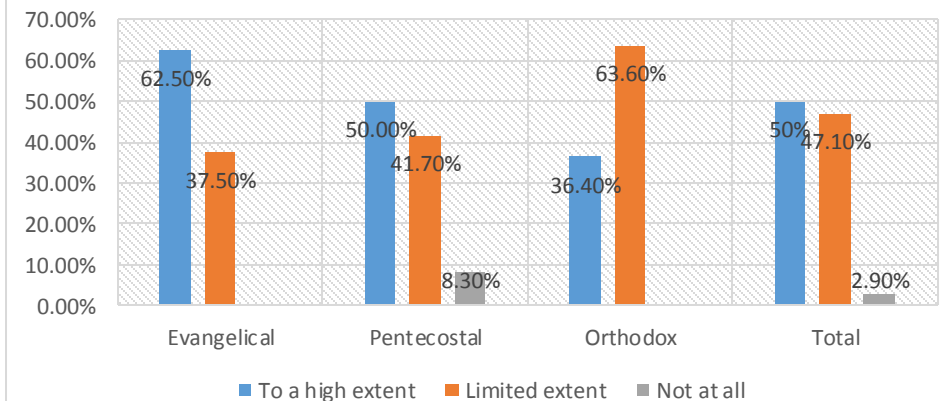
REALITIES - Integrating Christian Principles And Virtues Into Academic Programmes

- CSUC introduced Faith and Practice Programme (FAPP) –
 - a Christ-centered mentorship programme;
 - Comprised 94 Mentor Groups which meet periodically to discuss specific topics;
- PUC also has a similar programme where Faculty and staff mentor some students;
- Study shows that mostly lecturers integrate biblical principles in their lectures “in limited case” (58.6%)
- Lecturers present themselves as Christians “to a large extent” (50%)

Lecturers' integration of biblical principles in their lectures

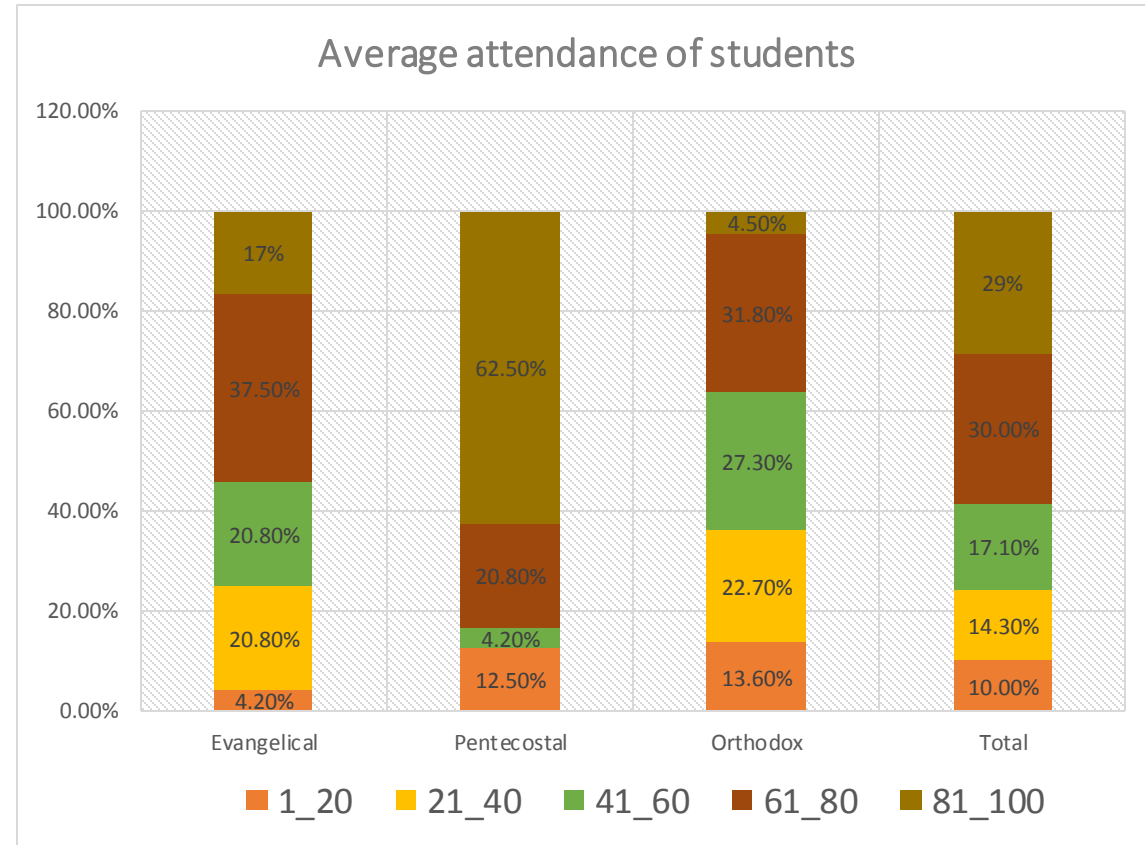


Lecturers present themselves as christians in their lecture rooms

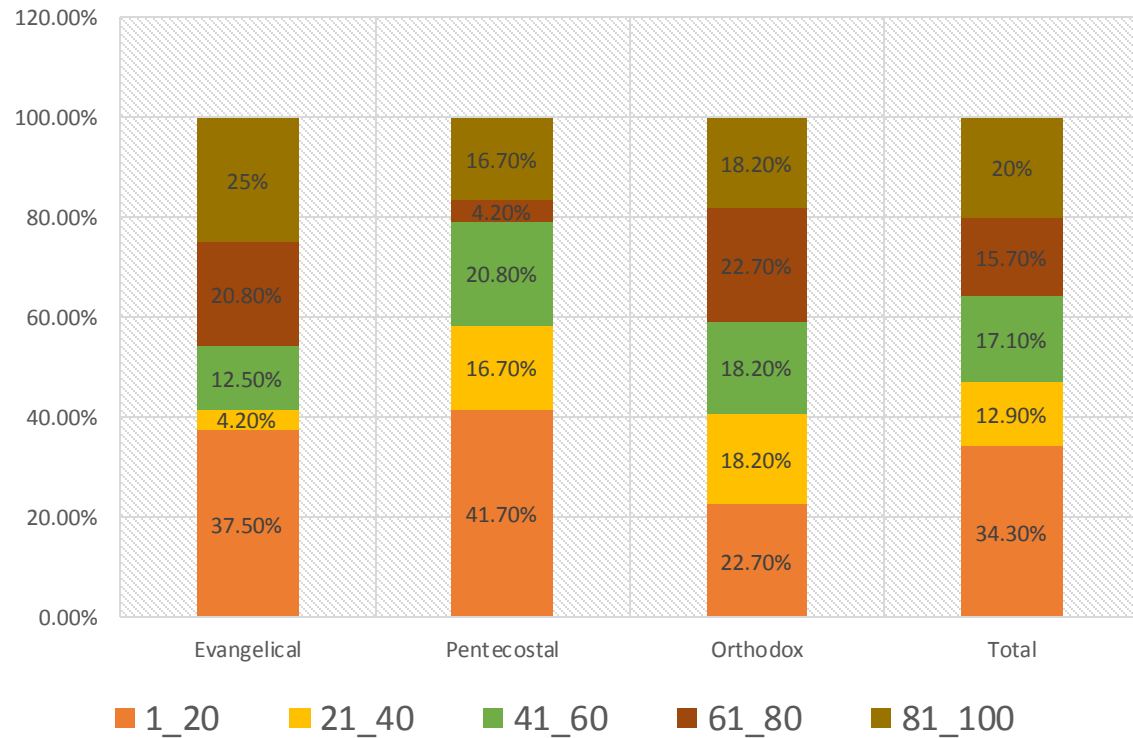


REALITIES – Chaplaincy Programmes on Campuses and Participation of Students and Staff

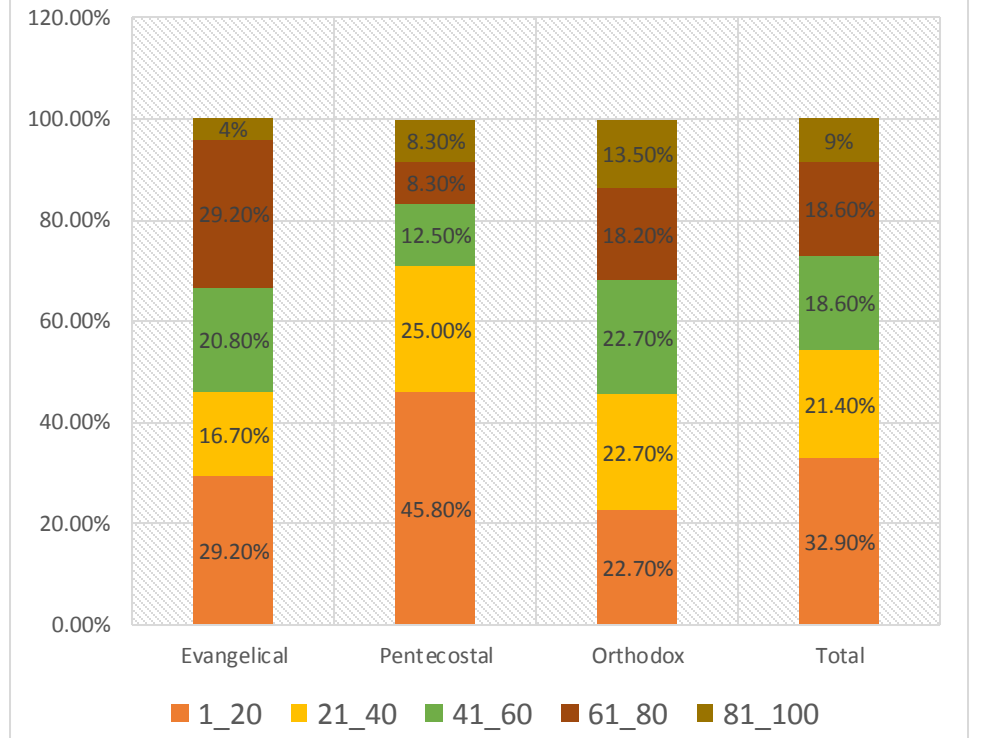
- The Universities organize regular weekly service;
 - 30% of respondents said 61-80% of students participate;
 - 34.3% of respondents said 1-20% of lecturers participate;
 - 32.9% of respondents said 1-20% of other staff participate.



Average attendance of lectures

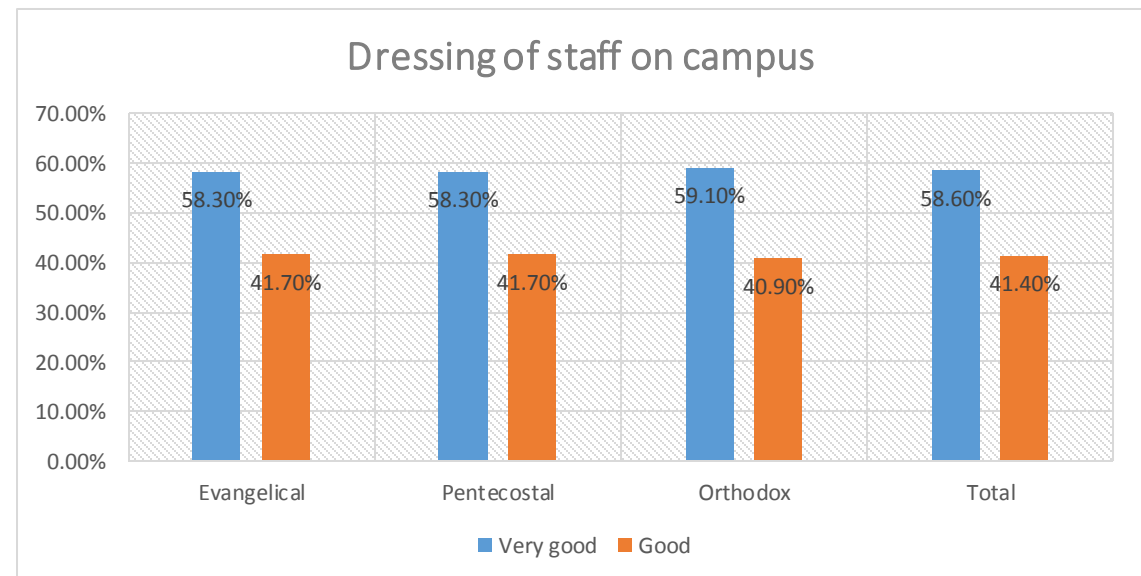
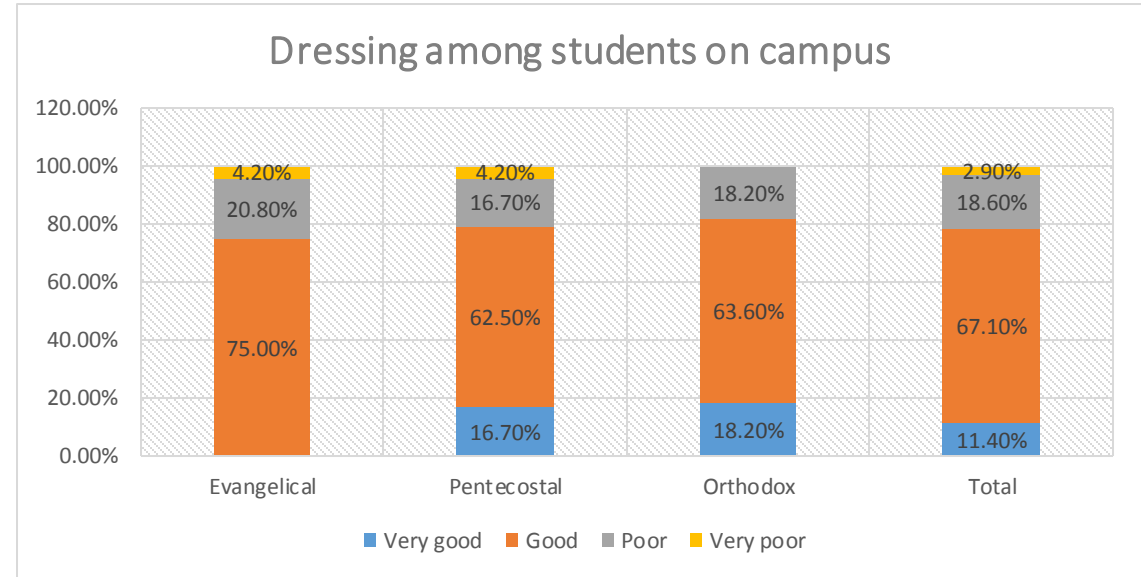


Average attendance of other staff



REALITIES – Modesty on Campus

- All study universities have dress codes for students;
- **These are not seriously enforced by the authorities;**
- Study shows dressing on the campuses is “progressively good”
 - Among student – good (67.1%)
 - Among staff – very good (58.6%)
- Males with very good dressing (40%) is higher than that of females (24.3%)

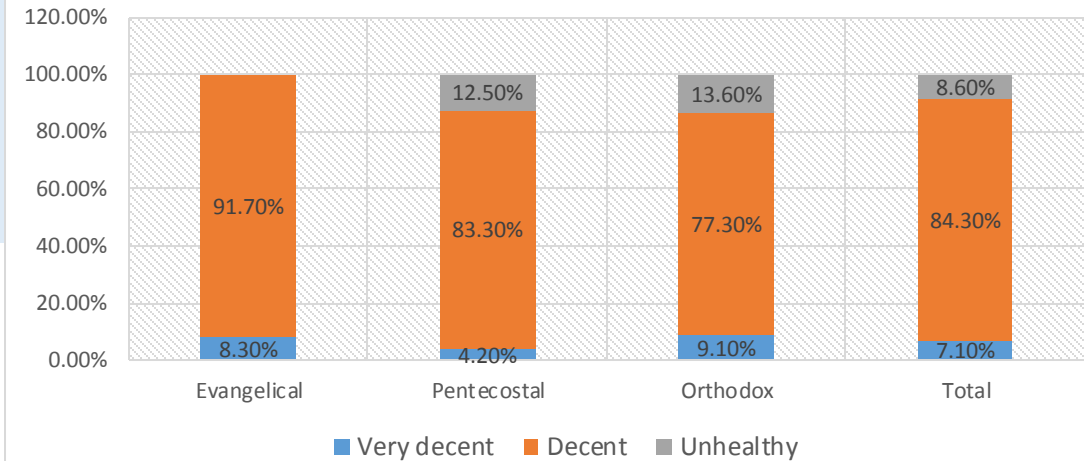


REALITIES – Opposite Sex Relationship, Discipline and Enforcement of Christian Principles on Campus

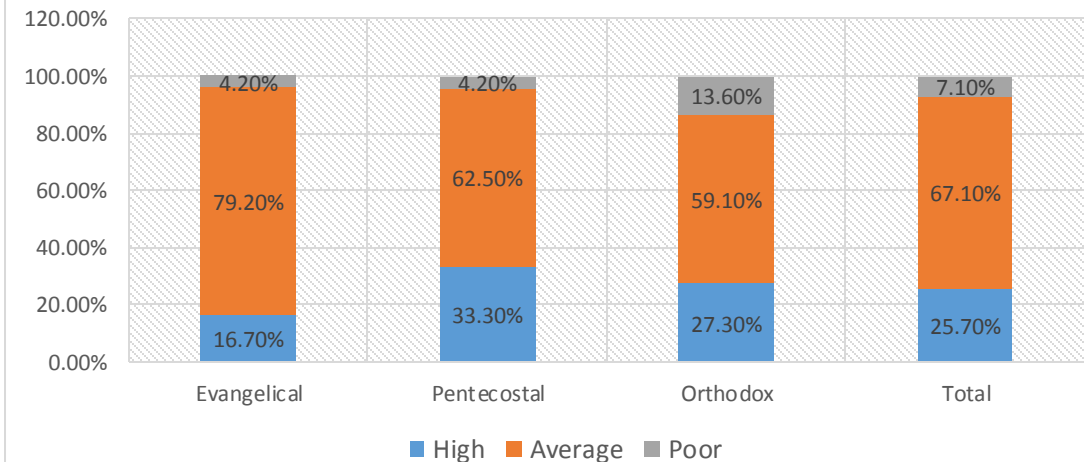
- 84.3% of respondents said opposite sex relationship is decent;
- Majority (67.1%) of the respondents said **discipline is average**;
- 40% of the respondents said Christian principles were highly enforced

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Relationship between opposite sex on campus



Discipline on campus



CHALLENGES OF MAINTAINING VIRTUES IN CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITIES IN GHANA

- Secularisation and modernity;
- Increase in student population;
- Inadequacy of qualified Christians for various positions
- State of the national economy

KEY FINDINGS

- Two of the universities: CSUC and PUC have organized programme that integrate Christian principles in academic lives of students;
- The universities have weekly church service for the entire university community - average attendance for both staff and students was usually between 50-70%
- Dressing on the campuses is “progressively good”
- Lecturers who integrate biblical principles in their lectures are to a limited extent
- Relationship with opposite sex on campus was good.
- Majority consider discipline on the campuses as average

WAY FORWARD

- **Deepen evangelism and discipleship**
 - By organizing Christ-centered programmes to address needs of contemporary students;
- **Carefully check background of staff employed and also minister to them**
 - Can help in knowing spiritual maturity of prospective staff and also deepen the faith
- **Institute monthly prayer and discipleship programme;**
 - Can be in the form of bible studies and group discussions
- **Groom and mentor young and committed Christians for top leadership positions**
 - This will create reservoir of qualified Christians for various leadership positions
- **Authorities must be strong in enforcing Christian discipline**
 - Dress code and other disciplines to be monitored and enforced

CONCLUSION

- Maintenance of Christian Principles and Ethos in Ghanaian Christian Universities are fairly in good shape;
- However, demonstration of Christian faith by lecturers in their work and general discipline of students leave much to be desired;
- A little more work is required by Universities authorities to maintain high standards of Christian Principles and Ethos in Ghanaian Christian Universities