



Pastoral Formation in the Caribbean: Reassessing Formal, Informal, and Non-Formal Theological Education in Contemporary Ministry

Tee Jay Whittaker

Scholar, [Eagle Scholars Forge](#), Sele Media Africa
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-5231-2924>

ARTICLE INFO

Article No.: 121825019
Type: Research
DOI: [10.15580/nsij.2025.1.121825019](https://doi.org/10.15580/nsij.2025.1.121825019)

Accepted: 21/12/2025
Published: 31/12/2025

***Corresponding Author**
Tee Jay Whittaker
E-mail: tee-junior2011@hotmail.com

Keywords: *pastoral formation; Caribbean theology; theological education; formal learning; informal learning; non-formal education; ecclesiastical*

ABSTRACT

Pastoral formation in the Caribbean has long been shaped by a complex interplay of spiritual calling, communal recognition, and diverse educational pathways. Yet scholarly attention to how formal, informal, and non-formal theological education collectively contribute to ministerial formation within Caribbean contexts remains limited. This article addresses that gap through a PRISMA-ScR-aligned scoping review of interdisciplinary literature spanning theology, pastoral studies, and general education. Drawing on peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and selected dissertations, the review maps how pastoral formation is conceptualized, the roles attributed to different modes of theological education, and the cultural, ecclesiastical, and historical dynamics shaping ministerial identity in the Caribbean. The findings reveal that pastoral formation in the Caribbean is best understood as a holistic, relational, and contextually embedded process rather than a linear or exclusively institutional endeavor. Formal theological education provides doctrinal grounding and critical reflection, while informal learning through lived ministry and non-formal education through mentoring and structured training play equally formative roles. Persistent tensions between Spirit-led authority and academic preparation are shown to be rooted not merely in ideology, but in colonial histories, Pentecostal and revivalist spirituality, and community-based constructions of authority. Building on these insights, the article proposes an Integrated Caribbean Formation Model emphasizing complementarity rather than hierarchy among formation pathways. The study concludes by outlining implications for theological institutions, churches, denominations, and policy frameworks, and by identifying priorities for future empirical research. In doing so, it contributes a contextually grounded framework for reimagining pastoral formation in contemporary Caribbean ministry.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the Caribbean, there are several church leaders who believe that, instead of getting a formal theological education, they can rely on the Holy Spirit to give them the ability to preach or teach effectively. Even church leaders in urban areas thus voice this feeling. This statement highlights an ongoing tension between Spirit-led authority and theological formation. It also illustrates some incorrect beliefs about access to training, how the church sees academic theology, and how the church misunderstands the developmental intention of theological education for Caribbean church leaders.

Theological education throughout the world is in a time of notable change because of rapid social change, diversity in churches, and a shift in expectations for pastoral leaders. Thus, church leaders today expect their church institutions of theological education to provide answers to the many complexities caused by cultural pluralism, technology and digital learning environments, dwindling ecclesiastical trust, and the on-going discussion about the relationship between academic formation and Spirit-led ministry (Yamada, 2020; Oakley, 2017). Therefore, how pastoral leaders develop intellectually, spiritually, is now a key area of discussion in many different areas of pastoral ministry, theological education, and general education.

In the Global South, and post-colonial world, where theological education must engage both Western theological education, as well as the many indigenous forms of spirituality and oral tradition, as well as communal forms of learning; questions on theological education are of immense importance. Scholarship from the Caribbean has identified a unique ecclesiastical landscape that has developed as a result of colonization, the revivalist movement, Pentecostalism, and strong community-based forms of religious practice (Hewitt, 2005). As a result, the way pastoral authority is created, constructed, and legitimized is influenced in an incredibly unique way within the Caribbean ecclesiastical landscape. As a consequence, the tension between experiential spirituality and a formalized theology has been magnified.

In the Caribbean, the conversation around pastoral and congregational experiences is a

repetition of the idea that as long as one has a sense of spiritual calling and anointing (sometimes confused with the two), theological education of traditional types is unnecessary. The scriptural witness does support the work of the Holy Spirit in revealing truth; however, it also places heavy emphasis on the need for discipline, mentorship, and training (or intentional formation) as part of the continuing journey of developing faithful leaders.

While this tension has been well documented in the literature devoted to pastoral care, there has not been enough investigation in the literature concerning how Caribbean pastoral formation has actually happened through the three modes (formal, informal, and non-formal) of theological education, nor how these three educational modes have functionally come together to shape the practice of being a minister. The purpose of the article is to explore all three forms of theological education together, as they contribute to pastoral formation in the Caribbean. Sele & Mukundi (2024) contend that a holistic and context-sensitive approach to theological education will yield pastors who are theologically informed, spiritually mature, and thoroughly prepared to lead God's people in light of the current circumstances they face. This article addresses this gap by offering a Caribbean-grounded framework that integrates formal, informal, and non-formal theological education.

Research Objectives

1. To explore the role of formal, informal, and non-formal theological education in the formation of pastoral ministry in a Caribbean context.
2. To examine the opinions of Caribbean pastors' and theological educators' regarding the relative value and limitations of formal theological education compared to informal and non-formal approaches to theological training.
3. To determine the level at which the current models or frameworks of theological education within the Caribbean embrace spiritual

- development, theological knowledge, and practical skills.
4. To investigate the relationship between cultural, historical, and church-related considerations and the routes of clerical preparation as influences for a Caribbean ministry identity.
 5. To provide a framework that meets the context and integrates formal, informal, and non-formal theological education for the current context of the Caribbean.

Research Questions

1. What is the role of formal, informal, and non-formal theological education in shaping pastoral ministry within the Caribbean context?
2. How do Caribbean pastors and theological educators perceive the value and limitations of formal theological education in comparison to informal and non-formal approaches?
3. To what extent do current models or frameworks of theological education in the Caribbean incorporate spiritual development, theological knowledge, and practical ministry skills?
4. How do cultural, historical, and church-related factors influence the routes of clerical preparation and shape Caribbean ministry identity?
5. What kind of integrated theological education framework would best serve the current Caribbean context by combining formal, informal, and non-formal methods?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Holistic Pastoral Formation

The literature on theological education has experienced a larger convergence towards the conclusion that Pastoral Formation must be seen as an integration of many distinct aspects and not simply an academic problem. Pastoral Formational Practices in the past have been influenced by the university systems in the West and have focused on

the intellectual aspect of pastoral ministry by requiring mastery of academic theology and less emphasis on the spiritual, moral, and practical (i.e., skills) aspects of pastoral ministry. For instance, Schuth (2016) and Ott (2016) have argued for a broader theological education that intentionally forms the whole person for ministry while integrating the intellectual, spiritual, and vocational aspects of a person.

For example, "A theological education is not only about learning to be a good Theologian, but it is about forming who the minister will be, their pastoral identity, the way they will use their ethical responsibilities, and their opportunities for ministry in the church." As further evidence of this trend, recent studies have included findings that support that character formation in Holistic Pastoral Formation requires intentionality in the pedagogical approach. Magezi & Madimutsa (2023), noted that character formation in Holistic Pastoral Formation was considered to be a given rather than something that needed to be cultivated in a systematic manner within theological institutions.

The research highlighted in this section shows that while a number of theological curricula define goals for student formation, not all are effectively developing students to meet these formation goals. This critique of contemporary theological curricula says that we need a new model to integrate the work of theological reflecting on those with whom we do ministry so that they can be more effective as leaders in their new ministry. In tandem, these studies demonstrate that there is heightened recognition that a holistic approach to ministry is essential for being an effective minister but is not being adequately practiced.

The literature indicates that there continues to be a gap between the ideal of holistic formation and the practice of formative work. While most of the scholarly community agrees on the necessity for holistic formation, Sele (2025) have developed models for how to achieve this formation in ways that account for varying cultural and ecclesiastical contexts. Most of the literature takes for granted the idea that there is institutional stability, that there is access to a residential seminary, and that there is a generalized or uniform pathway to ministry; none of these assumptions can be made within the Global South and Caribbean contexts. Therefore, there is a need to develop models and approaches to

developing ministers' pastoral and spiritual lives that are aware of the realities they face in their ministry.

2.2 Formal Theological Education and Ministerial Competence

The view of formal theological education as a primary location for establishing a foundation for doctrine and developing reflection skills related to doctrinal matters as well as providing connection to the Christian tradition continues to be recognized. Providing a structure in which to study Scripture, Theology, Church History, and Pastoral Care at the level of an accredited program allows ministers to obtain an opportunity to gain experience in knowledgeable and diligent study of these areas of theology at both levels of systematicity over sustained periods. Scholars have contended that when Pastors have received this type of formal theological education, they will be able to interpret the Scriptures in a responsible manner, engage the diversity of theology thoughtfully, and lead Biblically as an expression of good stewardship and accountability (Schuth 2016; Ott 2016). Empirical research and reports from practitioners support these findings. Formal theological education prepares ministers, not only for doctrinal proficiency in the preparation of biblical texts but additionally supports ministers by empowering them to lead with confidence and be successful in developing sustainable leaders for church planting and urban settings (Davidson 2015; Condon 2010). Thus, it serves the purpose of providing safeguards from the vulnerabilities of being superficial in their doctrinal foundation and practice that is unreflective. Although there are critiques found throughout the literature regarding the potential that overemphasis on academic development of clergy could have on the profession of Minister and the effect that overreliance could have on developing "best practices" for the profession, many authors have also identified limitations associated with the traditional academic models of assessment.

According to Oliver (2015), the methods of assessment typically used in Theological Education are inadequate. Oliver (2019) argues that the current models of assessment, including examination and essay format, are insufficient to address the overall development of ministers by not capturing the spiritual growth or wisdom gained along with any

other practical skills developed through the educational process. As a result of the previous articles, many authors suggested a revision of current practices of Theological Education, specifically addressing the integration of pedagogies and assessments to meet the goals of holistic formation.

According to Oakley (2017), seminary institutions must adapt to changes in both the ecclesiastical environment as well as societal shifts within their surrounding community, such as declining enrolment numbers, financial pressures, and changing expectations on behalf of church leaders. As a result, the question of whether or not formal theology education is relevant and accessible to those being formed outside the traditional means of education has become a more contentious topic of discussion. Yamada (2020) places these pressures on seminaries into a wider context of the changing landscape in the world of higher education and asserts that theological institutions will need to change both how we teach and learn in this demanding environment.

As such, institutions are beginning to devise innovative ways of teaching and providing alternative delivery Methods for delivering Theological Education, and within the changing Ecclesial & Social construct, institutions are employing Adaptive Leadership Strategies to provide continued and sustained Theological Education (Cunningham, 2022). Collectively, the aforementioned scholars continue to support the idea of formal Theological Education being of value but also acknowledge that it must be developed within contextually to other means of developing ministry skills.

2.3 Informal and Non-Formal Learning in Pastoral Formation

Moving out from the institutional perspective, an emerging field of studies acknowledges the developmental impacts of less formal learning on ministerial development. This emerging field of study acknowledges less formal learning in ministry development, whereby informal learning takes place by doing, seeing, relating, and being involved in ministry. The study by Riegel and Kindermann (2015) illustrates the importance of

informal learning in mastering theology in a religious context.

Non-formal education, which is clearly different from informal learning, has a specific place in non-accredited learning frameworks. Mentorship schemes, workshops, discipleship processes, and brief training courses are just some non-formal learning processes deliberately intended to develop ministerial competencies and spiritual development. Chiroma and Cloete (2015) strongly assert the presence of mentoring in theological education support processes since accompaniment through relationships allows for knowledge, character, and practice to be integrated. Later analyses confirm the formative role of accompaniment through mentoring relationships within theological seminaries and church-based training programs, focusing on vocational discernment, pastoral resilience, and ethics-based accountabilities (Chiroma, 2015; Blea et al., 2021). Accelerated pastor training programs with non-formal theological studies initiatives in expanding theological development access are similarly recognized by Handley Jr. in (2024) when formal studies access becomes complicated or unavailable.

Naidoo (2023) integrates these findings by proposing a more integrative approach to the education of ministers that crosses these different learning settings. Rather than seeing these settings as separate or hierarchical, Naidoo suggests that these settings are best seen as parts of an overarching learning environment. Van der Water (2005) supports this idea by asserting that transformative education in theology is the result of aligning learning pathways with ministerial agendas. Although this is well-understood, the literature suggests that there is a tendency to speak of these environments in relation to one another rather than consider their interplay within particular cultural spheres.

2.4 Global South and Caribbean Perspectives on Theological Education

Missional models of theological education further contextualize pastoral formation as a strategic focus for the health of the church in situations of social complexity and ecclesiastical transition (Richard, 2022; Ndereba et al., 2025). Theological education in the Global South has also

inspired critical scholarship to move away from Western models of theological education to contextual models (Behr 2020). According to Behr (2020), in the twenty-first century, theological education not only needs to be cognizant of culture particularity but also needs to be rooted in the Christian tradition. In the same vein, Ndereba et al. (2025) illustrate the significance of missional models of theological education in developing leadership in Africa among an increased number of clergymen in dealing with social complexity as well as ecclesiastical transitions on the continent.

The Caribbean has its own voice through its scholarly contributions to this debate, which emphasize regional historical and ecclesiastical distinctiveness. According to Hewitt (2005), Caribbean theology has been influenced by colonial history, revivalist cultures, and Pentecostalism, all of which impact ideas and concepts concerning ideas of authority, calling, and theological legitimacy. Within these cultures, spirituality has been prioritized over credentials, resulting in a lack of faith in university based theological training. According to Kemp (2022), Caribbean churches also use non-formal and informal systems to train its ministers, especially when opportunities for forming credentials are limited.

In spite of these contributions, it is clear that a significant gap exists in the literature. Although it is agreed that the coexistence of diverse pathways of formation takes place in the Caribbean experience, it is a fact that the diverse dimensions of the impact of theological education have been rarely examined by any research study towards an integrated understanding of the impact of formal, informal, and non-formal theological education on the formation of the pastor. The subject of theological education tends to be examined at a macro level or through the experience of the African or Western world and neglects the specifics of the experience that takes place in the Caribbean space. Notwithstanding the fact that the link between the story of culture, the expectations of the Church, and the structure of the educational system continues to be explored.

2.5 Synthesis and Implications for the Current Research

Subsequently, the literature affirms the centrality of holistic pastoral formation and the

importance of multiple educational pathways in ministerial development. Formal theological education provides essential doctrinal grounding and critical reflection, while informal and non-formal learning cultivate contextual wisdom, relational competence, and spiritual maturity. However, existing scholarship tends to treat these modes as parallel rather than integrative, offering limited insight into how they function together within specific cultural and ecclesiastical contexts.

In Caribbean ministry settings, where pastoral formation often unfolds across diverse and overlapping spaces, this gap is particularly significant. While scholars recognize tensions between Spirit-led authority and structured theological education, there remains a lack of empirically and conceptually grounded frameworks that account for how these tensions are navigated in practice. This study responds to that gap by examining pastoral formation in the Caribbean through an integrative lens, attending to the interplay between formal, informal, and non-formal theological education. By doing so, it seeks to contribute a contextually grounded understanding of pastoral formation that is both theologically robust and pedagogically informed.

3.0 METHOD

3.1 Review Design

Rationale for a Scoping Review

The choice to conduct a Scoping Review over a Systematic Review was driven by three factors. Firstly, literature involving pastoral development studies within a Caribbean setting are notionally scattered, ranging across theological education, Practical Theology, Adult Learning, and Ecclesiastical studies without a clear pervasive paradigmatic theme (Schuth, 2016; Ott, 2016; Naidoo, 2023). Secondly, a substantial periphery of literature is Qualitative, Conceptual, or Descriptive studies, which lack an experimental or outcomes-related thrust to accommodate meta-analysis (Magezi, Madimutsa, 2023). Thirdly, literature is also sparse and typically contextualized within an African, Global narrative (Hewitt, 2005; Ndereba et al., 2025).

A scoping review, therefore, offers the methodological dynamism that enables the exploration of how the concept of pastoral formation has been defined, where and how various routes of pastoral formation are highlighted, and the cultural and ecclesiastical forces that influence the training of ministers in the Caribbean. The current scoping review, therefore, does not intend to introduce novel empirical findings that would assess the efficacies of particular pastoral training initiatives. Rather, the scope of the review lies in the exploration, synthesis, and critical assessment that enables the current review to map the existing body of academically orientated literature that addresses the concept of pastoral formation. The findings, therefore, point to the patterns, emphases, and gaps that emerge from the body of existing literature rather than the current practices in the realm of pastoral formation. This review therefore interrogates how pastoral formation is constructed across diverse educational pathways rather than merely describing institutional practices.

Using the Guidelines of PRISMA

The review will adhere to the reporting guidelines set forth in the PRISMA-ScR, provided by Tricco et al. (2018). Though the focus of the article at hand is regarding the results based on conceptual and thematic aspects, those methodological aspects, like the criteria for inclusion, screening, and data retrieval, have all been done in a systematic manner to increase rigor.

3.3 Eligibility

For inclusion, trials had to fulfill the following criteria:

- Subject matter: Theology, theological education, pastoral studies, religious education, missiology, or a closely related field of education and development.
- Geographic relevance: either focus specifically on the Caribbean, or Global South studies focusing on African studies with a conceptual relevance to the Caribbean ecclesial reality.
- Topical focus: Pastoral formation, ministerial preparation, theological

education, mentorship, discipleship, or integrative models of

- Article type: Articles in refereed journals, scholarly books & monographs, edited book chapters & doctoral dissertations.
- The time frame would be 2000-2025, but a priority in the range would be from 2018-2025.

3.4 Information Sources

The literature search included a variety of academic databases to obtain a thorough overview:

- Web of Science
- ERIC (Education Resources Information Center)
- ATLA Religion Database
- ProQuest Dissertations & Theses

Moreover, hand searches of key journals like HTS Theologise Studies/Theological Studies, Practical Theology, International Review of Mission, and Christian Education Journal were conducted. Grey literature such as dissertation studies and internal reports was incorporated as per the rigors of academic scholarship and applicability whenever the academic scholarship of the Caribbean intellectual spectrum had not been captured by the indexed literature as per Hewitt (2005).

3.5 Search Strategy

Search terms were formulated in a process of iteration to capture the theological, educational, and contextual aspects of the subject. The basic terms and the use of Boolean operators might include:

- "pastoral formation" AND Caribbean
- "theological education" AND informal learning
- "ministerial training" AND non
- "pastoral formation" AND Global South

The period chosen is reflective of an increasing body of academic literature on formation-based theological education in the academic community during the past twenty years, with a focus on literature post-2018 responding to

ecclesiastical education change (Yamada, 2020; Oakley, 2017).

3.6 Study Selection Process

"The selection of studies was undertaken using a two-stage screening procedure. This consisted of the title and abstract stage, where the relevance of the title and abstract to the research question was assessed. Subsequently, the full text was assessed. This was utilized to ensure includability. A PRISMA flow diagram was employed to record the number of records identified, the number screened, the number excluded, and the number included. This helps in ensuring the methodology adopted is transparent. This was according to Tricco et al. (2018)."

3.7 Data Extraction and Charting

The information on each patient was gathered through the use of a standardized charting form with the following variables:

- Author(s) along with the year of
- Geographic and Church Context
- Type of formation provided (Formal/ Non-Formal/
- Methodological approach (conceptual, qualitative,
- Findings pertaining to pastoral formation

This enabled a comparison to be made between studies, with consideration for context.

3.8 Data Analysis and Synthesis

The data was analyzed using a thematic and narrative synthesis. Instead of conducting a quantitative aggregation of study results, this analysis sought to reveal patterns, contradictions, and gaps in the literature. Special attention was given to how paths of formation are conceived with regards to Caribbean culture, Pentecostal spirituality, and bi-colonial church frameworks (Hewitt, 2005; Kemp, 2022).

With the findings of this synthesis, the conceptual framework that aimed to embrace the incorporation of the dynamic processes of

theological education in the Caribbean was developed and will be revealed later in the article.

4. RESULTS / FINDINGS

This section reports the results of the scoping review in a descriptive format and without interpretation, as outlined in the PRISMA-ScR (Tricco et al., 2018). The findings are a compilation of the observed patterns from the included studies regarding the conceptualization of pastoral formation, the representation of different pathways of education, and the cultural and ecclesiastical influences of the process of formation in Caribbean contexts.

4.1 Overview of Included Studies

The extent of the literary base that has been canvassed for this review includes peer-reviewed journals, scholarly books, and edited volume chapters, and doctoral dissertations that treat the subjects of pastoral formation, theological education, and ministerial training. The preponderance of the research takes a conceptual or qualitative approach, and there is comparatively limited empirical research conducted on a Caribbean focus. This aligns with the general pattern of research into theological education, wherein formation is often a subject of theological reflection, program analysis, or critique rather than empirical study of a large scale (Schuth, 2016; Ott, 2016).

Geographically, literature is unequally represented. Even as some literature is directly related to Caribbean theological education and training for ministers (Hewitt, 2005; Kemp, 2022), a substantial amount of literature has a connection to Global North or Global South dialogues, namely African responses, that are utilized as analogy or comparative models (Behr, 2020; Magezi & Madimutsa, 2023). From a methodological perspective, most literature incorporates documental analysis, argumentation, or perception data that has a qualitative component.

In the corpus as a whole, there is a clear focus on formation-oriented discourse, even in studies that do not explicitly conceptualize in this way. Few studies, however, explicitly treat formal,

informal, and non-formal forms of formation, and even fewer do so in a single context.

4.2 Conceptualizations of Pastoral Formation

Upon reviewing the existing body of literature, the most prevalent perspective on pastoral formation is one of holism and integration that treats spiritual formation, theological knowledge, moral stature, and practical pastoral ability jointly (Schuth, 2016; Ott, 2016). Pastoral formation is thus understood not as something that can be encapsulated within the bounds of academic achievement or doctrinal expertise alone but as an ongoing process of forming ministerial self and ministerial relationship within the particular ecclesiastical body. The literatures demonstrate that pastoral formation is not reducible to credentialing but is a socially and theologically mediated process shaped by ecclesial expectations.

There are a number of studies which give importance to the formation of character in pastoral identity. For instance, Magezi and Madimutsa (2023) observe how both students as well as religious leaders consider the development of character as imperative though not sufficiently outlined in the theoretical courses. Likewise, Birkett (2019) observes how formation might be included in the outlines, though the development of formation outcomes might be rudimentary.

In more Caribbean-specific literature, ministerial formation is often understood in relational or communal ways, resonating with cultural values placed upon community, guidance, or living spirituality (Hewitt, 2005). Some ministerial formation is not associated with a specific process or the passing of a test for institutional recognition but is associated with recognition by the church of spiritual maturity or a calling. These conceptualizations often coexist with, rather than replace, formal theological definitions, resulting in plural and sometimes competing understandings of what it means to be “formed” for ministry.

4.3 The Role of Formal Theological Education

Formal theological education is always depicted as a major arena where grounding in doctrine, critical theological thinking, and

interaction with the Christian heritage and tradition occur. Across the literatures, accredited institutions are acknowledged as providing pastors with the ability to handle Scripture appropriately, as well as to function as leaders with discernment (Schuth, 2016; Ott, 2016).

Concurrently, the reviewed studies reveal ambivalence toward formal theological education, particularly in contexts where access is limited or where institutional theology is perceived as disconnected from lived ministry realities. Oakley (2017) documents growing pressures on seminaries to adapt to changing ecclesiastical landscapes, including declining enrollment and skepticism regarding institutional authority. Yamada (2020) situates these challenges within broader transformations in higher education, noting shifts toward flexible, context-sensitive learning models.

In Caribbean context, formal theological education is often affirmed in principle but questioned in practice. The literature reflects recurring concerns about cost, accessibility, cultural relevance, and perceived spiritual dryness. Oliver (2015, 2019) highlights limitations in traditional assessment models that privilege cognitive outcomes over spiritual and pastoral competencies, reinforcing perceptions that formal education does not adequately capture the fullness of ministerial formation.

4.4 Informal and Non-Formal Formation Pathways

Informal and non-formal formation pathways feature prominently across the reviewed literature as significant contributors to pastoral development, particularly in contexts where formal education is unavailable or supplementary. Informal learning is commonly described as occurring through lived ministry experience, observation, relational interaction, and communal participation, often without explicit curricular structure (Riegel & Kindermann, 2015).

Non-formal education, while distinct from informal learning, is described as intentional and structured, though not institutionally accredited. Mentorship programs, discipleship initiatives, workshops, and short-term training courses are frequently cited as formative spaces where theological understanding, ministerial skill, and

spiritual maturity are cultivated (Chiroma & Cloete, 2015; Handley Jr., 2024).

Across the literature, these pathways are often portrayed as strengths, particularly in fostering contextual sensitivity, relational competence, and practical wisdom. However, limitations are also noted. Informal formation may lack theological depth or consistency, while non-formal programs vary widely in quality and accountability. Few studies provide systematic frameworks for integrating these pathways with formal theological education, resulting in fragmented approaches to formation (Naidoo, 2023; van der Water, 2005).

4.5 Cultural, Religious, and Historical Factors

Pentecostal and revivalist spirituality, which emphasize experiential faith, spiritual gifts, and anointing, are often cited as factors that influence attitudes to theological education in Caribbean cultures (Hewitt, 2005). Within such settings, authority is often conferred relationally and spiritually rather than institutionally.

Colonial legacies are also well-represented in the literature, impacting the structure of theological education and the adoption of formal education. Behr (2020) and Hewitt (2005) point out that Western models of theological education, adopted in colonial missionary models, are shaping curricula and institutional standards to this day.

Engagement with colonial legacy adds depth in a unique way. An examination of the colonial legacy in Australia is significant in this context because Australia is a post-colonial state. The community-based dynamics of authority also influence formation ways, in ways where the esteem of seniors, mentors, and communities may rank higher than educational qualifications. According to Kemp (2022), in many Caribbean settings, persons in ministry are endorsed in their formation as a result of engagement and service in the community, thus sanctioning alternative formations in place of, or in addition to, education.

Community-based authority structures further shape formation pathways, as recognition by elders, mentors, and congregations often carry more weight than academic credentials. Kemp (2022) observes that in many Caribbean churches, ministers are formed and affirmed through participation and service, reinforcing the legitimacy

of informal and non-formal pathways alongside, or in place of formal education.

4.6 Cross-Study Gaps and Silences

Across the reviewed literature, several gaps and silences are consistently evident. First, there is a notable under-representation of empirical Caribbean-focused studies, particularly those examining pastoral formation longitudinally or across multiple educational pathways. Much of the Caribbean discourse remains conceptual or anecdotal, limiting comparative analysis.

Second, the literature reveals a lack of integrative formation models that account for the interaction between formal, informal, and non-formal education. While each pathway is discussed extensively, few studies examine how these modes function together within specific ecclesiastical and cultural contexts.

Third, there is limited engagement with how theological education policy, accreditation, and ecclesiastical governance shape formation outcomes in the Caribbean. These silences underscore the need for frameworks that are both contextually grounded and pedagogically coherent.

5. Discussion

This discussion engages the outcome of the scoping review through an interpretive lens, considering formal, informal, and non-formal theological education as a complex, interrelated, and deeply integrated aspect of pastoral formation in the Caribbean, rather than a set of competitive options. Four key aspects are utilized to structure the discussion: (1) The importance of integration over competition between pathways of formation; (2) The role of ministerial identity, mediated by cultural authority systems; (3) The implications arising between these principles and theological and general education; and (4) The role of this literature review in development and definitional aspects of contemporary formation theory in Global South studies.

The aim of this Discussion is to interpret the outcome of the literature review through a relationship between research questions and aims, and to consider those outcomes within a broader

state of conversation between theological, pastoral, and broader educational studies. Readers are invited to note that this section progresses beyond a literature map and describes an interpretation arrangement through a literature integration focused on identifying current practices in pastoral formation studies within the Caribbean, areas of tension, and a role for these ideas within a development trajectory for formation studies.

5.1 Integrating Formal, Informal, and Non-Formal Formation

Concurrently, the results of this research indicate that pastoral formation in the Caribbean is best approached by considering formal, informal, and non-formal methods of theological education as complementary and non-hierarchical. Perhaps the most important thing that can be gleaned about pastoral formation in the Caribbean through this literature review is that pastoral formation in the Caribbean occurs through a series of formal, informal, and non-formal sites of learning rather than through a series of singular educational pathways. While the literature frequently discusses these modes independently, reading the findings together reveals that pastoral formation is best understood as a relational and developmental process shaped by the interaction of multiple formation sites rather than by institutional location alone.

Formal theological education continues to play a crucial role in providing doctrinal grounding, theological literacy, and critical engagement with Scripture and tradition (Schuth, 2016; Ott, 2016). However, the findings demonstrate that in Caribbean contexts, formal education rarely functions as the sole or even primary source of ministerial legitimacy. Instead, it operates alongside informal learning through lived ministry and non-formal structures such as mentorship and discipleship programs. This integration reflects broader formation-oriented critiques of theological education, which argue that intellectual competence without spiritual maturity and pastoral wisdom is insufficient for faithful ministry (Magezi & Madimutsa, 2023; Birkett, 2019).

From the perspective of formation theory, it can be inferred that Caribbean pastor formation fits more appropriately into the categories of integrative

and situated learning rather than linear or hierarchical knowledge concepts and educational structures (Riegel and Kindermann, 2015). Informal learning through observation, imitation, trial and error, and development within the community supplies the contextual knowledge that usually cannot be transferred by formal educational programming (Riegel and Kindermann, 2015). Non-formal education, especially mentorship, acts as a mediating space or transition zone between theological knowledge and the ministerial life experience or tasks of the pastor to allow for the integration of formation concepts into the pastor's life experience (Chiroma and Cloete, 2015; Handley Jr., 2024).

The implication for formation theory is significant: pastoral formation cannot be reduced to credentialing, nor can informal spirituality alone bear the full weight of ministerial responsibility. The Caribbean context illustrates that formation is most effective when these pathways are intentionally integrated rather than implicitly competing, a theme that has been insufficiently theorized in existing literature (Naidoo, 2023).

5.2 Pastoral Formation and Ministerial Identity in the Caribbean

The results also make clear the role of pastoral education in the Caribbean as being inextricably linked with the concepts of authority, legitimacy, and leadership identity. In other settings, the authority of the minister is assured relatively solely on the basis of institutional qualifications. In some Caribbean churches, however, authority is recognized according to spiritual maturity, recognition, and the sense of calling (Hewitt, 2005). This also explains the ambiguous attitude toward formal theological education.

Pentecostal and revivalist traditions, which have significantly shaped Caribbean Christianity, emphasize experiential faith, spiritual gifting, and the immediacy of divine calling. Within such frameworks, theological education is sometimes viewed as optional or even suspect, particularly if it is perceived to diminish spiritual dependence or introduce foreign theological categories (Hewitt, 2005; Kemp, 2022). The findings suggest that resistance to formal education is not merely anti-

intellectual but is often rooted in historical memory, economic constraint, and theological imagination.

Concurrently, the literature reveals growing recognition among Caribbean pastors and educators that spiritual calling alone does not adequately prepare ministers to navigate the complex pastoral realities of contemporary ministry, ranging from ethical leadership and biblical interpretation to counseling, administration, and public engagement (Oakley, 2017; Yamada, 2020). This tension shapes ministerial identity, positioning pastors between communal expectations of spiritual authority and emerging demands for professional competence.

The discussion thus reframes the question from whether theological education is necessary to how it can be reconfigured to affirm Caribbean expressions of spirituality while strengthening pastoral accountability and competence. Ministerial identity, as reflected in the findings, is formed not in opposition to education, but through negotiated engagement between tradition, context, and formation pathways. Together, these dynamics demonstrate that ministerial legitimacy in Caribbean contexts is negotiated relationally and communally rather than derived solely from institutional credentials.

5.3 Contributions to Theological Education and General Education

This subsection situates the findings of the review within broader debates in theological education and general education, highlighting their implications for curriculum design, pedagogical practice, and formation theory. The integrative insights from this review contribute meaningfully to both theological education and general education theory, particularly in relation to adult learning, professional formation, and contextual pedagogy. From a general education perspective, integrative formation models align with broader calls for multicultural and context-sensitive pedagogies that resist one-size-fits-all approaches to professional training (Iseminger, 2016; Tanzella-Nitti, 2025).

For theological education, the findings reinforce calls for curricula that move beyond content delivery toward formation-oriented pedagogies. Studies critiquing traditional assessment practices highlight the need for evaluative methods that attend to spiritual growth,

character development, and ministerial competence alongside cognitive achievement (Oliver, 2015, 2019). Caribbean contexts underscore the importance of pedagogical approaches that are relational, dialogical, and embedded in ministry practice rather than confined to classroom spaces.

From the perspective of general education, the review aligns with broader scholarship on lifelong learning and professional formation, which recognizes that professional identity is shaped across formal instruction, workplace experience, and informal socialization. The Caribbean case contributes a valuable non-Western lens, illustrating how learning ecosystems operate in resource-constrained and communally oriented environments. This has implications for how educators conceptualize learning transfer, mentorship, and contextual relevance across disciplines (Naidoo, 2023).

Furthermore, the findings advance formation theory by highlighting the contextual specificity of formation processes. While global frameworks for theological education offer valuable insights, the Caribbean experience demonstrates that formation must be responsive to local histories, ecclesiastical cultures, and spiritual practices. These challenges universalized models and call for theory that is both theologically grounded and culturally situated.

5.4 Summary of Key Insights

Subsequently, the above discussion helps to illuminate a number of findings that were implicit in the literature but under-developed. Firstly, pastoral formation in the Caribbean is better conceived of as a multi-site process. Secondly, the forces of Spirit-led ministry and formal theological education are complex, drawing on a variety of ideological, historical, cultural, and ecclesial logics in order to construct notions of authority and legitimacy. Thirdly, while formal theological education retains a significant role in matters of doctrinal education and critical reflection, in the context of the Caribbean, there is a recognition that this may need to be supplemented in some way.

In summary, the analysis makes it clear that the process of formation of pastors in the Caribbean is influenced by the interaction of the formal process of theological education, the experience of ministry,

and the other kind of mentorship. On the one hand, formal theology encompasses the crucial provision of the intellectual foundations of ministry, but the other provides the provision of the required informally acquired spiritual insights. This emphasizes the need for the design of a model of integration. This thought prepares the constituent parts of the framework described in the next section.

6. Conceptual Framework: An Integrated Model of Pastoral Formation in the Caribbean

This conceptual framework should in no way be seen as prescriptive and universally normative but as an integrating heuristic tool that attempts to distill the dynamics of pastoral formation in general in the context of Caribbean ministry scenarios. This framework attempts to integrate insights from theological education, pastoral theology, and general education to distill the dynamics of formal and non-formal pathways of formation.

The above analysis shows that pastoral formation in the Caribbean cannot be adequately conceptualized within individual or linear models of theological education. Thus, formation is rather a multi-layered, relational, and context-embedded process that evolves through the interaction between formal models of theological education, informal learning, and non-formal models of education. This section suggests that there is an integrated conceptual framework that combines these different models and processes, and that establishes key terminology on pastoral formation in harmony with cultural and historical realities in Caribbean pastoral practice.

Conceptual frameworks used in literature reviews are not prescriptive theories, but more informative lenses used to order disparate knowledge (Naidoo, 2023). With this in mind, it is clear that the framework to be constructed is one that is informed by the literature reviewed, as well as Caribbean ecclesiastical tradition, in answering how pastoral formation is actually practiced, not simply how it might be conceived.

6.1 Defining Core Constructs

Pastoral Formation

In the context of the current research, pastoral formation shall be regarded as an integrated and continuous process by means of which people for pastoral ministries are formed or developed for spiritual maturity, theological knowledge, moral qualities, and wisdom for the Church. This definition is set forth with the support of formation-related research literature that does not favor the confinement of preparation for the pastoral role to intellectual development alone (Schuth, 2016; Ott, 2016). Current literature stresses the importance of identity formation as a role, if not a component, of pastoral formation.

Formal Theological Education

"Formal theological education" would refer to a system of curriculum and or degree-granting that is accredited and made available by an established theological institution, and such an education might include such things as the study of the Bible, theology, church history, and pastoral theology, which prepare one for a life of theological reflection and analysis.

At the regional level, the status of theological education is characterized by promise as well as tension within the Caribbean. Theoretically, its potential is exemplified by its ability to provide rigor and accountability. With that said, the potential is clouded by the fact that this kind of education is seen as unconnected or unresponsive to cultural contexts (Oliver, 2015, 2019; Yamada, 2020).

Informal Education

Informal learning refers to "formation accomplished through lived experience, relationship, observation, and participation in ministry," in the absence of programmed curricula and assessments. Informal learning is described as unstructured yet profoundly formative, in terms of influencing pastoral sensibilities, contextual awareness, and wisdom (Riegel & Kindermann, 2015).

Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education falls between formal and informal education. It encompasses organized but unaccredited efforts like mentorship classes,

discipleship classes, workshops, short courses, and leadership workshops. For instance, the effort could be church-related. It seeks to cover particular ministerial skills (Chiroma & Cloete, 2015; Handley Jr., 2024).

According to Meyer (2009), formal education encompasses the study of a recognized course of study. This kind of education is not limited to the Non-formal education is especially important in the Caribbean, where mentorship and short-term training opportunities are given great formative influence. While it is accessible and relevant, its impact is largely dependent on the level of mentorship and theological richness provided (Naidoo, 2023).

6.2 The Interrelationship of Formation Pathways

One of the key strengths of this conceptual framework is that it avoids hierarchical structures that rank and prioritize formation paths and pathways as mutually exclusive processes following upon each other in a linear and sequential fashion instead. A relevant article and various literature reviewed have clearly shown that pastoral formation and formal and non-formal and/or informal learning become viewed as mutually exclusive processes instead of occurring together in a complementary and mutually enhancing approach with each having equal importance and validity and significance. Instead, pastoral formation becomes unstructured and erratic instead of systematic and comprehensive as it currently is instead. These pathways complement each other instead of existing in a hierarchical order instead.

Both Naidoo (2023) and van der Water (2005) suggest that transformative theological education results from intentional alignments regarding the learning environment. In the context of the Caribbean, these alignments tend to occur routinely, as a pastor might engage in formal education, informal education, and non-formal education at the same time. The model of education that follows recognizes the ideal scenario.

6.3 Contextual Dynamics Shaping Formation

The formation of pastors in the Caribbean is greatly influenced by dynamics that transcend the sector's institutions. The historical influences of

colonialism on content and pedagogy in theological education mean that Western knowledge has dominated indigenous forms of religiosity (Hewitt, 2005; Behr, 2020). This, in turn, has created a dilemma regarding affiliation with traditional institutions of theology, which are viewed as remote from people's spirituality.

In ecclesiastical terms, Pentecostal or revivalist traditions' emphasis on experience-based faith, gifts of the Spirit, and sensations of anointing inform related notions of authority and legitimacy. In these circumstances, community validation has traditionally been regarded as more significant than academic qualification in evaluating ministerial credentials (Kemp, 2022). In this view, education remains valued, though it comes to inform another economy.

Culturally speaking, the Caribbean societies are relationship-dependent in matters of trust, oral

traditions, and community engagement. This impacts the role of mentorship and practical ministry as formative processes while countering learning approaches that are too theoretical or disengaged.

6.4 Proposed Integrated Caribbean Formation Model

Weaving these strands together, The Integrated Caribbean Formation Model presents a vision of pastoral formation as a relational ecosystem, as opposed to a pipeline approach. The heart of this vision is a pastor-in-formation whose identity and competence form as a result of interaction among these three dimensions: theological education, learning, and non-formal institutions.

Theological Education Conceptual Map

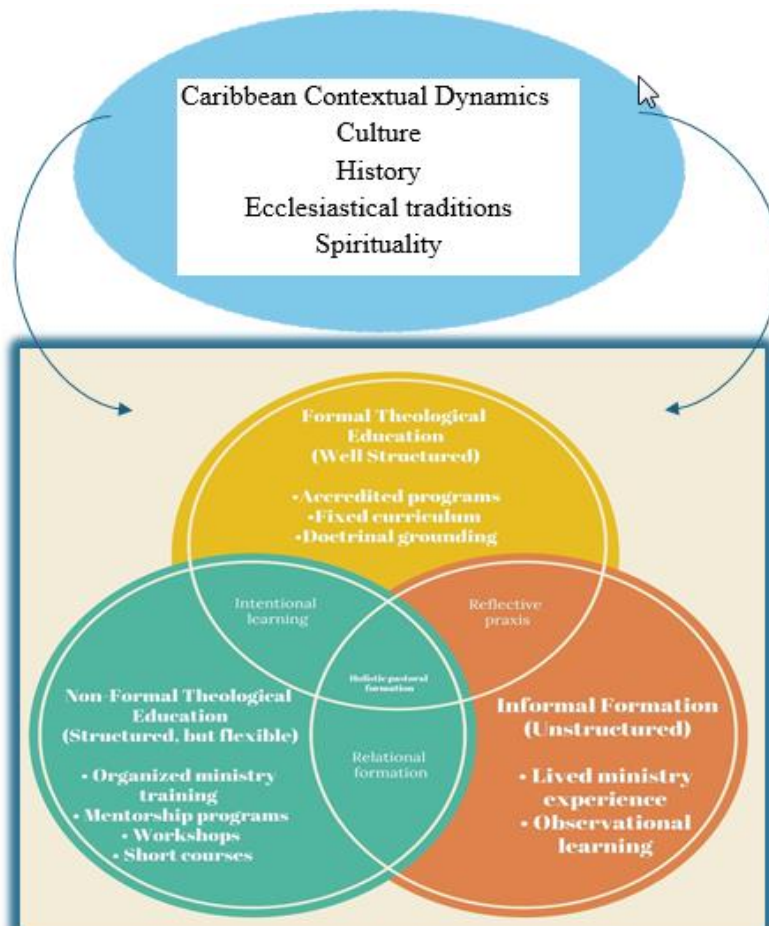


Figure 1 illustrates the Integrated Caribbean Formation Model proposed in this study. The model depicts pastoral formation as emerging through the dynamic interaction of formal theological education, informal

learning, and non-formal educational pathways, all situated within specific cultural, historical, and ecclesiastical contexts. Rather than privileging one pathway over another, the model emphasizes complementarity and mutual reinforcement, highlighting how contextual dynamics shape both the process and outcomes of pastoral formation in Caribbean ministry settings.

These pathways are framed by contextual forces, culture, history, and ecclesiastical tradition, which determine the mode in which formation is received, valued, and enacted. It postulates that for pastoral formation in the Caribbean to be authentically effective, it needs to equally seek intentional integration, cultural humility, and pedagogical flexibility. Rather than importing models wholesale, it calls for formation practices that honor Caribbean spirituality while strengthening theological and pastoral competence.

This framework provides a conceptual foundation for reimagining theological education and ministerial training in the Caribbean, offering a coherent lens through which churches, seminaries, and denominational leaders can reflect on how pastors are formed for faithful and effective ministry.

7. Practice and Policy Implications

The integrated conceptual framework developed in this study has important implications for how pastoral formation will be conceived, practiced, and regulated in Caribbean theological schools, churches, and denominational structures. These arise directly from the recognition that pastoral formation within the Caribbean is neither linear nor institutionally bound but unfolds within the complex cultural and ecclesiastical contexts through interrelating formal, informal, and non-formal education trajectories.

7.1 Consequences for Theological Schools

Curriculum Reform

For theological institutions serving Caribbean contexts, these findings undergird the urgent need for curriculum reform focused on holistic formation and not merely accumulation of content. While doctrinal competence remains imperative, curricula must be intentionally designed so that spiritual formation, pastoral identity development, and contextual ministry engagement

permeate the learning process from beginning to end (Schuth, 2016; Ott, 2016).

This calls for a curriculum design that should move beyond compartmentalized courses toward integrative learning trajectories, in which biblical studies, theology, pastoral care, and ministry practice are deliberately interwoven. For instance, theological reflection assignments may be embedded within field education placements, enabling students to engage Scripture and doctrine in direct conversation with lived pastoral realities. Such approaches respond to critiques that theological education too often remains abstract and disconnected from ministry contexts familiar to Caribbean students.

Assessment of Formation Outcomes

A second implication pertains to the evaluation of formation outcomes. Traditional evaluative tools like examinations, essays, and grades remain important but are insufficient in measuring spiritual maturity, character development, and pastoral competence (Oliver, 2015, 2019). Institutions are, therefore, challenged to adopt multi-dimensional assessment strategies which reflect the holistic aims of formation-oriented education.

These might include reflective portfolios, supervised ministry evaluations, peer and mentor feedback, and formative self-assessment practices. These methods align with broader trends in professional and adult education that recognize learning as developmental and contextually situated (Naidoo, 2023).

7.2 Implications for Churches and Denominations

Ministerial Training Pathways

The findings also hold major implications for churches and denominational bodies, which continue to be principal agents of pastoral formation in the Caribbean. Churches are urged to

acknowledge that while spiritual calling and communal affirmation are foundational, neither of them dispenses with intentional theological and pastoral preparation. Instead of presenting formal education as optional or oppositional, denominational leaders could redefine it as one component within a broader formation ecology (Chiroma & Cloete, 2015).

Mentorship Structures

A particularly significant implication concerns the intentional development of mentorship structures within churches and denominations. The literature consistently affirms mentoring as a powerful vehicle for integrating knowledge, character, and practice (Chiroma & Cloete, 2015). Yet mentoring in Caribbean churches is often informal and uneven, dependent on personal relationships rather than institutional support.

Churches and denominations may therefore consider formalizing mentorship frameworks by training mentors, clarifying expectations, and providing ongoing support. Mentorship should not be limited to novice pastors but extended throughout ministerial life, recognizing formation as lifelong. Such structures honor Caribbean relational cultures while ensuring that informal learning is guided by theological wisdom and pastoral accountability.

7.3 Implications for Policy

Accreditation

Policy-oriented discussions further illuminate that churches and denominations need to identify various formation pathways as valid expressions of pastoral preparation, specifically where access to formal theological training is at a premium (Kemp, 2022; Handley Jr., 2024). The policy level, too, is invited to reflect critically on the nature of accreditation systems that regulate theological education in the Caribbean. Often, these standards favor formal academic structures, sometimes at the expense of marginalizing important non-formal and informal formation pathways that contribute significantly to pastoral development. While academic integrity must be preserved, this invites accrediting agencies into serious reflection regarding the ways in which

formation outcomes, spiritual maturity, ethical leadership, pastoral competencies, might be recognized alongside academic markers (Schuth, 2016).

Recognition of Non-Formal Training

Workshops, mentorship programs, and denominational training projects very often contribute significantly to formation, but their input is seldom recognized officially. Policies permitting the certification and assessment of non-formal learning through portfolios, supervised practice records, or competency-based assessments may further enhance coherence across the paths of formation. Such recognition is an affirmation of the legitimacy of diverse experiences of learning while it encourages intentional integration over fragmentation.

Church Academy Partnerships

The conceptual framework developed in this research postulates that pastoral formation thrives when seminaries and churches work together rather than in parallel. Such partnerships might take the form of shared mentoring arrangements, curricula design, joint assessment of the formation outcomes, and mutual recognition of expertise.

Given the limited resources and high demands at the ministerial level typical of most Caribbean contexts, such a partnership has practical advantages but also represents a theological vision of formation as communal and shared. According to Yamada, "institutions that adapt through collaboration can be better poised to answer the changing ecclesiastical and educational landscapes".

8. Limitations of the Review

As with other scoping reviews, a number of limitations need to be recognized for this study, which forms a caveat toward the interpretive transparency and scholarly integrity of the work. Collectively, these limitations do not reduce the value in the findings but rather place a boundary on the conditions under which the conclusion must be considered and indicate an area that needs further empirical and theoretical development.

Several limitations should be established. First, this is a scoping review, and as such, it is limited to the scope and quality of the existing literature without primary empirical data from Caribbean pastors or institutions. Second, in spite of efforts to include regionally relevant scholarship, there is still a paucity of empirical studies focused on Caribbean pastoral formation in the academic databases; therefore, reliance has been placed on conceptual, comparative, and Global South literature. Third, this review was limited to English-language sources only, excluding those works of relevant scholarship which were published in other languages, or even in locally circulated formats. These limitations emphasize the need for subsequent empirical research that emerges from the Caribbean contexts of ministry.

Underrepresentation of Empirical Caribbean Studies

The most significant limitation arising from the review is the limited number of empirical studies dealing specifically with Caribbean pastoral formation. Much of what already exists is conceptual, reflective, or comparative work based on African or Global North contexts as proxy perspectives on Caribbean realities (Behr 2020; Magezi & Madimutsa 2023). As useful as these can be for insights into specific contexts, they cannot replace empirical studies anchored in the Caribbean congregational or ministerial contexts.

This lack of longitudinal studies, mixed-methods research, and large-scale qualitative enquiries puts a limit on how conclusions can be made regarding how the pathways of formation function over time or across denominational traditions.

9. Conclusion

This study set out to reassess pastoral formation in the Caribbean by examining how formal, informal, and non-formal theological education mutually shape contemporary ministry. In doing so, the article mapped existing scholarship through a PRISMA-ScR-aligned scoping review, synthesized key themes, and proposed an integrated conceptual framework that reflects the lived realities of Caribbean ecclesiastical life. By doing so, this

study contributes to scholarly, ecclesial, and policy-level conversations seeking sustainable and contextually faithful models of pastoral formation.

Reaffirmation of the Significance of the Study

The importance of this study is not so much in what it affirms but in what it clarifies. The review synthesizes fragmented bodies of literature and brings into sharp focus the persistent disconnect between formation ideals and formation practices in Caribbean contexts. It challenges simplistic binaries that oppose Spirit-led ministry to theological education and reframes formation as fundamentally relational, communal, and lifelong.

First, it underscores the need for theologically informed pedagogies that address spiritual maturity, moral character, and pastoral competence alongside the need for academic rigor. For churches and denominations, it affirms the formative power of mentoring and lived ministry while calling for greater intentionality and accountability. For policy framers, the study brings into view the urgent need for frameworks enabling diversity in learning pathways without sacrificing theological depth.

Conflicting Interests

The authors state that no conflict of interest exists.

Authors' contributions

All authors were involved in the conceptualization, arrangement, the proofreading and approved the manuscript before submission.

Funding: Self-funded.

References

- Behr, F. J. (2020). Theological education in the twenty-first century. *Journal of Orthodox Christian Studies*, 3(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1353/joc.2020.0000>
- Birkett, K. (2019). The theological curriculum for twenty-first-century ministry: A UK perspective. *Practical Theology*, 12(4), 402–414.

- <https://doi.org/10.1080/1756073X.2019.1638576>
- Blea, J., et al. (2021). *Spiritual formation outcomes and curricular strategies in theological education*. Christian Education Journal: Research on Educational Ministry. Available via ResearchGate or journal publisher: <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/cej>
- Chiroma, N. H. (2015). Potential of mentoring in theological seminaries. *Kairos: Evangelical Journal of Theology*, 9(2), 201–220. Available via ORCID/author repository: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9507-0559>
- Chiroma, N. H., & Cloete, A. (2015). Mentoring as a supportive pedagogy in theological training. *HTS Theological Studies*, 71(3), 1–8.
- Chrispal, A. (2022). Theological education: Which way? In *Overcome Excuses and Stupidity...*
- Condon, T. R. (2010). *Educating transformational leaders for the urban context: A study of formal, non-formal, and informal educational experiences in the effective training of urban ministers* (Doctoral dissertation, Capella University). Available via ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global: <https://www.proquest.com>
- Cunningham, S. (2022). Innovation in seminary theological education: An overview of contributing forces. In *Overcome Excuses and Stupidity...*
- Davidson, J. (2015). *The impact of formal theological education on church planter formation* (Doctoral dissertation, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary). Available via ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global: <https://www.proquest.com>
- de Kock, J. (2024). Spirituality and theological formation: Seven critical perspectives. *Journal of Spirituality and Ministry Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/19397909241234294>
- Handley, J. W., Jr. (2024). Accelerating formal and non-formal pastor training. In *Equipping for Global Mission: Theological and Missiological Proposals and Case Studies* (pp. 211–225).
- Hewitt, R. (2005). Caribbean perspectives on theological education. *International Review of Mission*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1758-6631.2005.tb00496>
- Iseminger, S. (2016). Multicultural education in theological education. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 18(3), 174–179. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2016.1191293>
- Kemp, R. (2022). Theological education and the church. In *Overcome Excuses and Stupidity...*
- Magezi, V., & Madimutsa, W. (2023). Theological education and character formation: Perceptions of theological leaders and students. *HTS Theological Studies*, 79(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i1.8543>
- Naidoo, M. (2023). Exploring integrative ministerial education for contextual church leadership. *HTS Theologies Studies/Theological Studies*. Available via journal open-access platform: <https://hts.org.za>.
- Ndereba, K. M., et al. (2025). Missional theological education and clergy leadership development in Africa. *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 8(3). <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.8.3.3604>
- Oakley, D. (2017). Seminary education and formation: The challenges and some ideas about future developments. *International Studies in Catholic Education*, 9(2), 223–235. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19422539.2017.1360613>
- Oliver, E. (2015). Alternative assessment to enhance theological education. *HTS Theological Studies*, 71(3), 1–10. Available via institutional repository: <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC177993>
- Oliver, E. (2019). The triangle of effective education implemented for theology. *HTS Theologies Studies/Theological Studies*, 75(1). Available via journal open-access platform: <https://hts.org.za>
- Ott, B. (2016). *Understanding and developing theological education*. Langham Publishing.
- Richard, R. (2022). Training of pastors: A high priority for global ministry strategy. In *Overcome Excuses and Stupidity...*
- Riegel, U., & Kindermann, K. (2015). Tracing informal religious learning. *International Journal of Practical Theology*, 19(1). <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijpt-2014-0033>
- Sandage, S. J., & Jensen, R. J. (2013). Formation-oriented theological education paradigms.

Christian Education Journal: Research on Educational Ministry. Available via ResearchGate and SAGE Journals: <https://www.researchgate.net>
<https://journals.sagepub.com>

Schuth, K. (2016). *Seminary formation: Recent history, current circumstances, new directions*. Liturgical Press.

Sele, J. P. (2025). *Sacred music as a catalyst for theological reflection and social development: A critical review of African Christian liturgical traditions*. *Journal of Fine and Creative Arts, Music, Media, and Communication Studies*, 1(2). <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/396717884>

Sele, JP; Mukundi, MB (2024). *The Role of Christian Education in Shaping Political Stability and Economic Growth in Developing Countries*. *Greener Journal of Social Sciences*, 14(2): 166-174. <https://doi.org/10.15580/gjss.2024.2.102024135>

Tanzella-Nitti, G. (2025). The role of theology in a university curriculum. In *Universities' Purpose and Catholic Identity* (pp. 241–260). Routledge. Available via Routledge and Taylor & Francis Online: <https://www.routledge.com>
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com>

Tricco, A. C., et al. (2018). PRISMA extension for scoping reviews (PRISMA-ScR). *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 169(7), 467–473. <https://doi.org/10.7326/M18-0850>

van der Water, D. P. (2005). Transforming theological education and ministerial formation. *International Review of Mission*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1758-6631.2005.tb00495>

Yamada, F. M. (2020). Living and teaching when change is the new normal: Trends in theological education and the impact on teaching and learning. *The Wabash Center Journal on Teaching*, 1(1), 23–36. <https://doi.org/10.31046/wabashcenter.v1i1.1580>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tee Jay Whittaker is a Jamaican-Kittitian scholar-practitioner with formal training in theology, counseling, education, and pastoral ministry. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Theology and Pastoral Ministry (with a minor in Counseling) from the Caribbean Wesleyan College, Jamaica, and later completed a Master's degree in Christian Studies, Wesley Biblical Seminary, U.S.A, along with a Postgraduate Diploma in Education and Training in General Sciences, Jamaica. He currently serves as a pastor and guidance counselor, where he integrates faith-based leadership, counseling practice, and educational guidance in the formation of youth and families. He is a scholar with the [Eagle Scholars Forge](#), an initiative of [Sele Media Africa](#) which is a premier practical academic development program dedicated to raising African and Caribbean scholars through rigorous practical-based training in scholarly writing, research, and publication. His research and writing focus on father absenteeism, youth mental health, family systems, spiritual development, and community-based intervention within Caribbean and developing-world contexts. Through his ministry and scholarship, he is committed to advancing culturally grounded, trauma-informed, and socially responsive frameworks for strengthening families, churches, schools, and youth-serving institutions.