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## **Experience of Integrated Learning Among Theological Students in Jos Metropolis and Environs**

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### **Abstract**

Teaching and learning in institutions established by Christians generally reflect the fragmented approach to education that has for long characterized Western education, such that faith and learning are splintered because of dualism which advocates separation of Church and State, subjects are taught as if they are independent of other subjects and often as if they are unrelated to life, thus missing out the connectivity that makes learning meaningful and useful. Consequently, both in Church and secular life Christians often seem unable to apply biblical knowledge to solving life's problems. In the belief that integrated learning, which is gaining recognition globally, can improve the application of knowledge to life to increase productivity and meaningful living among Christians, these researchers investigated the extent to which theological students in Jos and its environs in Nigeria may be experiencing integrated learning, using a descriptive survey method. The research found that integrated learning takes place randomly but without cognitive recognition among the students, and recommends more intentional description and application of its principles in teaching and learning in theological institutions, so that there might be greater evidence of integration of learning in both spiritual and secular life among Christians.

### **Introduction**

The quality of theological training Christian leaders receive, which is likely to be influenced by the dominant approaches to teaching and learning used in

theological institutions, may determine the way leaders respond to prevailing challenges facing churches. Thus Boer's (2009:49) claims may be relevant that Nigerian Christians' "dualistic inheritance" leads them "to make false secular demands of neutrality and objectivity." Christians fail to bring their faith to bear on constitutional debates, which Muslims insist on doing, though their integration of faith and politics fails to cater for things like injustice against women and non-Muslims. Boer believes dualism, which leads to a fragmented view of faith and secular life, has weakened Christianity in facing the Islamic challenge. Moreover, Christians often confuse their arguments against government interference in religious affairs by often making demands in the name of equity for governmental support for religious programs like going on pilgrimages to Rome and Jerusalem like the Muslims are getting to go to Mecca. Christian demands seem like a double-faced attitude that contradicts their calls for "neutrality." Of course, when it appears obvious that Northern Nigerian governments show no inclination to ever divorce governance from religion, Christians probably feel forced to shift ground from total separation of church and state to ask for what seems fairer – government intervention in Christian affairs like pilgrimage.

## **Stereotypical responses**

Furthermore, because of their fragmented thinking about faith and secular life, Christians seem confused about the real and often violent persecutions they face from Muslims, and easily resort to stereotypes and conspiracy theories in attempting to describe or explain their harrowing experiences. For example, the cover story of *Today's Challenge*, a leading Christian magazine, volume 10, number 3 of June 2016 cites the Federal Government of Nigeria's implementation of the religious education curriculum as "another Islamization ruse in disguise," without acknowledging that the said policy was formulated between 2009 and 2010, when the Nigerian President, the Minister of Education and the Director of the National Education Reform Council were all Christians. Christians fail to account for the failure of fellow Christians in positions of authority to "protect" Christian religious education from interference, but rather serve as tools of such interference (Ango 2019:65). This suggests that the dualistic foundation of Christian thought in Nigeria, probably embedded in theological education, negatively affects their ability to

formulate effective strategies to respond to the Islamic challenge. Integrated education would therefore help Nigerian Christians to grapple with what Fernandez (2017:xvii) calls, “The reality of our highly globalized and religiously diverse global village” which “calls for a serious, respectful, thoughtful and creative response to the issue of religious diversity ... in accord with our faith convictions.” As Hess (2017:38) puts it, “In the context of theological education, a school that explicitly affirms its openness to engaging ‘the neighbour’” needs to teach both explicitly and implicitly that living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century means living in a multi-faith world. Christian dualistic education makes this difficult.

## **Failures of the Church**

Other evidences of the negative results of the fragmented view of life resulting from Christian dualistic education include the many thinly veiled accusations by Christian scholars of failure of the Church to look after both the spiritual and social needs of her members (Shyllon 2000:43), failure to be productive in order to cater for poor members and non-members of the Church (Sowa 2000:16), “the extensive corruption, looting, greed and avarice that has overwhelmed the socio-economic life of many Christians,” (Dafwang, 2016: 92, 93, and 142). and failure of the Church to totally do away with prejudicial attitudes towards refugees of different faiths (Kemdirim 2000:53). Not only that, the Church has often been accused of an inadequate response to pandemics like HIV and AIDS (Atowaju 2010:128), which can also be said today of the Church’s response to Covid 19; a response that is filled with false prophecies, conspiracy theories and a lackadaisical attitude to safety procedures.

What is more, commenting on environmental challenges, Faniran (2017:47) laments that “participating in an eco-justice future has yet to become important enough to most theological educators, parish pastors, or denominational leaders” and that “Few schools offer more than a couple of elective courses while barely becoming publicly engaged.” On his own part, Asomoah-Gyadu (2019:25) observes that Christians’ “belief in God as creator has not necessarily translated into stewardship of creation.”

All the above instances of poor Christian response to various issues of life point to the inadequacy of the dualistic education of Christian leaders. Mworsho (2017:60-61) argues for education that is “empowering, transforming, engaging students in life’s issues and resulting in service to humanity and the world in general,” through “practical strategies that arise from real community challenges and problems” (p.69). In the same vein, Ango and Rutoro (2020:148) propose “an African education system... (which) will value not only sustainable development and the development of critical skills but ...also nurture honesty, integrity and a God-fearing spirit,” through teaching that will inspire students “to live for greater purposes, combining academic and community mindedness and engaging both the intellect and spirit of the students” (p.150). The writers of this article see the above challenges and proposals as strong motivation to look at what has been called integrated education.

## **Integrated education**

One of the most vocal advocates of integrated education is Ken Gnanakan, whose argument in favour of integration is premised on the postulation that “modern education has been disintegrated to the extent that students do not see connections to real life.” Moreover, “Disciplines such as language, mathematics, science, and religion are all taught separately with no interaction between the concepts” (2007:82-3). This is not a rejection of the need for specialization for the sake of efficiency, but a concern that without ensuring that interconnections are realized, the purposes of the individual disciplines for life easily get lost. Elucidating on his concerns, Gnanakan (2007:13) argues that educational systems in Asia and Africa depend on the disintegrated systems that have prevailed in the West, whose usefulness is being questioned today.

Gnanakan goes on to define integration as “making connections between elements that must be held together in order for their meaning to be explored,” such that “various components of education – the subjects, teacher, classroom, student and real life, etc. – are held together” (2007:18). He cites a strongly related word, holism, which refers to the “theory that parts of any whole cannot exist nor be understood except within their relation to

the whole” (p.19). The justification for pursuing integration is further posited by Gnanakan (2011:25):

The integrated curriculum and the learning experiences that are planned accordingly, not only provide the learners with a unified view of all that he/she is learning, but also motivates and develops the learner’s ability to apply this learning to newer studies, models and systems. Everything learned becomes a tool for further learning and the integration into real life.

### ***Importance of integrated education***

The importance of integrated education is therefore that it deliberately shows the interconnections between educational disciplines, and enables intentional interaction among various educational approaches, as well as among specialists in different fields of education. It also enhances understanding of the meaning of each discipline and its relation to life as a whole. This would lead to the development of more thoughtful persons who go through the educational process and most likely increase their creativity and productivity.

### ***Integration in Christian education***

The concept of integration, both in purpose and methods of education, has also been much implied in Christian education. For instance, Pazmino (1992:119) sees the need to pursue the implications of the contents of education for the lives of students through dialogue and interaction. The purpose is to ensure connections between orthodoxy (right doctrine) and orthopraxis (right living). Again, Rick and Shera Melick advocate for adult education the working together of knowledge, choices, and power (2010:98). Moreover, Ango (2012:67), while citing Ezra’s integration of learning, doing and teaching God’s word (Ez.7:10), and lamenting that universities and seminaries still teach in a fragmented manner, advocates that “faith, culture and learning should remain integrated,” and that “the Christian teacher should be familiar with technological developments and its application to effective teaching in an integrated manner.” On his own part, Obaje (2012:257-8) alludes to integration in asserting that “Christian education is holistic in nature,” and “covers all areas of life and it takes into consideration all subjects

of enquiry and disciplines of study” (p.263). Furthermore, Janvier (2018:204) calls for integration in theological education:

Students in Bible Colleges and Seminaries are on the way to full time ministry and need to be equipped for the task. The equipping includes outstanding teaching of information and knowledge as a foundation for other learning tasks...includes a godly example of the spiritual life in prayer and love towards God. It includes the development of skills through good teaching, prayer, experiential learning, and the development of competencies for ministry.

The question begged by these indications of attitudes towards integration in education in general, and theological education in particular, is whether students in theological institutions in Nigeria experience these tendencies towards integration, or if they are familiar with the concept of integration at all, or whether integration is intentionally and explicitly used in theological education.

### ***The value of an explicit integrated approach to education***

The importance of defining and prescribing integrated education intentionally and explicitly is so that it may be consciously pursued. This might possibly lead to a situation where, “once interdisciplinary connections are made, learners begin to ... creatively explore all kinds of interrelationships,” thus “breaking boundaries and building bridges that can revolutionize their experiential learning process” (Gnanakan 2007:83). Moreover, “true integration will prepare men and women who value education as preparing them for life itself, not just for a livelihood” (Gnanakan 2007:24). It is especially valuable for Christian education, considering Edlin’s statement that

Christian schooling has as its goal the nurturing and equipping of all young people as they respond in faith to Jesus Christ to live as hope-filled, God-enthroning ambassadors in every aspect of life and culture (including promoting justice, being concerned for the outcast, seeking peace, caring for the environment, creating machines, structures and symbols that improve society) (2014: 49).

Edlin captures the essence of integrated education, which will be greatly enhanced by the use of methods that appeal to the head, heart and hands for ministerial training.

### ***Evidences for the efficacy of explicit integrated approaches to education***

Many scholars have undertaken research and found results that provide evidence for explicit integrated education. For instance, Neihaus et al, (2017), observing that “educators are failing to fully capitalize on students’ in-classroom and out-of-classroom experiences to promote integrative learning” (p.2), researched service-based alternative breaks (in which students go on short trips to render social services to communities) among students and found “a great deal of evidence that integrative learning was happening before, during and after participants’ alternative breaks” (p.17). This indicates that theological institutions, for instance, could observe how students on intentional service trips to surrounding communities integrate aspects of their theological education in their service activities as a means of developing methods to help students use integration even more deliberately. Moreover, Drake and Reid (2018) carried out extensive reviews of research on integrated curriculum and report that “curriculum integration offers an effective way to teach ... 21<sup>st</sup> century capabilities” including critical thinking, creative thinking, citizenship, character development, and communication because they “transcend disciplines” as well as “maintain, and possibly boost, academic achievement” (p.25). This implies that theological institutions may deliberately use methods like team teaching or symposia, during which training for specific character or spiritual or ministerial formation could take place, while endeavouring to see how the various participating disciplines work together to form the desired character. Drake and Reid also report that “students experiencing integrated approaches do as well as, or better than, students in traditional classrooms in academic systems” (p.37, citing Aiken 1941, Barr et al, 2015, Drake et al, 2015, and Yoon et al, 2014). Drake and Reid further claim that “students who experience the integration of socio-emotional learning improve their academic scores” (p.37, citing Vega, 2012). This means it should be possible to research if integrated learning may improve the performance of students in theological institutions, especially in relation to spiritual and ministerial formation.

Literature is, in fact, being developed to help teachers make use of integrated approaches effectively. For example, the Professional Development Service of Teachers (PDST) of Dublin (2017) developed a manual entitled *An Integrated Approach to Learning, Teaching and Assessment*, which contains “practical examples of how teachers can use differentiated active learning methodologies, inquiry-based approaches to learning and on-going assessment to enhance the key skills of literacy, numeracy and working with others” (p.4). A study of what kind of integrated learning goes on in theological institutions may help one to suggest what type of tools may be required to strengthen or improve such integrated learning.

## Research design

It is our belief that pastors, teachers, missionaries and church leaders or administrators need integrated education to impact the church for effective spirituality and societal transformation in the areas of response to poverty, diseases and conflicts. Such skills are also needed if Christians are to be better influenced to both preach the Gospel and to engage in fruitful dialogue towards peace with people of other faiths. We therefore embarked on a survey of final-year, first-degree students in 4 theological institutions in Jos metropolis and environs, including Jos ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS), Jos; Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN), Bukuru; Gindiri Theological Seminary (GTS), Gindiri; and Lagos, Western and Northern Area Seminary (LAWNA), Jos. We administered an 11-item questionnaire to 30 students, randomly selected at each of JETS, TCNN, and GTS; and 10 students who were the only ones available at LAWNA, totalling 100. We considered them to have encountered most of the learning experiences an undergraduate student would be exposed to in a theological institution, and adequately representative of the final-year students of the selected institutions. Our aim was to find out how much of their experiences may be described directly or indirectly as integrated education. The questionnaire contained the following questions:

1. How many of your teachers in the theological institution help you to see the connection between each course they teach and other courses offered in the institution?

- A. All the teachers
  - B. Many of the teachers
  - C. Few of the teachers
  - D. None of the teachers
2. The lectures you receive in the theological institution mostly demonstrate the application of each subject of lecture to life and ministry.
- A. Strongly agree
  - B. Agree
  - C. Disagree
  - D. Strongly disagree
3. After concepts are discussed in the classroom, teachers in the theological institution often give you opportunities to go out and see the concepts as they are in real life and report back.
- A. Strongly agree
  - B. Agree
  - C. Disagree
  - D. Strongly disagree.
4. The teaching you receive in the theological institution often leads you to have information about the subject, passionate love for the subject and ability to practice the subject at the same time.
- A. Strongly agree
  - B. Agree
  - C. Disagree
  - D. Strongly disagree.
5. How many teachers combine lecturing while you listen, free interaction among students, and practical exercises in helping you to learn?
- A. All of the teachers
  - B. Many of the teachers
  - C. A few teachers
  - D. None of the teachers.
6. How often have you heard the term “Integrated Learning” during your theological education?
- A. Very often
  - B. Often

- C. Not often
  - D. Not at all.
7. Write in one short sentence (10 to 15 words) your personal definition of “Integrated Learning” if you have any. If not, say you do not have any.
  8. In which course(s) do you remember hearing about integrated learning? (Please, name the course, or list the courses if more than one).
  9. Mention one way you remember that integrated learning was demonstrated in your experience of theological education. If you do not remember, say so.
  10. You came about your understanding of integrated learning through
    - A. Interaction with lecturers
    - B. Personal study
    - C. Interaction with students
    - D. None of the above.
  11. How often have you participated in a conference, workshop or seminar in which integrated learning is the main theme?
    - A. Very often
    - B. Often
    - C. Not often
    - D. Not at all.

The responses were analysed using simple percentages. The responses to the open-ended questions 7 to 9 were sorted and summarized into general themes for the purpose of tabulation and analysis.

## **Experience of Integrated Education among theological students in Jos Metropolis and environs**

Question 1: Number of teachers who show connection between disciplines

Institution	All Teachers		Many Teachers		Few Teachers		No Teachers		No Response		Total	
TCNN	5	16.7%	7	23%	16	53%	1	3%	1	3%	30	100%

JETS	3	10%	14	46.7%	13	43%	0	0%	0	0%	30	100%
GTS	12	40%	15	50%	3	10%	0	0%	0	0%	30	100%
LAWNA	1	10%	6	60%	3	30%	0	0%	0	0%	10	100%
Total	21	21%	42	42%	35	35%	1	1%	1	1%	100	100%

Table 1 shows that most respondents believe many teachers show connection between disciplines, with LAWNA having the highest percentage in this regard and only respondents in TCNN mostly saying few teachers show such connection. Jets also has many students saying few teachers show connection between disciplines Theological students in Jos metropolis and environs appear to generally experience some inter-disciplinary connections in their lectures, though some of the bigger institutions have a noticeable percentage of teachers who may not provide such experience in their teaching.

#### Question 2: Demonstration by teachers of each subject’s connection to life and ministry

Institution	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Response		Total	
TCNN	10	33%	16	53%	2	6.7%	2	6.7%	0	0%	30	100%
JETS	11	36.7%	15	50%	4	13%	0	0%	0	0%	30	100%
GTS	15	50%	12	40%	3	10%	0	0%	0	0%	30	100%
LAWNA	6	60%	4	40%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	10	100%
Total	42	42%	47	47%	9	9%	2	2%	0	0%	100	100%

Table 2 shows that most respondents agree that most teachers, without institutional exception, show connections between their subjects and life. The overall percentages are higher at GTS and LAWNA, the smaller institutions, indicating a higher though insignificant negative trend in the larger institutions.

Apparently, theological students in Jos metropolis and environs are generally helped by their teachers to experience interconnections between what they learn and life.

Question 3: Opportunities are given to go out and see concepts discussed in real life

Institution	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Response		Total	
TCNN	7	23%	14	46.7%	7	23%	1	3%	1	3%	30	100%
JETS	7	23%	15	50%	8	26.7%	0	0%	0	0%	30	100%
GTS	7	23%	16	53%	1	3%	6	20%	0	0%	30	100%
LAWNA	1	10%	6	60%	3	30%	0	0%	0	0%	10	100%
Total	22	22%	52	52%	19	19%	7	7%	1	1%	100	100%

In Table 3, most respondents, without institutional exception, agree that teachers give them opportunities to see examples in real life of what they discuss in class. There is apparently a significant level of integration to life in the educational experiences of theological students in Jos metropolis and environs, though the indications appear higher in the smaller institutions. The lower percentages in the bigger institutions indicate that not all teachers are aware of or inclined to pursue deliberate integration in teaching and learning.

Question 4: Teaching of each subject leads to information, passion and action

Institution	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Response		Total	
TCNN	10	33%	15	50%	3	10%	1	3%	1	3%	30	100%
JETS	13	43%	17	56.7%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	30	100%
GTS	15	50%	12	40%	2	6.7%	1	3%	0	0%	30	100%

LAWNA	8	80%	2	20%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	10	100%
Total	46	46%	46	46%	5	5%	2	2%	1	1%	100	100%

In Table 4, most respondents, without institutional exception, agree that their teachers help them to experience information, passion and action in their courses. There appears to be integration of the three domains of learning, cognitive, affective and psychomotor, in the experiences of theological students in Jos metropolis and environs, more so in the smaller than the larger institutions. The data does not make it explicit, but a few teachers may be neglecting to address all the domains of learning.

Question 5: Number of lecturers that combine lecturing with free interaction and practical exercises

Institution	All Teachers		Many Teachers		Few Teachers		No Teachers		No Response		Total	
TCNN	4	13%	6	20%	20	66.7%	0	0%	0	0%	30	100%
JETS	8	26.7%	12	40%	10	33%	0	0%	0	0%	30	100%
GTS	8	26.7%	10	33%	11	36.7%	0	0%	1	3%	30	100%
LAWNA	3	30%	4	40%	3	30%	0	0%	0	0%	10	100%
Total	23	23^	32	32%	44	44%	0	0%	1	1%	100	100%

While most students in TCNN and GTS, according to Table 5, think only few teachers combine lecturing, interaction and practical exercises, most students in JETS and LAWNA think many teachers do such combination. There appears to be a fair amount of integration of approaches to teaching and learning in the experiences of some theological students in Jos metropolis and environs, but there seems to be noticeable absence of such experiences among some other students.

Question 6: How often the term “Integrated Learning” heard by students

Institution	Very Often		Often		Not Often		Not at All		No Response		Total	
TCNN	2	6.7%	11	36.7%	11	36.7%	6	20%	0	0%	30	100%
JETS	12	40%	13	43%	3	10%	2	6.7%	0	0%	30	100%
GTS	7	23%	12	40%	10	33%	1	3%	0	0%	30	100%
LAWNA	0	0%	0	0%	3	30%	6	60%	1	10%	10	100%
Total	21	21%	36	36%	27	27%	15	15%	1	1%	100	100%

According to Table 6, majority of students in JETS and GTS claim to hear the expression “integrated learning” often in class, while students in TCNN seem evenly split between those who often hear the expression and those who do not; but majority of students in LAWNA say they do not hear the expression at all. Integrated learning seems to be used in some institutions as an explicit term but not in others. It implies that integrated education as a teaching strategy may be used either only randomly, or by some other name in many institutions.

Question 7: A personal definition of “Integrated Learning.”

Institution	Holistic Education		Life Applied		Interaction		Learning Process		No Response		Total	
JETS	5	16.7%	6	20%	2	6.7%	1	3%	16	53%	30	100%
TCNN	5	16.7%	3	10%	2	6.7%	1	3%	19	63%	30	100%
GTS	8	26.7%	6	20%	1	3%	0	0%	15	50%	30	100%

LAWNA	1	10%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	9	90%	10	100%
Total	19	19%	15	15%	5	5%	2	2%	59	59%	100	100%

While in Table 7, the few students, not higher than 20% in any institution, who offered a personal definition of integrated learning related it to either holistic education or life-related education, majority, not less than 50% in GTS and up to 90% in LAWNA offered no personal definition of integrated learning. This seems to confirm the analysis of responses to question 6 that integrated education may either be used only randomly or by another name in theological institutions. It implies that even where integrated learning takes place, the students are not consciously aware of what is taking place, or have no name for the experience even if they are aware of it.

Question 8: Courses in which integrated learning was recalled as mentioned.

Institution	Social Science	Education		Mission		History		Religion		Administration		No Response		Total		
JETS	4	13%	9	30%	4	13%	3	10%	11	36.7%	0	0%	12	40%	30	100%
TCNN	4	13%	7	23%	3	10%	0	0%	9	30%	1	3%	16	53%	30	100%
GTS	6	20%	7	23%	1	3%	0	0%	4	13%	1	3%	12	40%	30	100%
LAWNA	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	30%	0	0%	8	80%	10	100%

Total	14	14%	23	23%	8	8%	3	3%	27	27%	2	2%	48	48%	100	100%
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Whereas, according to Table 8, most students who mentioned subjects in which they recalled hearing the expression “integrated learning” mentioned courses in Education and Religion, majority of the students, not less than 40% each in JETS and GTS and up to 80% in LAWNA, did not recall any subject in which they heard “integrated learning” mentioned. The use of the expression “integrated learning” does not seem to have had significant impact on the knowledge of theological students in Jos metropolis and environs. This may yet be because the integrated approach to education goes mostly under another name or only randomly. There may be no deliberate policy or intention to follow integration as a concept in teaching and learning. This means that integrated learning often takes place subconsciously, probably due to proximity of experiences of different aspects of life among teachers and students, which naturally manifest themselves in teaching, not counting out those teachers who may point out such interconnections of disciplines and life from time to time, even if randomly.

Question 9: One-way integrated learning was demonstrated

Institution	Interfaith Dialogue	Field Trip		Leadership		Interaction		Preaching or Teaching		No Response		Total		
JETS	1	3%	4	13%	2	6.7%	2	6.7%	1	3%	20	66.7%	30	100%
TCNN	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	4	13%	26	86.7%	30	100%
GTS	0	0%	2	6.7%	0	0%	0	0%	2	6.7%	26	86%	30	100%
LAWNA	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	10	100%	10	100%
Total	1	1%	7	7%	2	2%	2	2%	7	7%	82	82%	100	100%

The overwhelming majority of students in all the institutions, according to Table 9, not less than 66.7% in JETS and 100% in LAWNA, could not cite a way in which “integrated learning” was demonstrated in class, while very few mentioned interfaith dialogues, field trips, leadership, interaction, and preaching or teaching. It appears most theological students in Jos metropolis experience integrated learning in their studies without being able to describe how it occurs, most likely because it is an unfamiliar term, even when integration happens. It again strongly points to a lack of deliberate use of the integrated approach to teaching and learning, even when it occurs. Perhaps in its use, whenever it is done, the impact on the students’ understanding of the process or importance of integration remains weak beyond mere proficiency in each discipline.

Question 10: How student came about understanding of integrated learning

Institution	Interaction with Teachers		Personal Study		Interaction with Students		None of the Above		No Response		Total	
TCNN	12	40%	5	16.7%	7	23%	6	20%	0	0%	30	100%
JETS	15	50%	3	10%	7	23%	3	10%	2	6.7%	30	100%
GTS	17	56.7%	5	16.7%	6	20%	2	6.7%	0	0%	30	100%
LAWNA	2	20%	1	10%	0	0%	7	70%	0	0%	10	100%
Total	46	46%	14	14%	20	20%	18	18%	2	2%	100	100%

Except in LAWNA where 70% of the students neither learnt about integrated learning through interaction with teachers, nor personal studies, nor interaction with other students, according to Table 10, majority of students in all the other institutions, learnt about integrated learning through interaction with teachers. Teachers seem to be the most significant factors in any knowledge about integrated learning that theological students in Jos metropolis and environs may have. Such teachers may however have been few, and may not have made adequate efforts to lead students to an understanding of the term itself, nor the process it takes, nor the importance it has in life and ministry.

Question 11: Frequency of Conferences, Seminars and Workshops on Integrated Learning attended

Institution	Very Often	Often	Not Often	Not at All	No Response	Total

TCNN	1	3%	3	10%	12	40%	12	40%	2	6.7%	30	100%
JETS	2	6.7%	12	40%	5	16.7%	11	36.7%	0	0%	30	100%
GTS	6	20%	3	10%	12	40%	9	30%	0	0%	30	100%
LAWNA	0	0%	1	10%	2	20%	6	60%	1	10%	10	100%
Total	9	9%	19	19%	31	31%	38	38%	3	3%	100	100%

While 40% of students in JETS say they often attend conferences in which integrated learning is mentioned, while 36.7 do not attend at all according to Table 11, in TCNN 40% say they do not often attend such conferences or seminars and 40% say they do not attend at all. In GTS 40% not often attend and 30% do not attend at all. In LAWNA 60% do not attend at all. Apparently, most theological students in Jos metropolis and environs get little or no exposure to the concept of integrated learning through seminars or conferences. This does not tell us how often the students participate in conferences as such, nor how many such conferences have anything to do with integrated teaching and learning.

## Inferences

It is apparent that activities in teaching and learning that support integrated education are going on in theological institutions in Jos metropolis and environs, and theological students generally acknowledge these activities. This implies that the students of theological institutions will easily benefit from deliberate, intentional use of integrated teaching and learning approaches. If used in interfaith dialogue, ministry to the poor, the sick and the displaced due to conflict, integrated education has the potential of being a very effective tool, in view of its demonstrable effectiveness in other research cited in the literature.

However, this research shows that the use of the expression “integrated learning or education” seems to be at best random and not deliberate or emphatic. Moreover, theological students do not seem to be getting any training in the use of integrated teaching and learning approaches for future

use in the teaching aspects of their ministry. This is indicated by their lack of significant recollection of the use of the expression in specific learning activities, as well as their lack of significant participation in seminars or conferences dedicated to integrated learning. It also implies that they lack adequate skills in integrating their education with the various issues of life, in spite of their apparent recognition of efforts to integrate courses to life in their educational experiences. It appears such experiences do not have significant impact on their understanding of ministry. The reason for this may be that the teachers themselves may only be randomly applying integrated ideas that seem naturally obvious in the recognizable relatedness of some disciplines and their use in real life situations. It is not because the teachers have been trained or come with a deliberate intention to use integrated approaches to teaching and learning in their interaction with students. Obviously, there is no demonstrable uniformity in the way teachers in the theological institutions surveyed convey the sense of integration among students, perhaps due to variations in the institutions' contexts and philosophies.

These may be contributory factors to the reasons why the Church continues to be weakened by dualistic thinking in response to the challenges posed by the integrated approach of Islam to national issues. It may explain why the Church continues to resort to stereotypical conspiracy theories rather than empirically verifiable presentations of their experiences of perceived persecution by Muslims. It may at least partly explain why the Church continues to be found wanting by researchers in the areas of responses to pandemics, poverty and victims of conflicts.

## **Recommendations**

In view of the experience of activities that seem to hint at integration by theological students in Jos metropolis and environs, the introduction of the concept and intentional use of integrated teaching and learning approaches will not be difficult in those institutions. Theological institutions are therefore encouraged to introduce intentional, rather than random, integrated learning and teaching. All teachers should be required to demonstrate familiarity with and willingness to use integrated learning approaches among other teaching

methods as part of the process of selecting them to teach in theological institutions.

Departments of education in theological institutions should be mandated to carry out orientations, short courses, seminars and workshops among faculty and students on the meaning, usefulness and processes of integrated teaching and learning. The already existing experiences of teaching and learning activities that encourage integrated experiences should be used as foundations for the orientations and other introductory activities on integrated teaching and learning.

Students of theological institutions should be encouraged to intentionally observe integration in their learning activities, with a view to making use of their observations and experiences to enhance their own ministerial impact in the field. They should be exposed to literature on integrated education as part of their ministerial preparation, and encouraged to practice the principles learned. It should be intentionally made clear that integrated learning is not only useful in helping students to understand the applicability of various disciplines to life, but that they need the same approach in ministering to the needs of church members, especially in training them for holistic development.

Deliberate and explicit integration of the learning of competencies of hospitality to persons of other faiths beyond theoretical discussion of inter faith dialogue, integration of holistic ministry for imparting development skills in ministering to the poor beyond mere lectures on holistic ministry, and deliberate integration of competencies for responding to pandemics and displacement due to conflicts beyond mere rhetorical discussions in class, should be part of theological education.

Mechanisms should be set in place to research and document the impact of the intentional, as compared to random, use of integrated approaches to teaching and learning. The findings of such research would serve for the long-term development of teaching and learning approaches in theological education.

## **Conclusion**

The impression that has existed among advocates of integrated education, that the fragmented approach to education inherited from the West is still predominant in the educational systems in the Majority World countries today, has not been fully supported by this research. This is because most respondents seem to observe integrative activities in their theological educational experiences. This is a strong indication that the fragmented educational systems have begun to be modified with telling effects. This may also be because at least some teachers observe and, even if only randomly, use obvious interconnectivity among disciplines, in delivering some of their teaching. However, the trend in the intentional, rather than random, use of integrated educational approaches, supported by reviewed literature and now being adopted by some Western countries, may not yet be taking hold in the Majority World countries, as indicated by our research. It may be beneficial to the future ministries of students of theological education if theological institutions begin to take advantage of the benefits of deliberately defining, describing and utilizing integrated educational approaches to enhance the performances and future impact of theological students.

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