

THESIS ABSTRACT

Master of Arts Missiology

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: A TENT-MAKING APPROACH FOR EQUIPPING ADVENTISTS FOR WITNESSING TO MUSLIMS IN ILORIN, NIGERIA

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The fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden ignited the conflict between God and Satan, between good and evil. Biblical accounts present to humanity the core of God's mission to save and redeem fallen creation for Himself. This paper seeks to study this mission of God termed in missiology as *Missio Dei* through the tent-making ministry concept. The focus is to explore the tent-making approach for equipping Adventists for mission engagement among the Muslims in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. The qualitative research method is employed, which uses narrative research designs through focus group discussions and interviews.

Purposive sampling was used in selecting participants for this research. Three groups were selected based on situational-specific behaviours. One participant each was selected from two groups, while four participants were selected from the last

group, which formed the focus group discussants. The three groups are the mission-employing organization of the Church – Conference, Training institution – Seminary and the Missional Church – Members of the Lay-Pastor.

It was observed that Paul used this tent-making model to build cross-cultural bridges to link the dying world to the fountain of life, Jesus Christ, in an unusual way. Through this model, Paul was able to connect with people of various backgrounds and do underground missionary work. This model allowed Paul to carry the gospel message to the then-known Roman Empire, and it was said of his effort that his message had “turned the world upside down” (cf. Acts 17:6).

It has been reported that through the tent-making model, missionaries can serve in the hosting territory for the development of the place and at the same time be the hand of God in ministering the hope in Jesus Christ to the people he/she is serving. On the part of the Church, a tent-making model has been identified to reduce the cost of hiring gospel workers, thus providing benefits both to the Church organization and the mission practitioners.

This study presents that tent-making ministry is the next viable method of mission engagement among Muslims in the areas considered resistant belt, especially in Ilorin due to the high level of religious restriction in the City. Through this study, it has been confirmed that many Muslims are dying in silence and need someone to share their (*spiritual*) concerns with; to give them hope. This made it clear that now is the time for the Church to seek ways to embrace mission refocus and adopt a tent-making approach to reach this restricted belt.

Africa University of Africa

Theological Seminary

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A thesis

submitted in partial of fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts Missiology

by

Ayeni Folorunsho Michael

May 2025

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I am dedicating his study to all missionaries around the world who are doing
their best to bring the message of hope from God to this dying world
and the Lay-Pastors in the Seventh-day Adventist Church,
West Nigeria Union Conference. I dedicate it also to
Professor Emeritus (Pastor) Joel Dada Awoniyi,
whose prophecy about me in 1998 began
the opening of a new direction
in my life's journey

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADM	Conference Administrator/Conference President.
HD-B	Head of Religious Department, Babcock University.
LP1	Respondent One
LP2	Respondent Two
LP3	Respondent Three
LP4	Respondent Four

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

Ministering the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Muslims has been an overwhelming task over the centuries as there has been considerable violence between Muslims and Christians at a global level.¹ The conflict can be attributed to religious differences and the quest for proselytising² on both sides over the centuries.³ Recently, Turkey’s Constitutional Court confirmed the expulsion of nine foreign Christians for missionary work.⁴ In Mauritania, a missionary noted an incident where his Muslim ‘friend’ asked “Have you come to make me a Christian?”⁵ This kind of

¹ David Thomas, ‘The Past and the Future in Christian–Muslim Relations’, *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 18, no. 1 (1 January 2007): 33–42.

² Ruth Mandel et al., ‘Islamophobia, Religious Conversion, and Belonging in Europe’, *History and Anthropology* 26, no. 3 (27 May 2015): 362–79.

³ Eric R Dursteler, ‘Fearing the “Turk” and Feeling the Spirit: Emotion and Conversion in the Early Modern Mediterranean’, *Journal of Religious History* 39, no. 4 (2015): 484–505.

⁴ Anugrah Kumar and Christian Post Contributor, ‘Turkey’s Highest Court Upholds Expulsion of 9 Foreign Christians for “Missionary Activities”’, 14 June 2024.

⁵ Bernard Pelletier, ‘Missionaries Among Muslims’, *Spiritan Magazine*, 30, no. 1 (February 2006): 12.

tension is visible in Nigeria,⁶ particularly in Ilorin.⁷ Ilorin's environment is predominantly Muslim⁸ with low tolerance to people of other faiths.⁹

One must bear in mind that there are lots of challenges in ministering to the Muslims. First among these challenges is the resistance from a fanatic/extremist Muslim through argument and hot debate,¹⁰ secondly, the fear of persecution among relatives and lastly, loss of job.¹¹ In some areas in Nigeria and Ilorin in particular, the instruments of the governments are used to stop the missionary work in certain domains.¹² Recently, the Kwara state government did not wait for a court ruling before taking sides against the Christians in the state.¹³

Preaching to convert one to another religious sect has been documented as one of the principal causes of religious violence in Nigeria.¹⁴ Religion is a volatile issue in

⁶ John Nengel† and Chigemezi Wogu, 'Colonial Politics, Missionary Rivalry, and the Beginnings of Seventh-Day Adventist Mission in Northern Nigeria', *Mission Studies* 38 (28 September 2021): 213–35.

⁷ Eliasu Yahaya, 'Christian Churches in Ilorin, Nigeria: A Brief Historical Survey', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 24, no. 1 (April 2004): 175–80.

⁸ Sakariyau Alabi Aliyu, 'The Modernisation of Islamic Education in Ilorin: A Study of the Adabiyya and Markaziyya Educational Systems', *Islamic Africa* 10, no. 1–2 (2019): 76.

⁹ Gbenga Oloniniran, 'Isese: Police Take Sides as Ilorin Traditionalists Battle for Survival', *Punch Newspapers* (blog), 16 August 2023, <https://punchng.com/isese-police-take-sides-as-ilorin-traditionalists-battle-for-survival/>.

¹⁰ Jeremiah Kaaya, 'How to Convert a Muslim to Christianity?', eBible, 28 October 2013, <https://ebible.com/questions/4384-how-to-convert-a-muslim-to-christianity>.

¹¹ Anugrah Kumar, 'Nigeria Court Affirms Right to Convert from Islam to Christianity | World News', 25 August 2013, <https://www.christianpost.com/news/nigeria-court-affirms-right-to-convert-from-islam-to-christianity.html>.

¹² Yahaya, "Christian Churches in Ilorin, Nigeria," 176.

¹³ Alfred Olufemi, 'Hijab Controversy: CAN Accuses Kwara Governor of Bias against Christians', *Premium Times Nigeria* (blog), 9 March 2021, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/447853-hijab-controversy-can-accuses-kwara-governor-of-bias-against-christians.html>.

¹⁴ Kamal-deen Olawale Sulaiman, 'Religious Violence in Contemporary Nigeria: Implications and Options for Peace and Stability Order', *Journal for the Study of Religion* 29, no. 1 (2016): 92.

Nigerian society, particularly in Ilorin, and open preaching and most conventional methods of proselytising seem to be losing recognition to religious violence.¹⁵

Conditions worldwide and in Ilorin call for creative and innovative approaches to sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ where the conventional method seems to be failing.¹⁶ Therefore, this thesis seeks to look at the approach for tent-making (bi-vocational) approach to reach the Muslims, focusing on Ilorin City in Kwara Conference, West Nigeria Union Conference, through the Seventh-day Adventist Church Members.

According to Whitehouse, "The traditional approach to evangelism may present the truth "as it is in Jesus." It may proclaim doctrines in proper perspective. But it carries some baggage that gets in the way of effectively relating to Muslims."¹⁷ In Nigeria, particularly Ilorin, public preaching like 'morning cry,'¹⁸ outdoor campaigns, and preaching inside buses on transit are now very dangerous.

Kelvin Onongha posited that the next strategy for effective ministry among the regions considered "resistance" to the gospel is the tent-making (bi-vocational) approach.¹⁹ Therefore, an alternative method must be sought to reach the people with the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ, which this thesis seeks to look into. If the

¹⁵ Muhammad Aliyu and AbdulHameed Badmas Yusuf, 'Religious Crisis in Ilorin Emirate: Causes and Solutions', *International Journal of 'Umrānic Studies* 7, no. 1 (2024): 8, <https://doi.org/10.59202/ijus.v7i1.751>.

¹⁶ Kevin Onongha, 'Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions', *Andrews University Seminary Studies*. 53, no. 1 (2015): 183.

¹⁷ Jerald Whitehouse, 'Relating to Muslims: An Adventist View', 18, accessed 4 March 2024, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2001/10/relating-to-muslims-an-adventist-view.html>.

¹⁸ Church Times, 'Morning Cry: Why I Can't Do without It- Emerurai Anna - Church Times Nigeria - News, Features and More', 23 October 2019, <https://churchtimesnigeria.net/morning-cry-christ-emerurai/>.

¹⁹ Onongha, 'Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions', 196.

Church would truly be part of *Missio Dei* -The Mission of God, then, there is a need for other means of sharing the gospel of salvation.

Tent-making ministry is not new,²⁰ it was derived from the word Paul used to describe his status as a gospel worker when he met the family of Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth (cf. Act 18:3). Various mission institutions have adopted this term and has been given different terminologies over the centuries. Trecartin Homer defined a tent-maker as someone who intentionally does mission work but does not work for the Church.²¹ Stephens Darryl stated that "A bi-vocational minister is a person called to pastoral leadership who also earns money doing something else."²²

Samushonga Hartness identified nine terms used in the Church of England to describe the same ministry, these include "(1) voluntary clergy (2) auxiliary priests (3) honorary ministers (4) worker/working priests (5) priest-workers (6) tent-making ministers from Apostle Paul's example (7) dual-role pastors or priests (8) self-supporting ministers/priests (or pastors – outside of the Church of England - CoE) (9) non-stipendiary ministers' and bi-vocational ministry."²³

In the words of Ruth Siemens, the New Testament gave a picture of two mission methods; self-supporting and Church-supporting methods: Apostles in Jerusalem were supported by the Church, while Paul and Aquila were tent-makers

²⁰ Pastor Oswald Lwijiiso Ndelwa, "'Tent-Making Ministry" As a Proposal for Mission and Ministry In The Evangelical Lutheran Church In Tanzania-Iringa Diocese (ELCT-IRD), With Practical Examples From "Muslim Tent Makers" In Tanzania' (Master of Theology, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal, 2002), 17.

²¹ Homer Trecartin, 'Seven Principles for Being a Tent-Maker', *Ministry: International Journal for Pastors* 93, no. 5 (2021): 7.

²² Darryl W. Stephens, 'Bivocational Ministry as the Congregation's Curriculum', *Religions* 12, no. 1 (January 2021): 3, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12010056>.

²³ Hartness M. Samushonga, 'A European Theological Pentecostal Perspective to Bivocational Ministry', *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 40, no. 2 (2 July 2020): 146, <https://doi.org/10.1080/18124461.2020.1795421>.

(self-supporting Ministers).²⁴ The working policy of Seventh-day Adventist Church made clear provisions for the ministers, as employed and supported by the Church through tithe and offerings.²⁵ This shows that more focus is on the Church-supporting mission method.

Diop Ganoune's position is that "every follower of Jesus is called to be a witness, evangelist, and an ambassador of reconciliation."²⁶ He further submitted that "one of the fundamental reasons the Holy Spirit was given to dwell in every believer was to produce His fruit in us and equip us with gifts to lead people to Jesus Christ."²⁷

The city of Ilorin is the seat of political power that is controlled by the Muslim elites. Any move or any effort by the Christians to reach out in any public space/facilities has been resisted by the elites with strong, government agents. Technically, most Church activities are on the watching list of the state and local government within and around Ilorin.

Ilorin is a growing city; it grew in population by 3.3% to reach 1,064,000 in 2024 from what it was in 2023 and it is projected to reach 1,500,000 by 2035²⁸. The total number of baptized members of the Adventist Church in Ilorin as of June 2024 is 533.²⁹ The statistic above shows that the total percentage of Adventists in Ilorin is

²⁴ Ruth E. Siemens, 'My Turn: An Emerging New World Order and a Call for Tentmakers', accessed 23 January 2017, <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/my-turn1>.

²⁵ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Church, *General Conference Working Policy 2021-2022*, 2021st–2022nd ed. (Nampa, Id 83653-5353: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2021), 490, 628.

²⁶ Ganoune Diop, 'Total Membership Involvement: A Reformation Principle', *Ministry: International Journal for Pastors* 88, no. 5 (2016): 26.

²⁷ Ganoune Diop, 26.

²⁸ Macrotrends LLC, 'Ilorin, Nigeria Metro Area Population 1950-2024', accessed 2 May 2024, <https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/cities/21998/ilorin/population>.

²⁹ Executive Secretary, 'Kwara Conference Statistic' (Kwara Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, 3 July 2024).

0.05%. The ratio is 1:1,996; that is one Adventist to roughly 2,000 population of Ilorin. This is happening after more than a hundred years of Adventism in Ilorin.³⁰

The ratio of Christians to Muslims in Ilorin would be hard to ascertain since the National Population Commission (NPC) had since 1991 stopped reflecting religious affiliation in the census data in Nigeria.³¹

There is none, or at best, limited works of literature on using the tent-making approach to reach the challenging religious environments like Ilorin, in Western Nigeria by the Adventists. No research work on how the Adventist professionals can mingle, using their vocations, as the salt (cf. Matt. 5: 13) where they can influence their environment like Paul (the model of tentmaker) among the hostile gentiles, in Ilorin.

There are works on tent-making ministry in different parts of the world among other Christian bodies: in America,³² Europe,³³ and even in Nigeria among The Evangelical Church Winning All,³⁴ and how the Muslims applied it in Africa,³⁵ and

³⁰ Yahaya, 'Christian Churches in Ilorin, Nigeria', 177.

³¹ Garba Isa, 'Nigerian Census; Should We Include Tribe and Religion? - Cybereagles', 26 January 2005, <https://forum.cybereagles.com/viewtopic.php?t=28093>.

³² Kristen Plinke Bentley, 'Perspectives of Bi-Vocational Ministry: Emerging Themes in Bi-Vocational Ministry Research at Lexington Theological Seminary', *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 48, no. 3 and 4 (2018): 115.

³³ Samushonga, 'A European Theological Pentecostal Perspective to Bivocational Ministry', 144.

³⁴ Dan Victor Luke, 'A Strategy for Engaging Youth In Cross-Cultural, Tentmaking Ministry In The Evangelical Church Winning All, Nigeria', *The South African Theological Seminary, SATS PhD Compendium*, 2020, 1 (2021): 294.

³⁵ Ndelwa, "'Tent-Making Ministry" As a Proposal for Mission and Ministry In The Evangelical Lutheran Church In Tanzania-Iringa Diocese (ELCT-IRD), With Practical Examples From "Muslim Tent Makers" In Tanzania', 6.

among the Adventists in the Central Asia,³⁶ but there is yet to be one on how Adventists can witness as tentmakers locally in Ilorin. As it is now, with the restriction witnessed on Christian outreach in Ilorin, there is a need to investigate other means of witnessing to the people of Ilorin and its neighborhoods.

Most of the work on tent-making ministry among Adventist scholars like, Trecartin and Onongha, concentrates on foreign missionaries,³⁷ and none of their articles focused on implementing tent-making ministry as a vital tool to be adopted for implementation among the local mission field. There is little or no concentration on the use of a tent-making approach within our local mission environment, especially in Ilorin, and this is the gap that this research wants to fill.

This study, therefore, seeks to explore the vitality of the tent-making approach in witnessing to the resistant region to the gospel as Ilorin; and how the professionals can be involved, through their vocations, in the mission efforts of the Church without exposing the practitioners to the danger of threats and persecution. This study, though focus on Ilorin, could be generalized to involve tent-making ministry outside of the Ilorin territory; for implementation in other part of the world.

Statement of the Problem

The Adventist Church in Ilorin faces significant challenges in reaching the Muslim population. With only 533 baptized members in a city of over 1 million, this is after a century of Adventism in Ilorin, thus, the need for a new approach is evident.

³⁶ Zavrichko Ivan, 'Improvement of the Tentmakers' Pioneer Training Program for a More Effective Service to the Indigenous People of the Central Asia' (Doctor of Ministry Dissertation, USA, Andrews University, 2016).

³⁷ Onongha, 'Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions', 186.

The tent-making model offers a way to engage local members in mission work without compromising their safety or with minimal resistance.

The first convert and possibly the only one that his family still remain in the faith (the Late Mr Samuel Olatunji) happened more than half a century ago, more than five decades ago.³⁸ Now, most of the worshippers are non-indigenes who are in Ilorin to do business or as government workers. There is now a need to investigate the tent-making approach, different from the conventional evangelistic methods, to witness the gospel to the Muslims in Ilorin using a qualitative research approach.³⁹

Purpose of the Study

The reason and objective of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the tent-making approach as a strategic tool for reaching the Muslims with the gospel in Ilorin, Nigeria and potentially beyond. Specifically, this research seeks to explore the potential tent-maker within the Seventh-day Adventist Church to identify and engage tent-makers and integrate their vocational works with the missionary efforts of the Church. These tent-makers may include civil servants, private workers or owners of employing institutions, contractors and Artisans.

³⁸ Elder Femi Olatunji, Adventist Converts in Ilorin, WhatsApp Calls, 10 November 2024. Femi Olatunji is one of the children of Pa Samuel Olatunji (The first convert to Adventist in Ilorin). Femi has relocated to the USA now. He said that his father met Elder D.C Babcock in person on his way to farm and later got converted to Christianity – Adventist Faith. A conversation with Pastor E. O Ayeni, the Kwara Conference President elaborated that there are two other known Adventists who are from Ilorin: one of the two was married to an Adventist husband and the other Adventist was born to an Adventist (an Igbo woman) mother, whereas, the father was never an Adventist. Another conversation with Professor (Pastor) D. O Babalola, a Professor of Church History, between December 9 and 10, 2024, he made it clear that there was another convert by the name Pa Olokojobi, but nothing was heard about him after 1965 when he personally visited him in his residence in Okelele area of Ilorin. Again, he said that no members of his family joined him in his Christian faith.

³⁹ Omolola A. Adeoye-Olatunde and Nicole L. Olenik, 'Research and Scholarly Methods: Semi-Structured Interviews', *JACCP: Journal of The American College of Clinical Pharmacy* 4, no. 10 (2021): 1361.

By leveraging the skills and influence of these individuals, the study aims to assess how tent-making can enhance the vitality of the Church's mission, strengthen its outreach efforts, and provide a sustainable model for witnessing in challenging religious environments like Ilorin. The overarching goal is to involve the congregation more deeply in fulfilling the Church's mission while overcoming the barriers posed by conventional evangelistic methods in a predominantly Muslim context.

Significance of the Study

The importance of this thesis is to assist the members of the Church in Ilorin to be able to do missions among their Muslim neighbours. Furthermore, it provides a viable tool for the local Church Administrators; Conference and Union in providing a means to engage all members of the Church in witnessing to their Muslim friends within their territories. It will also assist the Church's policymakers in exploring the inclusion of tent-making ministry in the working policy of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as part of the Church's gospel ministers.

The Supporting Ministries contained in the Church's Working Policy⁴⁰ might not be able to meet the need to reach the unreached (the Muslims) because they are independent ministries that have to register with the Church and act separately. However, the tent-making ministry and practitioners will be controlled/monitored by the local Mission Field/Conference and their work can be evaluated over time.

This thesis will benefit the Church in enlarging number of the mission practitioners and also benefit the teaming young seminary graduates who are finding it challenging to secure a place with the Church to fulfil their call to the gospel call

⁴⁰ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Working Policy of the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists*, 2021st–2022nd ed. (Nampa, Id 83653-5353: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2021), 471.

due to financial constraints facing most Mission Fields/Conferences. This measure will allow them to go into the society, mingle with them, work with them and bid them to come to the faith of Jesus Christ.

Limitation

The researcher understands the limitation of this thesis due to the nature of this work; the concept of tent-making ministry might have different meanings to different people since this approach has not been practised in the city before now. Since the tent-making ministry has not gained prominence among the people of Ilorin, it is envisaged there would be the possibility of limited information gathering on the concept of a tent-making ministry. The researcher also wishes to contact the Religious Department of Babcock University for an Interview, which is hundreds of kilometres away from Ilorin City.

Delimitation

This thesis will only investigate the understanding of members of the Church and how they can get involved in tent-making ministry. Participants will be limited to the active mission practitioners in Ilorin which will include the current trained Lay-Pastors within Ilorin, the Kwara Conference president and the head of the Department, Religious Studies of Babcock University. Purposive sampling will be used to determine participants, therefore not all of the Church's population will be part of this study.

Research Questions

This thesis will ask the following questions:

1. What is the worldview of the Tent-making ministry, particularly in the context of Muslim evangelism?

2. What is the Biblical foundation for tent-making ministry?
3. How can the Seventh-day Adventist Church effectively implement a tent-making ministry to make it an acceptable approach in Ilorin?
4. What strategy can the Church apply to equip tentmakers in Ilorin for effective mission work among the Muslims?

Reflexivity (Self as a Research Instrument)

Introduction

Reflexivity is a demonstration of researcher's skill in recognizing their character in a research process.⁴¹ Gerry et al., quoting Robson, stated that "reflexivity is an awareness of how the researcher as an individual with a particular social identity and background impacts the research process."⁴² To Gerry et.al, reflexivity is important to prevent prior knowledge from altering the researcher's observation of data. It would be proper for the researcher to know that the credibility of a research work depends on how data are gathered and interpreted.

Researchers, who use qualitative methods relate directly to research participants, for this reason, there is a need for caution and a guide against subjectivity that can result in bias in data gathering and interpretation. This awareness of personal position and the ability to exercise reflexivity is important in ascertaining the trustworthiness; and credibility of qualitative research work.⁴³

⁴¹ Dean Collett, 'Reflexivity', Melbourne Medical School, 31 July 2018, <https://medicine.unimelb.edu.au/school-structure/medical-education/research/qualitative-journey/themes/reflexivity>.

⁴² Gerry McGhee, Glenn R. Marland, and Jacqueline Atkinson, 'Grounded Theory Research: Literature Reviewing and Reflexivity', *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 60, no. 3 (2007): 334–42.

⁴³ Franz Breuer, Katja Mruck, and W.-M Roth, 'Subjectivity and Reflexivity: An Introduction', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 3, no. 3 (1 September 2002).

Positioning myself in this Research

In this thesis, I want to explore a tent-making approach to reaching the Muslims with the gospel in Ilorin City. I stayed in Ilorin more than any other place I have been to, from 1992 after grammar school, till 2010. I joined the Church as a Pastor in 2010. In 2022, I was transferred there again to serve and up till the moment, I can say that I am still part of Ilorin.

In Ilorin, I received training as an apprentice in a Tailor's workshop, called a Fashion Designer workshop. Throughout my training period, I was very dedicated to the Church's mission assignment, in the Youth Ministry and within the Church as a whole: it was not difficult for me to combine mission with my training. After graduation, I started the "Light of His Coming Tracts" club in 1999, which focused on gospel tracts printing and Children's Ministry. I started organizing Children's programs and hosting a yearly Children's event tagged "Children of the Kingdom." I did this till 2010 when I joined the Church as a Minister/Clergy.

Again, in my undergraduate program, my thesis was titled "Appraisal of Paul's Method of Self Support for Mission: Implication for Seventh-Day Adventist Pastoral Ministry in Nigeria." The focus of the thesis was how the Church can engage business owners to do mission work as tent-makers and their efforts would be recognized by the Church though they are not being paid by the Church: and how the Church can involve Laities in the mission work as Lay-Pastors.

The thesis then recommended that the Church should create avenues for the Laities to be Lay-Pastors so that they can be part of the mission of the Church. The study in my undergraduate provided me with some knowledge about what tent-making is and how one can be part of this ministry in fulfilling the obligation of the great commission.

The aim here is to provide honest and unbiased work reflecting the participants' personal experiences. I will want to make the interview an open-headed interview that will allow the participants to express themselves and give details of all that they might know or their experiences in bi-vocational ministry. The goal here is to guide against allowing my prior experience of Tent-making ministry and my current position as a Gospel Minister to interfere with the research process.

Methodology

This section briefly examines the method to be employed in this study. This will involve the research setting and design, data gathering method, sampling procedure, selection criteria, and how data will be evaluated.

Research Setting and Design

This qualitative research employed a narrative design to gather data. Quoting Cleland, Oranga and Matere posit, “Qualitative research is concerned with understanding people’s experiences in a simple, easy and analytical way and seeks answers to research questions using a systematically pre-defined set of procedures.”⁴⁴ Kim Raj Subedi states that qualitative inquiry is to unravel phenomenon in-depth rather than generalise the finding.⁴⁵ According Philippa Parks, “Narrative research appeals to those interested in “constructivist-oriented, qualitative research that examines people’s experiences from their perspectives”⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Josephine Oranga and Audrey Matere, ‘Qualitative Research: Essence, Types and Advantages’, *Open Access Library* 10, no. 12 (2023): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1111001>.

⁴⁵ Khim Raj Subedi, ‘Determining the Sample in Qualitative Research’, *Scholars’ Journal* 4 (31 December 2021): 10, <https://doi.org/10.3126/scholars.v4i1.42457>.

⁴⁶ ,’Philippa Parks, ‘Story Circles: A New Method of Narrative Research’, *American Journal of Qualitative Research* Vol. 7, no. No. 1 (2023): 58. Constructivist research prioritize the perspectives and experiences of participants, recognizing that knowledge is co-constructed through interactions between the researcher and the subjects.

Method of Gathering Data

This thesis employed focus group discussion and key informant interviews methods in data collection.⁴⁷ According to Tremblay, “key informant technique is pre-eminently suited to the gathering of the kinds of qualitative and descriptive data that are difficult or time-consuming to unearth through structured data-gathering methods such as questionnaire survey.”⁴⁸ Moreover, Kibuacha further stated: “Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) are a pivotal qualitative method that offers exclusive insights from individuals with extensive knowledge or experience in a specific area.”⁴⁹

Focus group discussion should not be confused with key informant interviews. The researcher in the focus group discussion acts as a facilitator or moderator where all the participants are allowed to voice their views on the subject of the discussion. During key informant interviews, on the other hand, the researcher acts as an investigator; he/she controls the flow of the interview and engages in “discussion” with the discussant as an individual.⁵⁰

Based on this, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and non-probabilistic purposive sampling were employed. Participants would be those that the Church trained and engaged as pilot Lay-pastors, the president of the Kwara

⁴⁷ Michelle Lokot, ‘Whose Voices? Whose Knowledge? A Feminist Analysis of the Value of Key Informant Interviews’, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 20 (1 January 2021): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920948775>.

⁴⁸ Marc-Adelard Tremblay, ‘The Key Informant Technique: A Nonethnographic Application’, *American Anthropologist* 59, no. 4 (1957): 688.

⁴⁹ Frankline Kibuacha, ‘Key Informant Interviews: An In-Depth Guide for Researchers’, *GeoPoll* (blog), 2 February 2024, <https://www.geopoll.com/blog/key-informant-interviews/>.

⁵⁰ Tobias O.Nyumba et al., ‘The Use of Focus Group Discussion Methodology: Insights from Two Decades of Application in Conservation’, *Methods in Ecology and Evolution* 9, no. 1 (2018): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1111/2041-210X.12860>.

Conference, and the Heads of the Department of Religious Studies, Babcock University.

The Lay-Pastors were engaged through focus group discussions and interviews to gather their experience in combining their vocation with pastoring a Church while the Conference President was engaged to provide insight into how the Conference administration can better improve on engaging tentmakers in the mission efforts of the Church. The Head of the Department of Babcock University was engaged in providing the possibility of training seminary students to prepare them to embrace tent-making instead of focusing on working for the Church as full-time Ministers.

Data Collection

The research methodology incorporates both primary and secondary data collection approaches, a sampling procedure, selection criteria for participants, and data analysis techniques. The primary data collection was obtained through a survey, using Google Forms, Key informant interviews and focus group discussion: a semi-structured approach was used to interview selected individuals.

Secondary sources would be published literature from the library and unpublished manuscripts from suitable and relevant authors. The Internet, another secondary data source, will be used; here, Google Scholar and Google Book search engines, online journals, and research platforms will play prominent roles.

John W. Creswell posited that qualitative research begins with the logical assumption, which comes from the researcher's worldview, paradigm, or set of beliefs. This research inquiry informs how the study is done.⁵¹ Based on the research

⁵¹ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 2nd Edition (Nebraska, Lincoln: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2007), 15.

questions, secondary sources would be used to answer questions One and two on the worldview of tent-making and Biblical Foundation.

Further investigation was sought from the Seminary professor and the Conference administrator on the Biblical foundation of tent-making ministry. Questions three and four, which focused on the effective implementation and strategy of the tent-making approach, was answered using primary sources from the focus group discussions and interviews among participants.

Sampling Procedure and Size.

According to Anthony Stancy, the number of participants in a sample size is not what matters, but in the quality and clarity of the information collected.⁵² Again, Roland Boddy posited, "One case can produce an in-depth understanding that furthers knowledge ... Furthermore, as the example of the discovery of penicillin demonstrates, a single case can also have findings which do validly apply across many areas."⁵³

Seven participants would be engaged in the research. These include five Elders (Lay-Pastors), the Kwara Conference administrator, and the Head of the Department of Babcock University Seminary. Non-probabilistic purposive sampling will be adopted to locate the participants for this work.

⁵² Prof Anthony Stacey, *ECRM 2019 18th European Conference on Research Methods in Business and Management* (Academic Conferences and publishing limited, 2019), 99.

⁵³ Clive Roland Boddy, 'Sample Size for Qualitative Research', *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal* 19, no. 4 (1 January 2016): 430, <https://doi.org/10.1108/QMR-06-2016-0053>.

Selection Criteria

This characteristic decides whether people are eligible to participate in a study and should thus be invited.⁵⁴ The criteria for population selection was based on the position of the participants in the mission of the Church, which included Lay-Pastors, Church administrators, and the Head of the Department of Religious Studies of Babcock University. The Lay-Pastors are selected because of their involvement in mission work alongside their private business. The Conference President was selected based on his position of engaging workers for the ministries of the Church. Why the Head of the Department of Babcock University was selected because of the strategic position of the school in the training of mission workers in the territory.

Data Analysis

The thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. Clarke and Braun posited that thematic analysis (TA) is a method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning ('themes') within qualitative data.⁵⁵ Thematic analysis is a good tool for discovering something about people's views, experiences, opinions, knowledge, or values using interviews, social media profiles or survey responses.⁵⁶

Theoretical Framework

Emile Durkheim's theory of social structure and functional theory was used. The theory relates development in society, with the pressure of population where each

⁵⁴ GET-IT Glossary MART, "Selection Criteria", accessed 23 June 2024, <https://getitglossary.org/term/selection+criteria>.

⁵⁵ Victoria Clarke and Virginia Braun, 'Thematic Analysis', *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 12, no. 3 (4 May 2017): 297, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262613>.

⁵⁶ Jack Caulfield, 'How to Do Thematic Analysis | Step-by-Step Guide & Examples', Scribbr, 6 September 2019, <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/thematic-analysis/>.

member of the society functions to make the society a whole.⁵⁷ Other theories to use are doctrinal and praxis theories.⁵⁸ These theories focused on members' belief and knowledge about God's plan for all creation and a reflective approach to taking action.

Members of the Church are one of these communities and are expected to share the mission of the Church, (functional and praxis theories); mission work should not be upon the clergies (Church-Supporting Ministers) only; every member needs to be involved (TMI). Through the congregations' involvement in the tent-making ministry, they would get involved in the great commission handed to the Church by Jesus Christ (doctrinal theory). Diop's position is that "one of the fundamental reasons the Holy Spirit was given to dwell in every believer was to produce His fruit in us and equip us with gifts to lead people to Jesus Christ."⁵⁹

Ethical Consideration

Ethical consideration is a necessary attitude when using human participants in research work.⁶⁰ The rights⁶¹ of all research participants must be respected under all circumstances. Some of these rights include the right to accept to participate or to decline participation, the right to honesty, that all information gotten from participants

⁵⁷ Charlotte Nickerson, 'Emile Durkheim's Theory', 13 February 2024, <https://www.simplypsychology.org/emile-durkheims-theories.html>.

⁵⁸ Mark G. Harden, 'A Congregational Study on Mission Readiness: Toward a Practical Ecclesiology of Practical Action', *Ecclesial Future* Volume 4, no. 2 (December 2023): 95.

⁵⁹ Ganoune Diop, 'Total Membership Involvement: A Reformation Principle', 26.

⁶⁰ Siti Roshaidai Mohd Arifin, 'Ethical Considerations in Qualitative Study', *International Journal of Care Scholars* 1, no. 2 (2018): 32.

⁶¹ Laryeafio Michael Nii and Omoruyi Courage Ogbewe, 'Ethical Consideration Dilemma: Systematic Review of Ethics in Qualitative Data Collection through Interviews', *Journal of Ethics in Entrepreneurship and Technology* 3, no. 2 (1 January 2023): 98, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEET-09-2022-0014>.

was used as promised and that there was to be no distortion or alteration of the information they will provide.

The research went through the ethical committee of the Adventist University of Africa. This thesis followed thoroughly all the measures put in place to protect and respect the rights of all participants in this research work: A consent form was served and filled out by all participants at will.

Definition of Terms (Conceptual Definition)

1. Tent-making: This has been interpreted as a *bi-vocational ministry* (BM), *business as mission* (BAM) and many more.⁶² This term will be used interchangeably with bi-vocation and sometimes with business as a mission in this thesis.
2. Morning Cry: This method of witness is whereby a preacher will wake up very early in the morning to preach to the community by ringing a bell and preaching the word alongside, moving from one street to another.
3. Rights: This is a duty-based ethical theory that explains the rights of every person.⁶³
4. Isese: The Yoruba term for African Traditional Religion (ATR).
5. Ifa: is the deity of wisdom and intellectual development.⁶⁴

⁶² Samushonga, 'A European Theological Pentecostal Perspective to Bivocational Ministry', 146.

⁶³ Michael Nii Laryeafio and Omoruyi Courage Ogbewe, 'Ethical Consideration Dilemma: Systematic Review of Ethics in Qualitative Data Collection through Interviews', *Journal of Ethics in Entrepreneurship and Technology* 3, no. 2 (1 January 2023): 96, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEET-09-2022-0014>.

⁶⁴ UNESCO, 'UNESCO - Ifa Divination System', accessed 3 November 2024, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/ifa-divination-system-00146>.

6. Adventist: This a Christian denomination, among the Protestant Churches with a mandate to preach the last everlasting message of the three angels of Revelation 14 to the world.
7. Muslims: They are sets that follow the teachings and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Their religion is Islam.
8. Witnessing: Witnessing is telling others about the forgiveness, love, deliverance, empowering, fruitful life and ministry, etc., that you have found in Jesus.⁶⁵
9. Equip: ““To provide someone with what they need to fulfil their purpose." But not just any purpose- a God-given purpose. A purpose that is much greater than anything you could have ever asked or imagine” [sic].⁶⁶
10. Mission: This is the divine activity of sending intermediaries, whether supernatural or human, to speak or do God's will so that His purposes for judgment or redemption are spread.⁶⁷
11. Iyemaja: This is a river goddess among the Yoruba ATR.

Chapter’s Summary

This Chapter has looked into the background of this study and stated that this study is designed to fill a missional gap in Ilorin: a tent-making approach to mission. Efforts have been made to situate Ilorin City and why it is necessary to involve tent-makers in reaching the hard-to-reach Muslims of the City.

⁶⁵ The Christian Broadcasting Network, ‘What the Bible Says about Witnessing’, CBN, accessed 5 November 2024, <https://cbn.com/article/jesus/what-bible-says-about-witnessing>.

⁶⁶ tre Ministries, ‘Devotional 2 Overview: Equip’, tre Ministries, accessed 5 November 2024, <https://www.treministries.org/tre-devotional/d2-week-1-god-equips-the-called-wl2ga>.

⁶⁷ ‘Mission Meaning - Bible Definition and References’, Bible Study Tools, accessed 5 November 2024, <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/mission/>.

The method that is aimed to be used in this work is a qualitative research method. Purposive sampling that would be used in getting participants for this work, based on their experience in tent-making, has also been discussed. Thematic analysis will be used in the interpretation of data that would be obtained in this research.

This chapter ends with an emphasis on the importance of ethical consideration for all participants in the research work. Some conceptual definitions of terms are also included to give insights into some of the terms used conceptually in this thesis.

Thesis Outline

Chapter One presented the study, gave the background to the study and specified the problem that the study wants to look into and the method of approach to the study. Chapter Two dealt with the Biblical Foundation of tent-making ministry. Chapter Three focused on a review of some selected literature on tent-making ministry.

Chapter Four delves into the method that would be employed in this study. Chapter Five analyses all the data that would be collected and brings out the strategy that can equip tentmakers to do missions in Ilorin. Lastly, Chapter Six presents a summary of the work and conclusions and makes recommendations for the tent-making approach in Ilorin.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION OF TENT-MAKING MISSION

Concept for Mission Strategy

Tent-making is a concept for mission strategy. Mission practitioners analogically use the term “tent-making” to describe missionaries who support themselves financially through secular employment while engaging in ministry.¹ The plan builds on the principle of a bi-vocational strategy in Christian missions where individuals simultaneously engage in professional or secular work and ministry.²

Tent-making as a formal term is not directly referenced in the Bible, the Old Testament includes individuals fulfilling God’s call through both secular and spiritual responsibilities (cf. Neh. 1:11). The New Testament, on the other hand, explicitly associates the concept with Paul in his missionary efforts, supported through his trade as a tentmaker (cf. Acts 18:1-3). Marc B. Donaldson argued that bi-vocational ministry “has deep, biblical roots.”³

This chapter will review selected Biblical passages to establish the Biblical foundation of the Tent-making Mission. Efforts will be made to establish the concept of mission and tent-making ministry from both the Old and New Testaments, and

¹ Patrick Lai, *Tentmaking: The Life and Work of Business as Mission* (Colorado, CO: Authentic Publishers, 2005), xii.

² Dennis W. Bickers, *The Tentmaking Pastor: The Joy of Bivocational Ministry*. (Grand Rapids, Mi: Bakers Books, 2000), 10.

³ Marc B Donaldson, ‘A Means to an End: The Sustainability of Bivocational Ministry’ (D.Min. Dissertation, Wilmore, Kentucky, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2016), 14.

from the writings of Ellen G. White and various scholars with an emphasis on its implication in this twenty-first century.

Mission

The mission is described as the work that originated in/from God:⁴ “God took the initiative for mission in sending His Son, Jesus, to the world to save it and also the Son sending the Church to spread the Gospel of God’s salvation.”⁵ Luke gave a vivid picture of what God is doing in the work of mission: Jesus declared "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10). In the account of the fall, it was God who chose the initiative to seek Adam and Eve who were ‘lost’ (cf. Gen 3: 8-10).

The Bible is dotted with the mission of God. Christopher stated, “Mission is what the Bible is all about; we could as meaningfully talk of the missional basis of the Bible as of the biblical basis of mission.”⁶ Craig Ott et. al submitted that “The Bible is from start to finish a missionary book, for it is the story of God himself reaching into human history to reconcile a fallen and rebellious humanity to himself and to re-establish his reign over all creation.”⁷

⁴ Jiri Moskala, ‘The Mission of God’s People in the Old Testament’, *Perspective Digest*, 3, 16, no. 2 (2011): 3, <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pd/vol16/iss2/3>.

⁵ Rev. Eliazar Daila Baba, ‘Missions and the Church in the Light of Genesis 3:9’, *International Journal of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education* 9, no. 8 (2022): 138, <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.0908014>.

⁶ Christopher J.H Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible Grand Narratives* (USA: IntterVersity Press, 2006), 36.

⁷ Craig Ott, Stephen J. Strauss, and with Timothy C. Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues* (Grand Rapids, Mi: Baker Academic, 2010), 3. [Sic]

Tent-Making

The concept of tent-making⁸ appears remarkably in the New Testament with the way that Paul described his ministry to the Gentiles (cf. Acts 18:3, 2 Thess. 3:7-9). However, the Bible is filled with pictures of Tent-makers from the Old Testament through to the New Testament.

Ayeni, quoting Mareau, stated: “Tent-making mission has gained prominence in recent years, but tent-makers are not new. They are as old as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. While being semi-nomadic cattle-ranchers, they became witnesses to the living God, Yahweh, before the Canaanites.”⁹ Deckert¹⁰ classified the activities of Joseph and Daniel as tent-makers because they carried the mission of the God of Abraham and Isaac with them and bore witness in their place of work with pagan Kings.

Samushonga presented that some Scholars classified the term ‘tent-maker’ as overseas missionaries doing cross-cultural missions¹¹ like Paul. However, taking a broader look at tent-making ministry, one will see that tent-making is not limited to overseas missionaries. Amos who prophesied (around 760 BC) during the reigns of Jeroboam II in Northern Israel and Uzziah in Southern Israel (Judah) could also be considered a tent-maker because he was a shepherd when he was on a mission to his people (cf. Amos. 1:1, 7: 14-15).

⁸ Onongha, ‘Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions’, 185.

⁹ Folorunsho M. Ayeni, ‘Appraisal of Paul’s Method of Self Support for Mission: Implication for Seventh-Day Adventist Pastoral Ministry in Nigeria’ (Ilishn-Remo, Nigeria, Babcock University, 2017), 4.

¹⁰ Glenn D. Deckert, *Working Abroad with Purpose: The Way of a Tentmaker* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2019), 1.

¹¹ Samushonga, ‘A European Theological Pentecostal Perspective to Bivocational Ministry’, 154.

Old Testament

Mission and Tent-making Before the Flood

Some scholars like Kaiser focused on Abraham's call and the Israelites' election at Sinai as the beginning of outstanding mission texts in the Old Testament.¹² However, Culbertson agrees that the mission of God started with the creation of the world and that the message of the angels in Revelation 14: 6, 7 to worship God, who is the Creator of the heavens and earth is built on Genesis 1:1.¹³ God went out seeking for them,¹⁴ preached salvation to them and redeemed them from death by providing a substitute for their death (cf. Gen. 3: 15, 21, Rev. 13:8b).

Enoch preached to his generation: He maintained the foundation that God laid in ministering to those who are lost. Jude gave a picture that Enoch, seventh from Adam, got a clear revelation of God's plan of salvation, culminating in the second coming of Jesus. (cf. Jude 1:14). It was said that Enoch dwelt much on what will become of the people at the end of time; at the time of judgement.¹⁵

Ellen G. White told of the mission of Enoch thus, "Such often sought Enoch in his places of retirement, and he instructed them and prayed for them, that God would give them a knowledge of his will."¹⁶ Enoch goes on to visit the few human

¹² Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., 'The Great Commission in the Old Testament', *International Journal of Frontier Missions* Vol 13, no. 1 (March 1996): 4.

¹³ Howard Culbertson, 'From the Bible's Very First Verse: Missions -- The Heart of God', accessed 22 April 2024, <https://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/genesis1.htm>.

¹⁴ Don Fanning, 'The Old Testament and Missions', *Themes of Theology That Impacts Missions*. 1 (2009): 1, https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgm_theo/1.

¹⁵ George H Schodde, 'The Book of Enoch: Translated from the Ethiopic, With Introduction and Notes', 1882, 32, <https://www.holybooks.com/the-book-of-enoch-the-george-h-schodde-translation/>.

¹⁶ Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gift*, vol. 3 (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1864), 56.1.

populations on the earth. This gives credence to the role of a tent-maker; building relationships with the people.

Noah was classified as a preacher of righteousness (cf. 2 Pet. 2:5). His mission work was a picture of a New Testament tentmaker; he was a carpenter who built the first ship as recorded in the Bible (cf. Gen. 6:13-17). Ellen G. White said, “As the preaching of Noah warned, tested, and proved the inhabitants of the world before the flood of waters destroyed them from off the face of the earth, so the truth of God for these last days is doing a similar work of warning, testing, and proving the world.”¹⁷ Mark Wilson submitted that “Noah heeded God’s warning and obediently built the ark. First, his actions condemned (κατέκρινεν) the world, an element not stated explicitly in Genesis.”¹⁸

Missions and Tent-Making in the Post-Flood Era

The book of Genesis gave us narrations of the wonderings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who were Shepherds and were carrying with them the mission of the One God, YHWH. Joseph was a Politician/State Actor in Egypt and was there with the consciousness of the God of his Patriarchs before Pharaoh (cf. Gen. 39:9, 41:1-39).

Second Kings Chapter Five presents the mission work of a nameless slave maid in the house of Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria (cf. 2 Kings 5: 1-19). She could be classified as a tent-maker per excellent taken from the

¹⁷ Ellen G. White, *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, vol. 2 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1922), 213.

¹⁸ Mark W Wilson, ‘Noah, the Ark, and the Flood in Early Christian Literature’, *Scriptura* 113, no. 0 (19 January 2015): 6, <https://doi.org/10.7833/113-0-910>.

illustration by Trecartin of an incident in North Africa; a woman who pointed others to a missionary.¹⁹

Naaman got the message of hope for his illness and accepted to go to Israel for salvation. In Israel, after Naaman received his healing, he was converted; he got that experience of paradigm shift from his religion to the worship of the God of Israel. The Hebrew word [**אֲמַיִלִיָּהוָה**: (2Ki 5:17 WTT)] here connotes to belong to YHWH.

Another Old Testament tent-maker is Daniel in the foreign land. Daniel was not sent to Babylon as a missionary as Jonah was sent to Nineveh, but he found himself there alongside the captives from Judah to the land of the Chaldeans (cf. Dan. 1: 1-6). Stephens N. Haskell submitted that “Daniel and his companions passed through a strange school in which to become fitted for lives of sobriety, industry, and faithfulness.”²⁰

Workplace challenges made Daniel and his other friends from Judah closer to YHWH than ever before (cf. Dan. 1: 8-12, 2: 10-30, 3: 8-27). In all the encounters in the land of Babylon, Daniel and his friends stood firm to declare the God of heaven among their workmates. The mission of YHWH that the Hebrew captives: Daniel and his friends, were involved in Babylon resulted in the conversion of the highest-ranked personality, King Nebuchadnezzar. Ellen G. White commented thus: “He who had defied and blasphemed the God of heaven, now acknowledged the power of the Most High and earnestly sought to promote the fear of Jehovah and the happiness of his subjects.”²¹

¹⁹ Homer Trecartin, ‘Seven Principles for Being a Tent-Maker’, 9.

²⁰ Stephen N. Haskell, *The Story of Daniel the Prophet* (South Lancaster, Mass.: South Lancaster Printing Co., 1908), 28.

²¹ Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1917), 521.2.

Rochelle Houser provided archaeological evidence of this conversion of King Nebuchadnezzar. She submitted “Here is another amazing inscription, which says Nebuchadnezzar was a worshiper of Yavah, or Yahweh, or the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”²² This gives credence to show how far personal influence as a tent-maker can be: Daniel and his friends seized every opportunity, sometimes at the highest risk to their lives and established the knowledge of God where they work.

New Testament

Jesus Christ’s Mission Method

Jesus is God incarnate (John 1:14), he got involved (immersed) in human culture, though He is above it.²³ Daila Baba posited that “it is to Jesus that we look to understand the mission in the New Testament.”²⁴ Trecartin posited that “Jesus worked most of His life as a carpenter. His hands were rough. He got splinters in His fingers. He smashed His thumb with the hammer.”²⁵ Jesus could be classified as a model for a Tent-Making Ministry.

What we claim to do in the mission of God is the mandate we got from Jesus Christ (cf. Matt. 28: 19-20). Ellen White ascertained that only the method used by Jesus could be successful in reaching the world for He mingled with the people, sought their welfare and later bid them to follow Him.²⁶

²² Rochelle A. Houser, ‘Evidence Showing Nebuchadnezzar’s Change of Heart’, 20 June 2017, https://www.academia.edu/33545429/Nebuchadnezzar_Had_a_Change_of_Heart.

²³ Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Biblical Theologizing in CrossCultural Perspective*, Revised 25th Anniversary Edition (Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 381.

²⁴ Rev. Eliazar Daila Baba, ‘Missions and the Church in the Light of Genesis 3’, 139.

²⁵ Homer Trecartin, ‘Seven Principles for Being a Tent-Maker’, 8.

²⁶ Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1938), 458.3.

Mission to the neighbour was initiated by Jesus when He sent His disciples in twos to the lost house of Israel (cf. Luke 9:1-6, Matt. 10:5-7). Again the mission to “all the nations” [πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Mat 28:19 BGT)] of the world was also a command given to the Church by Jesus Christ (cf. Matt. 28:19-20, Act 1:8).

The mission of seeking the lost was what Jesu gave to the disciples too; “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” (cf. John 20:21 NKJV). Michael Langford posited that this word as recorded by Apostle John is the heart of the mission for it revealed the activities of God that He is calling us to.²⁷

Jesus showed the example of ministering in a hostile environment (resistance belt) when He attended to the Samaritan woman by the well (cf. John 4). Eric John submitted that Jesus always makes the first move to break down barriers that cause separations.²⁸ Jesus then instructed His disciples to go to all the world and that His presence will always be with them (cf. Matt. 28:20).

With the direction that Jesus gave in Act Chapter One and the example from His life from a Carpentry background, Jesus described how the mission should be. The disciples followed the directives from Jesus; they stayed in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, preached in Jerusalem (cf. Act 2), then in Samaria (Act 8) and then to the rest of the world (Act 17:6).

Apostles’ Mission Method.

The disciples began their mission work when they were in the school of discipleship under Jesus (cf. Matt. 10, Mark 6: 7-13, Luke 10:1-24). They went on

²⁷ Michael D. Langford, ‘Missiology in the New Creation: John 20:1–23’, *Lectio: Guided Bible Reading*, accessed 23 April 2024, //spu.edu/lectio.

²⁸ Eric John Wyckoff, ‘Jesus in Samaria (John 4:4–42): A Model for Cross-Cultural Ministry’, *Biblical Theology Bulletin*. 35, no. 3 (August 2005): 91.

mission outreach in twos and brought reports of their success in the mission field to Jesus, the Rabbi (cf. Luke 10:17). Jesus asked the disciples to wait in Jerusalem after His resurrection for the promise of the Holy Spirit that He made with them (cf. John 14:16; 15:26; 16:7, 13), that after the baptism of the Holy Spirit, they would be able to do the mission work. The coming of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled in Act chapter two.

The mission work of the Apostle commenced fully when they all received the Holy Spirit and Peter got the move to stand up and preach the gospel during the feast of Pentecost (cf. Act 2). It was chronicled that those who were converted and baptized in that single effort of the Apostle were about three thousand (cf. Acts 2: 41).

The book of the Acts of the Apostles is full of the mission work of the Apostles and records many conversions, starting from the experience at Pentecost in Jerusalem to the events in Rome when Apostle Paul was there to serve prison term. Kaiser posited that what followed through in the book of Acts is the great commission of Jesus Christ recorded in Matthew Chapter twenty-eight.²⁹

The book of Acts centred on the activities of only a few Apostles and they are Peter (Acts 1-12); Philip (Acts 8) and Paul (Acts 13-28). Paul's mission work appears to take the larger part of the book of Acts. Kraft agreed that the book of Acts is a few acts of a few apostles over a few periods, but few apostles were the very important ones, and the few acts were the decisive ones.³⁰ This does not imply that other Apostles did not do mission work for there are records of the activities of Apostle

²⁹ Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., 'The Great Commission in the Old Testament', 2.

³⁰ Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Biblical Theologizing in CrossCultural Perspective*, 439.

John as his revelation is recorded in the book of Revelation. It was also noted that Thomas worked in India as a missionary.³¹

Tent-Makers in the Early Church

A noticeable mode of doing a mission in the early Church era was the tent-making method. Onongha stated that Paul was not alone in this as others with him were into another vocation and were still committed to the mission. Among them were: Luke the Physician and gospel writer, Aquila and Pricilla the tent-makers, and Philemon the slave master.³²

Siemen submitted that the New Testament presented to us two models of mission work: Church-supporting and self-supporting methods: Apostles in Jerusalem were supported by the Church, while Paul and Aquila were tent-makers (self-supporting Ministers).³³ Paul and Barnabas started their mission work without depending on the Church in Antioch where they were sent on their first missionary trip.

Paul could be considered one of the greatest Apostles, he was a tent-maker who provided for all his necessities and not only his needs but the needs of other members of his team. Paul argued that his work has always provided for his needs and those with him (cf. Acts 20:34, 2 Thess. 3:7, 8). He wrote to the Church in Corinth of how he and Barnabas did not depend on the Church for survival (cf. 1 Cor. 9:6).

³¹ E. Randolph Richards and Brandon J. O'Brien, *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understand the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 27.

³² Onongha, 'Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions', 185.

³³ Ruth E. Siemens, 'My Turn'.

The account in Acts Chapter eighteen (Acts 18:1-3) presented the meeting of Paul with a Jewish family in Corinth (Aquila and Pricilla) who were of the same trade as him, tentmakers. This family were gospel workers who depended on their tent-making business like Paul. From the letters from Paul, he addressed that Aquila and his wife, Pricilla, oversaw a Church in their house (cf. 1Co 16:19, Ro 16:3-5). Among the early Church Fathers who gave us a glimpse of the nature of mission after the first century AD is Spyridon who was a Shepherd and a Bishop.³⁴

Ellen G. White's Position on Tent-Making Ministry

Ellen G. White gave a striking picture of the Moravian Church as described by John Wesley in the Great Controversy that those who presided over the Church were Paul, the tent-maker and Peter, the fisherman.³⁵ This presented a picture of the importance of tentmakers in upholding the work of the mission in the face of difficulty and religious restriction.

The Church of Vaudois got the same testimony as the Moravian that their Ministers never depended fully on the Church, but engaged in tent-making to cater for their needs.³⁶ The Vaudois Church is also called the Waldensians³⁷ who sacrificed all to stay true to the apostolic truth. It is also an encouragement today that the tent-makers possess the capability needed to care for the body of Christ while they are still engaging with their private business.

³⁴ Samushonga, 'A European Theological Pentecostal Perspective to Bivocational Ministry', 148.

³⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911), 255.3.

³⁶ Ellen G. White, 68.1.

³⁷ Russ Collins, 'Vaudois, Provence History, by Provence Beyond', accessed 6 June 2024, <https://www.beyond.fr/history/vaudois.html>.

Mission Implication of Tent-Making in the Twenty-First Century

The New Testament writers made it clear that the mission work of the Church to all the world would continue till the end of time (cf. Matt. 24:14, 28:19-20, Acts 1:8). David Bauer stated that the word of Jesus in Matthew 24:14 is made for both the disciples and for the Church that would be formed after His resurrection and will continue till the end of the world.³⁸ Siemens submitted that at this turn of the century, more Paul-like tent-makers are needed to reach hard-to-reach regions of the world.³⁹

Total Membership Involvement

Members of the Church, as members of the community of faith can be part of the mission work of proclaiming the gospel while they engage in their work. The family of Aquila and Pricilla, who, though were tentmakers with Paul in the mission work (cf. Acts 18:1-3), were also partners in the Church's mission activities.

Valdir Steuernagel posited that "the mission work is to be done in a 'communitary dimension;' in words and action, in suffering and rejection, the people of God must proclaim the marvellous deeds of Christ until He comes again."⁴⁰

Onongha asked a pertinent question about the position/condition of the Adventist Church in this twenty-first century; either a dying Church or a missional Church

³⁸ David R Bauer, 'The Theme of Mission in Matthew's Gospel From the Perspective of the Great Commission', *Asbury Theological Seminary* 74, no. 2 (2019): 245.

³⁹ Siemens Ruth E., 'The Vital Role of Tentmaking in Paul's Mission Strategy', *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 14, no. 3 (1997): 121.

⁴⁰ Valdir R. Steuernagel, 'An Exiled Community as a Missionary Community A Study Based on 1 Peter 2:9, 10', *Evangelical Review of Theology* 40, no. 3 (July 2016): 203. [Sic]

where every member is encouraged to hear and pursue God’s direction as an authentic disciple on mission in the revolutionary agenda of the kingdom of God.⁴¹

Diop posited that every member of the Church is called to be a witness and ambassador of the gospel.⁴² . According to Onongha, the next strategy for effective ministry among the regions considered “resistance” to the gospel in this twenty-first century, is the tent-making approach.⁴³

Empowerment for the Mission Workers

The tent-making mission primarily focuses on the mission effort of a particular member of the community of faith, the missional Church, in the workplace. This means an opportunity for empowerment while doing mission work. Saiyasak, quoting Christy Wilson, the ‘father of the modern tent-making movement,’ remarks that the “gospel being preached through self-supporting businesses and trades, the new believers were being helped to holistically improve their lives and living standards by teaching them useful skills and modelling the dignity of work in God's scheme of life.”⁴⁴

According to Onongha, “It can be inferred from Scripture that Paul must have been efficient and successful as a tentmaker otherwise he would soon have run out of

⁴¹ Onongha, ‘Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions’, 195.

⁴² Ministry Magazine, ‘Total Membership Involvement: A Reformation Principle’, accessed 30 April 2024, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2016/05/Total-membership-involvement-A-reformation-principle>.

⁴³ Onongha, ‘Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions’, 196.

⁴⁴ Dr Chansamone Saiyasak, ‘Business As Mission: The New Paradigm of Missions in the 21st Century’ (Presentation, The 46th Anniversary of the AMA and the 13th AMA Triennial Convention, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 11 November 2019), 23, <http://ama2019.asiamissions.net/>.

business.”⁴⁵ Samushonga posited that for Paul not to burden the Church he planted, he turned to tent-making for his own needs and the needs of others with him.⁴⁶

Many Christian Churches in this twenty-first century are turning to a tent-making mission approach due primarily to financial constraints facing the Church in fulfilling their mission call.⁴⁷ According to Ward, the motivation for Business as Mission is that it is getting a solution to the financial dependency created by the Western Church.⁴⁸ Tent-making approach, therefore, will benefit both the Church and the mission practitioners.

Breaking Barriers

Trecartin submitted that a tent-making minister can enter any Muslim territory either as a plumber, phone tower engineer or computer programmer without any restraint.⁴⁹ It would be easier for a tentmaker to create a relationship with those around him/her in the workplace to do a mission without any suspicion.

During the Roman Empire's reign of terror, Paul used a tent-making approach to break every barrier and pave the way for his ministry. Today, an additional barrier is presented that can only be broken through a close relationship and that is the

⁴⁵ Onongha, ‘Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions’, 186.

⁴⁶ Hartness M. Samushonga, ‘A Theological Reflection of Bivocational Pastoral Ministry: A Personal Reflective Account of a Decade of Bivocational Ministry Practice Experience’, *Practical Theology* 12, no. 1 (1 January 2019): 72, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1756073X.2019.1575040>.

⁴⁷ Dennis Tongoi, ‘Business as Mission and Mission as Business: Case Studies of Financially Sustainable Christian Mission Ventures with a Focus on Anglican Dioceses in East Africa’ (Pretoria, University of South Africa, 2016), <https://pillars.taylor.edu/business-as-mission-td/3>.

⁴⁸ Ben Ward, ‘BAM Postures Toward Church Ministry: Identifying Four Common Philosophies’, *Journal of Biblical Integration in Business* 26, no. 1 (11 December 2023): 86, <https://doi.org/10.69492/jbib.v26i1.658>.

⁴⁹ Homer Trecartin, ‘Seven Principles for Being a Tent-Maker’, 7.

“stained glass barrier” that is created by language and cultural differences.⁵⁰ This is to conclude that to reach out to the “resistance” region of the world, the body of Christ needs to encourage and empower members to know what is expected of everyone and that there is a need to be part of the great commission by being a tentmaker.

Chapter Summary

This chapter made efforts to establish a Biblical foundation for tent-making missions. The mission takes its roots in God and from God. It has been established that tent-making missions start from the Old Testament and continue to the New Testament: Abraham and his descendants were tent-makers witnessing (mission) the God who created the heaven and earth (theology) to all the people they met in the land of Canaan and beyond, though they were nomads (tent-makers).

This chapter also pointed out how Ellen G. White described those who sustained the body of Christ during the period termed the time of the Dark Ages: They were tent-makers. Some of them learned a trade in order not to rely on the Church fully for sustenance. The chapter ended with a position from Onongha that the strategy for effective ministry among the regions considered “resistant” to the gospel in this twenty-first century, is the tent-making (bi-vocational) approach.

⁵⁰ Jonathan Lewis, ed., *World Mission: An Analysis of the World Christian Movement*, Second Edition (Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1994), 7–5.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews some literature that has dealt with the idea of mission and the tent-making approach. The main reason why the Church existed in the first place is for the work of mission (cf. Matt. 20:19-20). The mandate for the mission given to the Church is to continue till the end of age. Some places have been termed as “resistance belts,”⁵¹ especially the 10/40 windows: Muslims are part of the majority in this “resistance belt.”

Consequently, this chapter examines the tent-making approach's concept to reach Muslims with the gospel. Furthermore, this thesis aims to complement the existing body of works of literature among the leading scholars, particularly Adventist scholars on Tent-making by offering information on tent-making with a vision of situating its importance from Nigeria's peculiarity lens/perspectives: what the Adventist Church and the congregation in Ilorin know about the tent-making ministry.

This Chapter also provides a historical overview of the Christian mission in Ilorin. It also looks at the activities of Pioneer missionaries in the City over a century; both Adventist and other Christian denominations. This will show how the Christian mission finally entered Ilorin through tent-makers in the early twentieth century.

Tent-making literature will be discussed based on the existing understanding of tent-making ministry, who is a tent-maker, what makes for an ideal tent-making

⁵¹ Jonathan Lewis, *World Mission: An Analysis of the World Christian Movement*, 7–17.

ministry, the need to equip tent-making ministry practitioners, the question of Church Policy on Tent-making, and strategy for effective tent-making ministry. This Chapter will be guided by the following concepts and theories: functionalism, doctrinal, and praxis theories.

Tent-Making Ministry

Concept and Worldview of Tent-making Ministry

The concept of Tent-making comes from the approach of Paul in doing the Mission work: where he did not focus on receiving financial support from the Church in Jerusalem but engaged in doing his business to meet his needs (cf. Acts. 18: 3; 20: 34, 2 Thess. 3: 7-9). Amos (Amos 1:1, 7:14-15), Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in Canaan, were tent-makers who depended on their work for a living.

Trecartin posited, "A tentmaker is someone who moves into a difficult area for the purpose of mission but does not work for the Church."⁵² He continued "Their work for a "secular" employer provides for their living needs and gives them access to people they normally would otherwise not be able to touch."⁵³

Tent-making ministry has been interpreted under different terms to mean almost the same thing depending on the usage, the organization or where it is used. In some areas, it is termed bi-vocational ministry, business as mission, self-supporting ministry, non-stipendiary, or voluntary ministry⁵⁴ and many more.⁵⁵ Saiyasak, quoting

⁵² Homer Trecartin, 'Seven Principles for Being a Tent-Maker', 7. [Sic.]

⁵³ Homer Trecartin, 7.

⁵⁴ Samushonga, 'A European Theological Pentecostal Perspective to Bivocational Ministry', 146.

⁵⁵ Abner P. Dizon, 'Towards A Theology of Bi-Vocational Mission with Missiological Applications to Creative Access Cities', *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* 15, no. 1 (2019): 239, <https://doi.org/10.32597/jams/vol15/iss1/16/>.

Patrick Lai said that before 2004, tent-making was the sole term used by the evangelical movement to describe those who combined their business with mission, however, in this present age, it has been used to mean those believers who intentionally accept to work with an institution or a firm in order to witness across differ culture.⁵⁶

A tent-maker as “a bi-vocational minister is a person called to pastoral leadership who also earns money doing something else.”⁵⁷ Lim also defined tent-makers thus: “Tentmakers are self-supporting and self-propagating without the need for fund-raising and much training.”⁵⁸ Samushonga pushed further and brought out a novel idea of intentional bivocationalism where he expounded the idea to mean a condition where an individual who felt called to witness respond to the call by accepting to combine the call with doing business not related to Christianity, even if the church organization has the strength to pay them salary.⁵⁹

Onongha submitted that rather than dichotomize between sacred and the common, tent-making leads us to reconsider the more holistic worldview of the biblical time and see our efforts as unto the Lord.⁶⁰ This ideal resonates with the position of Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Corinthian Church when he counselled that whatsoever they do should be done to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31). The tentmakers’ worldview is based on their effort to return glory to God in their various professions.

⁵⁶ Saiyasak, ‘Business As Mission: The New Paradigm of Missions in the 21st Century’, 7.

⁵⁷ Stephens, ‘Bivocational Ministry as the Congregation’s Curriculum’, 3.

⁵⁸ David Lim, ‘Orality Missiology of Disciple Multiplication Movements: The Philippine Tentmaker Missions Story’, *Institutes for Orality Strategies* Vol. 1, no. No. 1 (2024): 6.

⁵⁹ Samushonga, ‘A European Theological Pentecostal Perspective to Bivocational Ministry’, 145. [Sic].

⁶⁰ Onongha, ‘Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions’, 191.

Benefits of Tent-making Ministry

Tent-making ministry reduces funding for missions on the Church budget. Onongha posited that the Church will need to take a look at its funding structure if an effective mission is to be accomplished.⁶¹ He further argued that tent-making ministry provided a cost-effective means of doing missions.⁶² Samushonga submitted that bivocational ministers had rescued some struggling Churches in the UK when they were incapacitated to employ a full-time Minister.⁶³

The position of Samushonga above is that a tent-making approach can save the Church from financial woe if they would engage all the young graduates from the seminary where the Church is struggling for funding to employ fresh ministry workers, by allowing them to seek employment in the secular organization. This will benefit both sides; the individual will fulfil his gospel call to the ministry and the Church will not have to worry about pay. According to Saiyasak, tent-making ministry or business as a mission greatly benefits both the Church and the gospel practitioners. Steffen stated that business as mission (BAM) provides laity who are business owners a frontline role in mission; it allows the least reached people to have a feel of hope and open a new way for wealth creation – a wealth that was given by God Himself.⁶⁴ This means that the avenue allow for real wealth creation rather than aiming at inheriting family fortune in a way that glorify God. Those who are involved, are able to have financial strength to take care of mission funding, both at home and

⁶¹ Onongha, 194.

⁶² Onongha, 194.

⁶³ Hartness M. Samushonga, 'On Bivocational Ministry-Focused Training in British Theological Schools: Dialoguing with British Theological Educationalists', *Practical Theology* 13, no. 4 (3 July 2020): 393, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1756073X.2020.1787006>.

⁶⁴ Saiyasak, 'Business As Mission: The New Paradigm of Missions in the 21st Century', 22.

abroad and also provide avenue to train mission practitioners to embrace a profit-making mission.

Ayeni submitted that a Banker he interviewed admitted that his service in the financial institution is secondary, but Pastoral/mission assignment is his primary focus.⁶⁵ Zavrishko Ivan's position on who is a tentmaker is that they are missionaries, who like Apostle Paul, make a living through trade, but the main purpose of their life is evangelism.⁶⁶ Therefore, the tent-makers should not be seen as part-time ministers.⁶⁷

Considering the way Paul approached tent-making in his ministry, it became clear that tent-making was a tool in Paul's hand to reach those he wanted to get rather than a means of livelihood. Therefore, to Paul, the mission was his primary/main focus and he was not a part-time apostle (cf. 1 Cor. 9-10). Jack posited that "Paul negotiated renewed acceptance as Corinth's founder and apostle by appealing to legitimate power that he was ... even Christ's ambassador ... and by denouncing status, patronage support and rhetoric as legitimation for leadership."⁶⁸

The position of Jack here is, that Paul denounced his status by not receiving support from the Church in Corinth does not reduce him to what could be termed as a part-time apostle or a lesser apostle.

⁶⁵ Folorunsho M. Ayeni, 'Appraisal of Paul's Method of Self Support for Mission: Implication for Seventh-Day Adventist Pastoral Ministry in Nigeria', 59.

⁶⁶ Zavrishko Ivan, 'Improvement of the Tentmakers' Pioneer Training Program for a More Effective Service to the Indigenous People of the Central Asia', 6.

⁶⁷ Stephens, 'Bivocational Ministry as the Congregation's Curriculum', 5.

⁶⁸ Jack Barentsen, 'The Social Construction of Paul's Apostolic Leadership in Corinth', *HTS: Theological Studies* 74, no. 4 (23 April 2018): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v74i4.5191>.

Theological and Missiological Implication

Kuhn⁶⁹ submitted that the theological and missiological issues relating to tent-making ministry are like either side of a coin: theology on one side and missiology on the other side with equal values. He further argued that God embodies the two: “God takes the initiative and reveals Himself, providing a message (theology) and a mission to His people.”⁷⁰ The mission includes the call to His chosen generation to proclaim (mission) the praises of Him who called us out of darkness (theology) into His marvellous light (cf. 1 Pet. 2:9).

Onongha posited that a viable missiological strategy demands a re-evaluation and recalibration of certain functions and practices in the Church. This will include the need to consider “the development of a curriculum for the training of tentmakers and a fresh look at its funding structures.”⁷¹

On the theological implication, Onongha argued that rather than dichotomize between the laity and clergy, common and sacred, “tent-making leads us to reconsider the more holistic worldview of biblical times and regard our labour as unto the Lord (cf. Col. 3:23).”⁷² Malone posited that When the Church upholds the dichotomy between the “sacred-secular, we marginalize the potential contributions thousands of

⁶⁹ Wagner Kuhn, ‘Adventist Theological-Missiology: Contextualization in Mission and Ministry’, *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 27, no. 1–2 (2016): 175.

⁷⁰ Wagner Kuhn, 176.

⁷¹ Onongha, ‘Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions’, 193.

⁷² Onongha, 191.

Christian business people, educators, and health care and social workers whose vocations provide means of service to God and other human beings.”⁷³

The Tent-Makers

Watson and Santos stated that “Paul was a tent-maker, occurred once in the New Testament.”⁷⁴ Onongha submitted that “Instead of seeking for patronage as a client from the group among whom he was witnessing, Paul rather sought after partnership in the gospel enterprise choosing to work with his own hands.”⁷⁵

Lohr argued that Paul chose tent-making as an approach to ministry because he desired to remove all and anything that could stand in his way of doing a mission. In his words, he said “He will "endure anything rather than put an obstacle [ἐγκοπὴν] in the way of the gospel of Christ.”⁷⁶

Experiences

The experience of Paul as a tentmaker could be considered successful since it is becoming a well-sought model for witnessing the gospel to the world presently.⁷⁷ Some of the success of tentmakers is their ability to gain access in places considered resistant to the gospel work.⁷⁸ Another success is their ability to support their

⁷³ Kelly Malone, ‘Broadening the Tent: Expanding the Strategic Use of Tent-Making in Cross-Cultural Mission’, *Missiology* 42, no. 2 (1 April 2014): 204, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091829613507022>. [Sic].

⁷⁴ James W. Watson and Narry F. Santos, *Tentmakers: Multivocational Ministry in Western Society* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2022), 46. [sic]

⁷⁵ Onongha, ‘Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions’, 189.

⁷⁶ Joel N Lohr, ‘He Identified with the Lowly and Became a Slave to All: Paul’s Tentmaking as a Strategy for Mission’, *Currents in Theology and Mission*, 34, no. 3 (2007): 184.

⁷⁷ Malone, ‘Broadening the Tent’, 195.

⁷⁸ Homer Trecartin, ‘Tentmakers’, *Adventist Review* 194, no. 11 (7 November 2017): 28, <https://adventistreview.org/magazine-article/tentmakers/>.

financial needs independently of the sending Church/organisation and are not a threat to their host. Rather, as Jonathan Winter puts it, tentmakers are sure resources that contribute to the economic development of their host.⁷⁹

Ivan presented an increase in the enrolment of Pioneer Tentmakers Training (PTT) due to the success witnessed by the members of the Church and also in part with the collaboration of the PTT with the medical ministry in the area. Some of what could be attributed to the success of the PTT was their contribution to the training and preparation of the Pastors and Indigenous leaders who later became a successful tentmakers in reaching the indigenous people of Central Asia.⁸⁰

More often than not, most tentmakers feel unsuccessful in their ministry. Denis Bickers pointed out some issues faced by the tentmakers that made them view their ministry as ineffective, which included no baptism as expected, loneliness and rivalry with Full-time Ministers.⁸¹ Trecartin in his article also pointed out that most tentmakers measure their success based on expected results. When they cannot see such, they consider themselves unsuccessful tentmakers.⁸² Whereas, the success of a tentmaker starts from his/her ability to create contact and mingle for influence.

⁷⁹ Jonathan SK Winter, 'The Tentmaking Missionary: The Philippine Context' (Research Paper Article, Philippine Baptist Theology Seminary, Northern Luzon, Philippines., 2009), 3, <https://bukallifecare.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/tentmaker-missions.pdf>.

⁸⁰ Zavrishko Ivan, 'Improvement of the Tentmakers' Pioneer Training Program for a More Effective Service to the Indigenous People of the Central Asia', 87.

⁸¹ Dennis W. Bickers, *The Tentmaking Pastor: The Joy of Bivocational Ministry.*, 14, 25, 40.

⁸² Homer Trecartin, 'Tentmakers', 27.

Identity

Identity crisis has been identified as a menace in the life of a tentmaker. Identity is defined as ““sameness” or “unity and persistence of personality.””⁸³ In most cases, tentmakers have a feeling of living a dual identity which questions their authenticity and integrity.⁸⁴ Watson and Santos pointed out that some tentmakers have a higher sense of freedom when they identify themselves with their role (profession/vocation) than as a Pastor (missionary).⁸⁵ Trecartin⁸⁶ gave an experience of a Banker in the Middle East/North Africa Field who had built a friendship with a local but was reluctant to reveal her identity as a Christian. She later revealed her identity as a Christian and as a result, a Bible study session started. The local is now a Pastor in the region according to the narration.

The gospels gave ample examples of how Jesus Christ disclosed His identity ((cf. Mark 1:23-25, 43-45; John 4: 25-26). Carol Clarke states that the level of identity disclosure varies from person and place: While some find it easy to disclose their identity, “some find it necessary to hide their missionary identity for personal security and those whom they might disciple or concern for co-workers.”⁸⁷

⁸³ John I. Bechtold, ‘The Concept of Identity and Its Application to Encounters with Jesus Christ’, *Faculty Scholarship Papers*. 3. (September 2000): 1.

⁸⁴ A. G. Smith, ‘Managing Missionary Identity in Restricted Access Nations: An Ethnography of American Tentmakers on the Arabian Peninsula’ (Ph.D., United States -- South Carolina, Columbia International University, 2024), 11, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/3030976073/abstract/395FECE942AE4FD4PQ/1>.

⁸⁵ James W. Watson and Narry F. Santos, *Tentmakers: Multivocational Ministry in Western Society* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2022), 96.

⁸⁶ Homer Trecartin, ‘Tentmakers’, 28.

⁸⁷ Carol Clarke, ‘Tentmaking State of the Art’, *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 14, no. 3 (September 1997): 103–5.

Calling

The tent-makers are believers who are called to proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light. Saiyasak, quoting Wingren challenges the notion that calling does not involve vocation or the secular sphere he said “That one's calling is related to secular life was a very important part of Luther's understanding of vocation which was in opposition to the medieval Roman Catholic view.”⁸⁸

Abner⁸⁹ made a case on who is a tent-maker. To him, there are two categories of tent-makers: involuntary and voluntary. The involuntary tent-makers are driven by circumstances beyond them and in the cause of their duty make known who their God is to those around them. Involuntary tent-makers include Joseph who was sold as a slave to Egypt and ministered in the court of the Pharaoh, Daniel who was carried as a captive from Judah to Babylon and the nameless young girl in the house of Naaman:

On the other way, the voluntary tent-makers received a call to do service for God. Abraham was called out from his homeland and a covenant to be a blessing to the whole world was made with him (cf. Gen. 12: 1-3). Amos was called while he was keeping his sheep (cf. Amos 1:1).

Likewise in the New Testament, those who served as tent-makers received a call from God to the assignment: Paul was a Pharisee before he was called and sent out, and Luke was a Physician. “This was a common pattern in the New Testament

⁸⁸ Saiyasak, ‘Business As Mission: The New Paradigm of Missions in the 21st Century’, 12.

⁸⁹ Abner P. Dizon, ‘Towards A Theology of Bi-Vocational Mission with Missiological Applications to Creative Access Cities’, 4.

because “most of the disciples had ordinary jobs”. Jesus himself worked as a carpenter.”⁹⁰

Sacrifice

Sacrifice is another marker that distinguishes a tent-maker. Trecartin’s illustration in his article gave a picture of the kind of sacrifice a tent-maker might need to make; leave a comfort zone to meet with those who are in dire need of the Saviour.⁹¹ This also could be seen in the ministry and life of Paul. Lohr stated that “Paul gave up his freedom to be supported by the gospel and decided to toil with his hands, working long hours in a lowly environment, for the sake of the gospel.”⁹² The courage of the called to give up certain freedom to answer the call of God to service; from their mission to His mission.

It is important to note that sacrifice is a testimony to obedience to God, love and compassion for the lost, on the side of a believer who heeds the call of God. Olurokan submitted that “Paul showed love and concern for his converts. He was personally involved in their life in helping them grow in their spiritual walk.”⁹³ Epistles of Paul clearly show his concern for all of the Churches he helped to establish and the one in Rome.

⁹⁰ Abner P. Dizon, 5.

⁹¹ Homer Trecartin, ‘Seven Principles for Being a Tent-Maker’, 7.

⁹² Lohr, ‘He Identified with the Lowly and Became a Slave to All: Paul’s Tentmaking as a Strategy for Mission’, 187.

⁹³ Olowoyeye Emmanuel Olurokan, ‘Paul’s Missionary Strategies And Their Replications In The Mission Outreaches Of Lagos Metropolitan Areas Of The Apostolic Church, Nigeria’ (Ph.D. Thesis, Ibadan, Nigeria, University of Ibadan, 2014), 60, 121.

Equipped for the Mission

The call and sacrifice seen in the ministry of Paul could be linked to the vision he received on his way to Damascus (cf. Acts 9, 22; Gal. 1, 2). But the account of his mission work started when the Church in Antioch engaged him along with Barnabas to go on a missionary Journey. Thus it could be argued that the Church in Antioch activated the calling of Paul by equipping him to do mission work through engagement: laying of hand and sending forth (cf. Acts 13:3). Paul was not a standalone minister; he was engaged and “licenced” by the sending Church.

The argument of Paul about his apostleship could be a reflection of inner feelings of his position among the other apostles who are Church leaders in Jerusalem (cf. 1Cor. 9). Ashcraft asserted that: “So, the criticism was not that Paul designated himself an Apostle; rather, it was that his apostleship was dependent on the Jerusalem leaders....”⁹⁴

The argument for equipping tent-makers is a result of the feelings of the tent-makers about how members of the Church would see or rate them. Stephens made a case quoting Bentley that bi-vocational ministers are licenced, commissioned or ordained to serve.⁹⁵ Bentley explained further that the reason for tent-makers to be licenced is due to their feeling. In his words, he stated: “They perceived that others considered their ministry “less than” other forms of ministry.”⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Morris Ashcraft, ‘Paul Defends His Apostleship Galatians 1 and 2’, *Review & Expositor* 69, no. 4 (1 December 1972): 459, <https://doi.org/10.1177/003463737206900406>.

⁹⁵ Stephens, ‘Bivocational Ministry as the Congregation’s Curriculum’, 5.

⁹⁶ Bentley, ‘Perspectives of Bi-Vocational Ministry: Emerging Themes in Bi-Vocational Ministry Research at Lexington Theological Seminary’, 117.

Licence

Ayeni submitted that the concept of the tent-making ministry of “bi-vocational ministry needs to be included in the policy of the Church to give the tent-maker a place; a well-structured policy backing”⁹⁷ as part of the structure of commissioned missionaries credentials, but unpaid workers of the Church. With this development, the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be able to situate tent-making as another method of doing missions as posited by Siemen.⁹⁸

According to Wagner Kuhn, more work has been done in the area of theological reflection and mission practice, but little on the method that are connected directly with the believers and the institutions that are responsible in carrying the gospel to the world.⁹⁹

While it is germane to work on the missiological and theological place of tent-making ministry, Wagner is making a case for a proper understanding of the methodology of doing a mission and giving it a proper place (praxis). This will provide a clear understanding among mission practitioners: tent-makers and Pastors; even when all are licenced.

Ayeni made a case on the structures or classes of licence holders inside the Seventh-day Adventist Church: some licences lead to ordination and some licences cannot lead to ordination as a full-time gospel worker. In his finding: “Those holding Ministerial license can expect to be ordained into the gospel ministry in the future, but those who are holding Commissioned Licence cannot be ordained for their license

Folorunsho M. Ayeni, ‘Appraisal of Paul’s Method of Self Support for Mission: ⁹⁷ Implication for Seventh-Day Adventist Pastoral Ministry in Nigeria’, 62.

⁹⁸ Ruth E. Siemens, ‘My Turn’.

⁹⁹ Wagner Kuhn, ‘Adventist Theological-Missiology: Contextualization in Mission and Ministry’, 175. [sic]

does not lead to ordination.”¹⁰⁰ The issue here is: “the tent-makers are to be recognised, engaged, licenced, or commissioned by the Church.”¹⁰¹

Training

Another important point here is the importance of training for the tent-makers. According to Stephens in “Bi-vocational as the Congregation Curriculum” and Samushonga in “On Bi-vocational Training in British Theological School: dialoguing with British theological Educationalists,” the place of training and the mission work cannot be dichotomized.

Samushonga, in his thesis, stated that the educationalist is well versed and informed with the concept of bi-vocational ministry and that noteworthy numbers of students, current and former, at the institutions where he conducted his research, practised bi-vocational ministry, but the curriculum of those institutions did not incorporate bi-vocational training.¹⁰²

Stephens proposed intentional bi-vocational ministry to be a practice of the entire faith community and called for religious instructors to assist in achieving a congregation curriculum.¹⁰³ Wagner Kuhn submitted that “When mission practitioners do not engage in serious Bible study and dialogue with theologians and the discipline of theology, their work is without foundation and direction.”¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Folorunsho M. Ayeni, ‘Appraisal of Paul’s Method of Self Support for Mission: Implication for Seventh-Day Adventist Pastoral Ministry in Nigeria’, 33. [Sic].

¹⁰¹ Stephens, ‘Bivocational Ministry as the Congregation’s Curriculum’, 5.

¹⁰² Samushonga, ‘On Bivocational Ministry-Focused Training in British Theological Schools’, 385.

¹⁰³ Stephens, ‘Bivocational Ministry as the Congregation’s Curriculum’, 2.

¹⁰⁴ Wagner Kuhn, ‘Adventist Theological-Missiology: Contextualization in Mission and Ministry’, 177. [Sic].

Motivation - Stipend

Though tent-makers are considered self-supporting ministers, non-stipendiary ministers as the designation might be, motivation could be another dimension of equipping them for the mission work. It is believed that Paul collected aid from some Churches (cf. Phil 4:10), though he argued to provide for his needs (cf. Ac 20:34; 1Co 4:12; 1Th 2:9; 2Th 3:8).

Gresham stated that the rapport that Paul built with the Philippian Church grew to the point that commanded their financial support to the point that Philippi became his support base.¹⁰⁵ Brelaz posited that “Paul himself acknowledged in his letter to the Philippians that he had a special connection with Philippi: ... one of the most faithful to him, supporting him in hard times and even helping him with funding when he needed it.”¹⁰⁶

In a nutshell, a stipend as motivation is not out of place for tent-maker ministers. There are existing records that Paul received help from one of his Churches. Going by the counsel in 1Ti 5:18, {“For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.” (KJV)}, it is a noble thing to provide a stipend to equip the tent-makers and as a motivator for their service.

¹⁰⁵ Charles R Gresham, ‘Paul & Philippi: Historic Times and Significant Relationships’, *Pepperdine Digital Commons*, 5, 5, no. 3 (1997): 14.

¹⁰⁶ Cédric Brélaz, ‘Chapter 10 The Authority of Paul’s Memory and Early Christian Identity at Philippi’, in *Authority and Identity in Emerging Christianities in Asia Minor and Greece*, vol. 103, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity, (Leiden, The Netherlands.: Brill, 2018), 241, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004367197_011.

The Challenges of Tent-making Ministry

Tent-making ministry is not without its challenges and limitations. Those challenges may vary from person to person and from territory to territory and also based on the relationship between the tent-maker and the employing organisation on the one hand and the attitudes of the engaging Church to the concept of tent-making ministry on the other. These challenges could be evaluated under three spheres: personal, workplace and engaging institution/Church - Ministry.

Personal Challenges

Personal challenges stem from the pressure of expectations and possibilities. The stress that comes from combining secular work, mission work and family time is another challenge that affects the tent-makers directly. According to Watson et.al “The challenge of tent-making were in the areas of managing expectation, the logistical challenge of finding work-life balance, and the challenge of establishing time of rest.”¹⁰⁷

King on his own, stated that his first challenge as a tent-maker was on his faith and work; where his work schedule wanted to clash with Sabbath keeping.¹⁰⁸ Samushonga submitted that time management is one of the main challenges; due to time constraints, there is difficulty in balancing secular, witnessing and family time.¹⁰⁹

Another area of challenge that could affect a tent-maker personally is how equipped a tent-maker is to confront the demands of his engagements; in the area of

¹⁰⁷ James W. Watson and Narry F. Santos, *Tentmakers: Multivocational Ministry in Western Society* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2022), 96.

¹⁰⁸ Headley King, ‘Tentm Akers in the Arabian G Ulf’, *Spectrum: Mission and Muslim* 22, no. 4 (October 1992): 34.

¹⁰⁹ Samushonga, ‘A Theological Reflection of Bivocational Pastoral Ministry’, 76.

theological training, personal relation and ability to know the right time to engage the people around and witness to them. Onongha posited that part of the challenge “is how to maintain a balance of being rooted in the Word and remaining connected with the everyday world.”¹¹⁰

Saiyasak maintained that one of the greatest challenges facing business as mission is “a lack of encouragement and equipping for business people to mobilize their effective engagement in mission in the global workplace.”¹¹¹ He stated: “More regular and continued dialoguing and training will be crucial to growing the BAM movement and other business-mission strands.”¹¹²

Workplace Challenges

The workplace is another challenge in the tent-making ministry. Among the challenges posed here is the conflict with the employer that might arise. Mesa et.al. stated that if tent-makers “aren’t working for themselves or in a like-minded business, they may face irreconcilable conflict with employers about time commitments, ethical practices, evangelism in the workplace, or the responsibility to stay in the government’s good graces.”¹¹³

This challenge can endanger the gospel and the job security of the gospel worker. From field research carried out in Quebec, Canada, it was reported that it is

¹¹⁰ Onongha, ‘Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions’, 193.

¹¹¹ Saiyasak, ‘Business As Mission: The New Paradigm of Missions in the 21st Century’, 26.

¹¹² Saiyasak, 26.

¹¹³ Ivan Mesa and Elliot Clark, ‘The Good and Bad of Tent-Making Missions’, *IMB* (blog), 24 May 2018, <https://www.imb.org/2018/05/24/good-bad-tent-making-missions/>.

necessary to build relationships through the workplace first before discussing faith:¹¹⁴ This is the focus of introducing the tent-making ministry where gospel practitioners can create the atmosphere for witnessing.

Ministry Challenges

Lastly, another challenge to the tent-making ministry is the understanding of the relationship that should exist between the full-time ministers and tent-makers. There can be leadership struggles, remuneration difference clashes and feelings of being undervalued. All these have the potential to undermine the benefit of the tent-making approach.

Stephens reports that the bi-vocational ministers do not want to be addressed as part-time ministers, but rather, as “partially compensated.”¹¹⁵ Ayeni observed that some bi-vocational ministers considered themselves to be under-valued among other full-time ministers in the Canterbury diocese.¹¹⁶ He also reported that bi-vocational ministers were engaged between 1980 and 1989 in the then-West Nigeria Mission, Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the result was a noticeable membership growth.¹¹⁷

The question was, why did the program stop? The answer could be obtained from an undocumented interview granted by two of the Lay-pastors who were involved. I was told that the Mission Field administrators called them and gave them “sack letters.” According to them, the sack letters were due to the rivalry between the Lay-Pastors and the full-time Pastors.

¹¹⁴ James W. Watson et al., ‘Canadian Multivocational Ministry Project: Research Report.’, Master Report (Toronto, Canada: Tyndal University, 2020), 15, www.tyndale.ca.

¹¹⁵ Stephens, ‘Bivocational Ministry as the Congregation’s Curriculum’, 5.

¹¹⁶ Folorunsho M. Ayeni, ‘Appraisal of Paul’s Method of Self Support for Mission: Implication for Seventh-Day Adventist Pastoral Ministry in Nigeria’, 48.

¹¹⁷ Folorunsho M. Ayeni, 7, 60.

Religion in Ilorin: Historical Perspective

Ilorin was settled by a team that revolted in the early 19th century against the Alaafin of the Oyo Empire, led by the Chief Military Officer of the Empire (Field Marshal), Afoja, the Are Onakankanfo, and who was assisted by Sheikh Salih Ibn Janta known as Sheik Alimi (a Fulani from Sokoto).¹¹⁸ Those who joined included the Pastoral Fulani, Muslim converts, and Hausa from the Old Oyo Empire.¹¹⁹

Religious Background of Ilorin

The religion of the people of Ilorin, a Yoruba settlement, was the “indigenous religion of Africa”¹²⁰ (African Traditional Religion - ATR) presently termed Isese. The city of Ilorin could be linked to the god of iron, Ogun, through the name of the City; Ilorin, which means place of iron sharpening or iron production.¹²¹ Murtala further submitted other deities worshipped in Ilorin, which were Ifa and Oye.¹²² It was also reported that Oke-sunnah (Islam) Agbaji Muslims co-existed side-by-side with the people of Ilorin (the indigenous religion of Africa).¹²³

¹¹⁸ Kwara State Government, ‘History & Society | Kwara State Government’, accessed 12 May 2024, <https://kwarastate.gov.ng/discover-kwara/history-society/>.

¹¹⁹ Bolaji Josephine Owoseni, ‘The Settlement of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria: An Archaeological and Ethnohistorical Investigation’ (Ph.D. Thesis, UK, University of East Anglia, 2023), 5.

¹²⁰ Dr Saad Murtala, ‘The Impact Of Islam And Shariah On The Culture Of Ilorin Emirate’ 8, no. 8 (2021): 14.

¹²¹ Owoseni, ‘The Settlement of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria: An Archaeological and Ethnohistorical Investigation’, 42.

¹²² Murtala, ‘The Impact Of Islam And Shariah On The Culture Of Ilorin Emirate’, 14.

¹²³ Jamiu F.O., ‘Contributions of Ilorin Scholars to Arabic and Islamic Studies in Yoruba Land: Focus on Shaykh Adam Abdullah Al-Iluri’, *African Journal of History and Culture* 6, no. 8 (31 October 2014): 113, <https://doi.org/10.5897/AJHC2014.0193>.

As pointed out earlier, according to Owoseni, Muslims were among the earliest settlers of Ilorin when it was settled in the early 19th century.¹²⁴ With the overthrow of Afonja, the Field Marshal of the Oyo Empire, and the subsequent seizure of political power by the Muslim Fulani in 1816,¹²⁵ Ilorin came under the control of Muslim elites and other religions were either banished from the community or restricted.

Recently, the city stopped an Indigenous religion of Africa, Isese, from worshipping within the vicinity of the City. This almost degenerated into religious violence in the City: It was reported that the adherents of “Iyemaja” (water goddess) were stopped when performing their rituals by the riverside in the Oko-Owo area of Ilorin.¹²⁶ This demonstrates the hostility of the Muslims in Ilorin toward people of other religious sets. Komolafe Hezekiah listed some of the violence against the Christians in Ilorin by the Muslims extremist where Churches were burnt down, and sanctuary property looted.¹²⁷

Adventism in Ilorin

According to a historical narrative by Yahaya, during the reign of the 7th¹²⁸ Emir, Oba Shuaib Bawa bin Zubair (1915-1919),¹²⁹ Elder D. C Babcock of Seventh-

¹²⁴ Owoseni, ‘The Settlement of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria: An Archaeological and Ethnohistorical Investigation’, 5.

¹²⁵ Ilorin Emirate Durbar, ‘Mission and History – Ilorin Emirate Durbar’, 2023, <https://ilorinemiratedurbar.com/about-mission-and-history/>.

¹²⁶ Julius Ogunro, ‘Ilorin, Isese, and the Tyranny of the Majority’, TheCable, 26 July 2023, <https://www.thecable.ng/ilorin-isese-and-the-tyranny-of-the-majority/>.

¹²⁷ Hezekiah Deji Komolafe, ‘Christian and Muslim Relationship in Ilorin Metropolis: A Model for Peaceful Co-Existence in A Multi-Religious Society’, *Ilorin Journal of Religious Studies, (IJOURELS)* 9, no. 2 (2019): 56.

¹²⁸ Yahaya, ‘Christian Churches in Ilorin, Nigeria’, 176.

¹²⁹ Ilorin Emirate Durbar, ‘Mission and History – Ilorin Emirate Durbar’.

day Adventist visited Ilorin in 1915 intending to start a mission station among the Muslims. He was refused and directed to a nearby town of Sao where he was accepted. In 1916, Elder D.C Babcock made a comeback and built a mission station in Ilorin, the second Christian mission Station in Ilorin.¹³⁰

It appears that the mission station did not last. According to Babalola,¹³¹ it was in 1923 that a mission station was built in Ilorin, around Oke-Aluko championed by Pastor Oriola. During this period Elder McClement was the head of the Church in Nigeria. It was reported that McClement had his first baptism in 1924 among the Muslims.¹³² It was also noted that there was a conflict among the people with the Church that took the intervention of the Emir to resolve and the Church was later assigned another land for a mission station in 1930.¹³³

The people of Ilorin appeared to resist all efforts of the early Pioneers: This explains why the Church in Ilorin is not growing. The land given to Babcock in 1916 could not be accounted for, the one gotten through Oriola at Oke-Aluko in 1923 had gone (one can hardly mention the name of Jesus publicly around Oke-Aluko today, for the Muslims now dominate the environment), the one secured by McClement had gone too. According to Babalola¹³⁴ and the Kwara Conference Office, Pastor Romanus E. Awoniyi with financial assistance from his brother,

¹³⁰ Yahaya, 'Christian Churches in Ilorin, Nigeria', 177.

¹³¹ David O. Babalola, *Our Heroes Past, 'A History of Christianity in Nigeria': The Seventh-Day Adventist in Nigeria 1914-2022*. (Ilorin, Nigeria: Akot Prints & Design Company, 2023), 102.

¹³² Nengel† and Wogu, 'Colonial Politics, Missionary Rivalry, and the Beginnings of Seventh-Day Adventist Mission in Northern Nigeria', 214.

¹³³ Nengel and Wogu, 214.

¹³⁴ David O. Babalola, *Our Heroes Past, 'A History of Christianity in Nigeria': The Seventh-Day Adventist in Nigeria 1914-2022.*, 102.

Pastor J. D. Awoniyi, Th.D., secured the present site in 1967¹³⁵ where Amilegbe Church in Ilorin was built. Part of the land in Amilegbe was again cut off from the plots by the government for sitting Government Girl's School.¹³⁶

Today, Adventist Churches within the Ilorin metropolis have been divided into three districts: Amilegbe, Tanke and Gamon Districts. The reason for the division could be in response to members' location and the need for accessibility and not a response to population growth. All of these three districts within Ilorin have less than six hundred members.

Other Christian Denominations: Origin of Christianity in Ilorin

According to Yahaya and Negel et.al, different efforts have been made by the Christian Missionaries to have their mission station in Ilorin without any success. Yahaya posited that Christian missionaries made numerous moves to establish a Mission Station in Ilorin, but their requests were turned down. He stressed that Bowen and Reverend W. H. Clarke sought permission to open up a mission station in Ilorin in 1855, but their requests for permission was denied by Emir Shitta and Emir Aliyu respectively despite the efforts of Bishop Ajayi Crowther in 1871.”¹³⁷

The missionaries then devised alternative means to have their mission station within the then-Ilorin province rather than within Ilorin city, Ilorin being a Provincial Headquarters. Yahaya reported that “Bishop Ajayi Crowther, who joined

¹³⁵ Kwara Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, 'Land Document: Seventh-Day Adventist, Amiligbe, Ilorin', 14 June 2024, WhatsApp Messages.

¹³⁶ Professor J. D. Awoniyi, Adventism in Amilegbe Ilorin, Interview, April 2004.

¹³⁷ Eliasu Yahaya, 'The Christian Missions and Western Education in Ilorin, Nigeria: A Century of Resistance and Challenge: 1847–1957', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 21, no. 1 (April 2001): 149, <https://doi.org/10.1080/713680380>.

the Niger Expedition in 1857, acquired a site for a Christian mission at Igbebe near Lokoja (then, within Ilorin Province) in 1862 (where the first baptism on Northern soil was believed to have taken place), there were tensions."¹³⁸

Yahaya submitted that Christianity began to gain access to Ilorin through trade relations. He said that some Ijesa traders brought the first Christian Church denomination, The Saint Barnabas Anglican Church to Ilorin in 1910.¹³⁹ This attests to the importance and benefit of bi-vocational ministry. Since 1910 till date, there have been good numbers of Christians in Ilorin City. Yahaya posited that the reason for the proliferation of different Christian Churches in Ilorin is due to the accommodating nature of the City to welcome people of other faiths.¹⁴⁰

Ilorin still desires to maintain the Islam of the founding fathers,¹⁴¹ therefore, there exist some religious strains in the city between the Muslims and the people of other faiths. Aliyu and Yusuf assert that the reason why there is a crisis in the City is because the Muslims are trying to restore moral decay brought by Western education¹⁴² that was introduced to the City by the Christians.

Tent-making: A Strategy for Mission

Horn submitted, "A Missions strategy is a document that will answer the question of how a church believes God wants them to achieve their unique purpose in

¹³⁸ Yahaya, 'Christian Churches in Ilorin, Nigeria', 176.

¹³⁹ Eliasu Yahaya, 'The Christian Missions and Western Education in Ilorin, Nigeria: A Century of Resistance and Challenge: 1847–1957', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 21, no. 1 (April 2001): 150, <https://doi.org/10.1080/713680380>.

¹⁴⁰ Yahaya, 'Christian Churches in Ilorin, Nigeria', 177, 178.

¹⁴¹ Aliyu and Yusuf, 'Religious Crisis in Ilorin Emirate: Causes and Solutions', 8.

¹⁴² Aliyu and Yusuf, 7.

world evangelization.”¹⁴³ He further said this strategy deals with goals, objectives, and priorities. “The strategy makes leaders seek God for direction and enables the Church to set a unified direction.”¹⁴⁴

Dan Victor said, “Paul adopted tent-making ministry with the aim of money not becoming a barrier to his ministry to people he is trying to reach with the gospel.”¹⁴⁵ He posited that Paul worked to support himself during his early ministry effort so that others would not give the impression that money was his motivation for the mission.¹⁴⁶

Strategy against Financial Limitations

On the ACWA/ASWA/BU Theology graduate WhatsApp platform, an issue with Pastors' monthly salary was brought up on June 13, 2024. Some posted that some graduates are not being paid as they should be paid: the wage factor for Ministers' salaries in a particular Union was said to be one hundred and fifty thousand Naira at 100% monthly salary (\$ 102. Official Nigeria foreign exchange calculation as of June 2024).

According to a Professor on the platform, a fresh graduate should collect 63% of the wage factor.¹⁴⁷ The discussion was that why is it that some Conferences still offer twenty-five thousand (\$17) to graduates per month while tagging them as

¹⁴³ Tom Horn, ‘The Missions Strategy’, *Mission Strategy* 1, no. 2 (September 2012), www.davidmays.org.

¹⁴⁴ Tom Horn.

¹⁴⁵ Dan Victor Luke, ‘A Strategy for Engaging Youth In Cross-Cultural, Tentmaking Ministry In The Evangelical Church Winning All, Nigeria’, 303.

¹⁴⁶ Dan Victor Luke, 296.

¹⁴⁷ Bettina Krause, ‘ANN Feature: Leaders Tackle Remuneration Issue, Vote New Approach’, 15 October 2002, <https://adventist.news/news/ann-feature-leaders-tackle-remuneration-issue-vote-new-approach>. (The wage factor of Ministers' salary is determine by the standard generated by each local Division of the world Church)

“Pioneer Pastors.” This was blamed on the national economic situation and level of unemployment that is affecting the Church in Nigeria.

Enang posited that the present economic situation in most countries is contributing to Youth unemployment, therefore, there is a need for self-supporting ministers if the mission work of the Church is to be accomplished.¹⁴⁸ Tagwirei and Masango posited that “Paul models tent-making that mirrors the value of employment and/or business towards economically sustaining missionary work.”¹⁴⁹

Different issues can lead to a financial crisis that can affect financial sufficiency. In Zimbabwe, Tagwirei gave a picture of what the Church faces due to the national economic crisis that was compounded by the COVID-19 lockdown. He posited that most Pastors could not get support from the Church due to the economic situation in the nation, he submitted that those who could cope with the financial crisis were tent-making ministers.¹⁵⁰

On this note, it could be argued that the tent-making approach can assist the Church to continue with its mission work in the face of economic crisis by allowing the young minister to seek means of self-support outside of the Church and still be able to fulfil the mission mandate.

¹⁴⁸ Nkeruwem John Enang, ‘Training Adventist Youth in Empowerment Skills to Reduce Unemployment and Enhance Mission in Abidjan, Cote D’Ivoire’ (Thesis, Adventist University of Africa, Theological Seminary, 2016), 137, <http://162.241.183.158:8080/xmlui/handle/123456789/289>.

¹⁴⁹ Kimion Tagwirei and Maake Masango, ‘Rethinking the Identity and Economic Sustainability of the Church: Case of AOG BTG in Zimbabwe’, *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 79, no. 2 (7 April 2023): 6, <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/hts/article/view/245433>.

¹⁵⁰ Kimion Tagwirei, ‘Sustaining Pastoral Work and Welfare in Zimbabwe: Case Study of Pastors in Masvingo Urban’, *Verbum et Ecclesia* 43, no. 1 (2022): 1, <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v43i1.2359>.

Strategy to enter the Resistance Belt

In the words of James D. Smith, “Paul of Tarsus crossed all types of barriers to gain followers for Jesus of Nazareth.”¹⁵¹ Onongha submitted that the next strategy for effective ministry among the regions considered “resistance” to the gospel is the tent-making (bi-vocational) approach.¹⁵² During the Roman Empire's reign of terror, Paul used a tent-making approach to break every barrier and pave the way for his ministry.

Trecartin represented what is tent-making and why tent-making is the next approach for a mission. He said that he was in Lebanon, his residency permit had “Missionary” printed on it (in Arabic). As a result, if he applied for a visa to visit Algeria, their embassy in Lebanon would look at his residency permit and say, “Missionary? We don’t want you in Algeria!”¹⁵³

Whereas, a tentmaker could say that they are a teacher, plumber, computer programmer, nurse, cell phone tower engineer, professor, or geologist, and they would get in. This is to say that a tent-making approach to the mission opens a way in the difficult “resistance belt” of the world. Paul used tent-making to advance access to the people that could be difficult to reached if not for the approach he used.

Strategy for Contextualization

Tent-making is a strategy for contextualizing the gospel. According to Olurokan, “Contextualization involves building a bridge to connect the message

¹⁵¹ James D. Smith III, ‘Boundary Breaker’, Christian History | Learn the History of Christianity & the Church, accessed 13 June 2024, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue-47/boundary-breaker.html>.

¹⁵² Onongha, ‘Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions’, 196.

¹⁵³ Homer Trecartin, ‘Seven Principles for Being a Tent-Maker’, 7.

bearer to those for whom he has a message to declare. The Apostle Paul could be regarded as a master bridge-builder.”¹⁵⁴ Tent-making ministry allows the mission practitioners to meet with the people where they are and through possible means.

He further submits that “In the process of contextualization, the message of the gospel does not change, but the method of presentation could be altered.”¹⁵⁵ This is where tent-making provides such an alternative method. The position of Kuhn is that “there is a need to contextualize the method of taking the message of the gospel to the world.”¹⁵⁶

Vital Congregation: Concept

The church is the body of Christ that has been called to be part of the *Missio Dei* (cf. Matt 28:19-20). “The vitality of the Church, as an institution, is measured in terms of strength and weakness, this does not deny it as the body of Christ and does not question the working of the Holy Spirit over the Church.”¹⁵⁷

Stephens submitted that vital congregation means “radical hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, risk-taking mission and service, and extravagant generosity.”¹⁵⁸ Snook posited that “congregational vitality arises out of two main factors which are: a committed core of Christian disciples, with most

¹⁵⁴ Olurokan, ‘Paul’s Missionary Strategies And Their Replications In The Mission Outreaches Of Lagos Metropolitan Areas Of The Apostolic Church, Nigeria’, 65.

¹⁵⁵ Olurokan, 65.

¹⁵⁶ Wagner Kuhn, ‘Adventist Theological-Missiology: Contextualization in Mission and Ministry’, 175.

¹⁵⁷ Sam Reimer, ‘Congregational Vitality among Evangelical Churches in Canada’, *The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada* 5, no. 1 (2012): 2.

¹⁵⁸ Darryl W. Stephens, ‘Healing Congregations: A Corrective to the Metrics of Congregational Vitality | Witness: The Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education’, *Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education* 34 (1 September 2020): 4.

members growing continually in discipleship and a strong sense of congregational identity that sends members out on individual and communal Christian mission.”¹⁵⁹

Vitality is measured both vertically and horizontally. A research report from the United Church of Christ linked congregational vitality to Ministerial excellence: Ministerial excellence helps members to be connected with God and participate in the mission of the Church.¹⁶⁰ This is what forms the basis for spirituality within the congregation.

Missiological Implication

The tent-making ministry pioneered by Paul as he entered the restricted frontline of the Roman Empire has shown the way forward for those who are involved in mission frontlines today. The model opened doors for Paul, assisted him in balancing missionary work with everyday life and assisted him in mingling with the people to whom he had the privilege of ministering.

The situation around the world where some areas are considered as resistance to the gospel. A good example is in Mauritania, where a missionary noted an incident where his Muslim ‘friend’ asked “Have you come to make me a Christian?”¹⁶¹ In some of these places, many of the minority religious groups are suppressed and persecuted, and this is what calls for underground ministry using the tent-making model.

¹⁵⁹ Susan Brown Snook, ‘Preaching for Congregational Vitality’, *Anglican Theological Review* 101, no. 1 (1 December 2019): 67, <https://doi.org/10.1177/000332861910100105>.

¹⁶⁰ Rev. Dr. Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi, ‘Congregational Vitality and Ministerial Excellence: Intersections and Possibilities for Ministry.’, A Research Report of the United Church of Christ Center for Analytics, Research and Data (CARD) (Cleveland: United Church of Christ, June 2015), 37.

¹⁶¹ Bernard Pelletier, “Missionaries Among Muslims,” *Spiritans Magazine*, 30, no. 1 (February 2006): 12.

Through the tent-making model, mission practitioners are allowed to mingle with the people. This is one of the benefits of the tent-making approach to mission, for it provides privileges to create contact with the people where it would have been impossible if one showed up as a missionary.¹⁶² Through the contact, tentmakers can build friendships with the people and thus an avenue for gospel witnessing could be created.

Some of the challenges recognized in this study include personal, workplace and ministry challenge. Every effort needs to be put in place by the Church to mitigate these challenges in whatever form they appear: tentmakers need to be constantly encouraged and be given tangible support like training on how to combine work with mission.

Chapter's Summary

Some works of literature have been reviewed in this chapter in line with the purpose of this thesis: the importance of tent-making ministry and how it could be incorporated into the mission approach in Ilorin to bring about the vital congregation. The theories looked at here are the doctrinal and praxis theories. These considered the belief and knowledge about God's plan and the reflective approach to taking action.

This chapter has established the concept of tent-making ministry and the different terms used in addressing it: bi-vocational ministry, business as mission, and self-supporting ministry. Also, efforts were made to establish who is a tent-maker or who can be a tent-maker and how the Church can empower the would-be tent-maker through training, policy making, and support with a stipend. And that this tent-making

¹⁶² Homer Trecartin, 'Seven Principles for Being a Tent-Maker', 9.

ministry can be an avenue to engage all members of the Church (vital congregation) and many young seminary graduates when the Church is struggling financially.

A historical overview of religious background of Ilorin, Christians of other denominations and Adventism in Ilorin was done in the Chapter too. It brought to light the struggles of the Christians, particularly the Adventists within Ilorin City over a century. The Chapter looks at the claims of both Muslims and Christians on the issue of the relational crisis between them in the city.

The chapter ends with why the Church need this tent-making as an approach for the mission work in Ilorin: Tent-making can reach where it could be otherwise difficult to get to and open doors for witnessing. It is a means of combating unemployment, is cost-effective and could be used to contextualise the mission work: meeting people where they are and becoming all things to all people so that some might be won for Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 9: 19-23).

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This chapter looked into an overview of the method that was employed in this research thesis. This thesis makes use of the qualitative research method. According to Hamed Taherdoost, “Qualitative research aims to collect primary, first-hand, textual data and analyses it using specific interpretive methods.”¹ Furthermore, the approach used here was the narrative approach to the qualitative research method.

This thesis explored the narrative of key players in the Church; those that have a kind of relation to the tent-making approach to mission. These key players include the engaged Lay-Pastor in Ilorin, the Kwara Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Administrator and the Head of the department of Religious Studies, Babcock University.

The framework put in place in this thesis is aimed at looking at the knowledge and functionality of the participants and how this understanding can contribute to the realisation of tent-making ministry in the Kwara Conference, particularly in Ilorin. This thesis sought to know the level of understanding and awareness that these participants are exposed to as it relate to the use of Tent-making approach to doing mission work.

¹ Hamed Taherdoost, ‘What Are Different Research Approaches? Comprehensive Review of Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Research, Their Applications, Types, and Limitations’, *Journal of Management Science & Engineering Research* 5, no. 1 (April 2022): 54, <https://doi.org/10.30564/jmser.v5i1.4538>.

The aim of using the qualitative research method is to have systematic, transparent, trustworthy and accurate reporting. Johnson et.al posited that “The goal of rigor in qualitative research can be described as ensuring that the research design, method, and conclusions are explicit, public, replicable, open to critique, and free of bias.”²

Research Setting

The importance of the research setting is to offer the readers with important facts about the context of the study: This includes the population, culture, period, environmental faction and the location where the research is taking place.³ This will boost credibility, accessibility and re-productivity in the future. Snowdon et.al posited that “Context is not just the backdrop against which things occur; it is a collection of shaping forces that affect experiences in different ways. It is an environment, an atmosphere perhaps, which is integrated into personal narratives, experienced, interpreted and reinterpreted over time”⁴

Location

Ilorin is located in Kwara state, in the North-central region of Nigeria. Ilorin is within Kwara Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, West Nigeria Union

² Jessica L. Johnson, Donna Adkins, and Sheila Chauvin, ‘A Review of the Quality Indicators of Rigor in Qualitative Research’, *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* 84, no. 1 (January 2020): 7120, <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe7120>.

³ ‘Importance of Describing the Setting of a Study in Your Manuscript’, Editage Insights, 10 March 2023, <https://www.editage.com/insights/importance-of-describing-the-setting-of-a-study-in-your-manuscript>.

⁴ Claire Snowdon et al., ‘The Research Setting’, in *Death, Bereavement and Randomised Controlled Trials (BRACELET): A Methodological Study of Policy and Practice in Neonatal and Paediatric Intensive Care Trials* (NIHR Journals Library, 2014), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK262175/>.

Conference. It occupies an area of about 100 km², located between the sparsely populated middle belt and the densely populated southwest of Nigeria.

Ilorin is situated between 8° 30' N and 8° 50' N of the Equator and longitude 4° 20' E and 4° 35' E of the Greenwich Meridian.⁵ Presently, Ilorin is the Capital City of Kwara state which was created in 1967⁶ and the headquarters of the Ilorin Emirate created in the 19th century within the Sokoto Caliphate.⁷

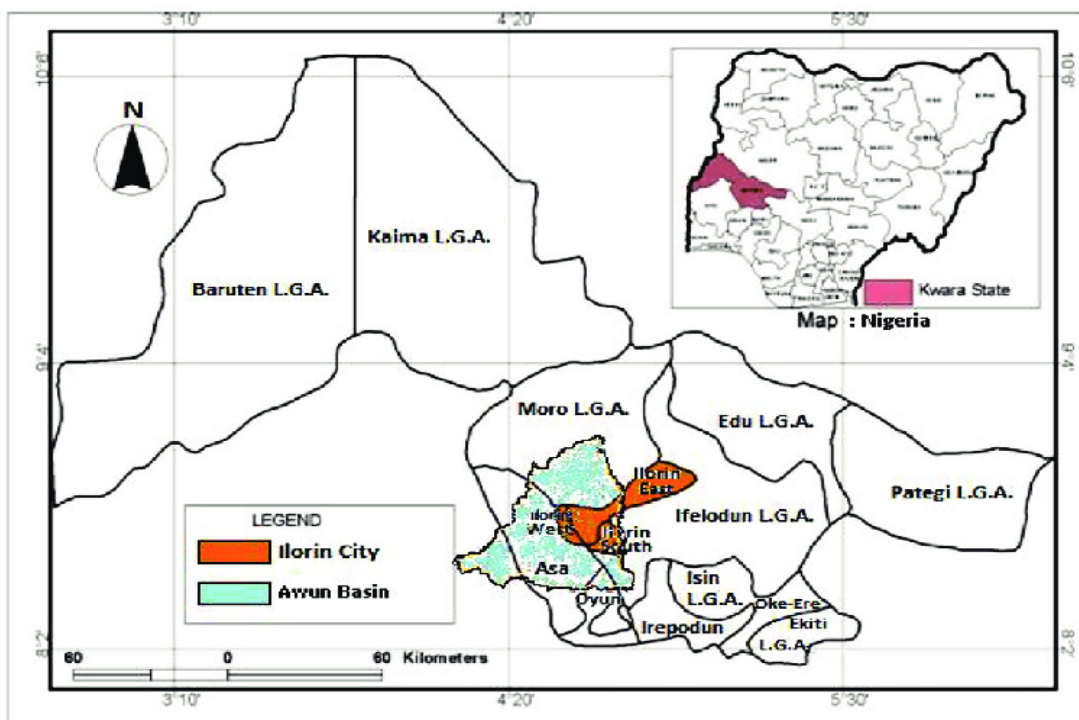


Figure 1. Map of Kwara State showing Ilorin City

⁵ Lateefat A. Kareem, Philip M. Atere, and Olumide A. Oluwole, 'Analysis of Residential Location Preferences in Ilorin Metropolis, Nigeria', *Ife Social Sciences Review* 30, no. 1 (2 June 2022): 125.

⁶ Are Kolawole, 'The Role of Grassroots Participation in National Development: Lessons from the Kwara State of Nigeria', *Community Development Journal* 17, no. 2 (1982): 124.

⁷ Akanbi Shola Ahmed, Ajayi Ayobami Olutayo, and Yahaya Adebayo Yusuf, 'Inter-Group Relations between the Igbo Migrants and Their Host Community in Agaka Quarters of Ilorin Metropolis, 1950-2015', *Ajayi Crowther University Journal of History and International Studies* 1, no. 1 (4 June 2024): 60, <https://acujhis.acu.edu.ng/index.php/acujhis/article/view/106>.

Population and the People

The current metro area population of Ilorin in February 2024 is 1,064,000, a 3.3% increase from 2023,⁸ this makes Ilorin one of the fastest-growing cities in Nigeria with over one million population.⁹ Ilorin is made up of different ethnic groups, which include the Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, Nupe and Kanuri¹⁰ who came together after the secession from the Oyo Empire.¹¹ According to Solagberu et.al, all these people groups came with their culture but later became a city of unique Islam.¹²

Research Design

This research used qualitative research that wants to employ narrative design to gather data. Quoting Cleland, Oranga and Matere posit that “qualitative research is concerned with understanding people’s experiences in a simple, easy and analytical way and seeks answers to research questions using a systematically pre-defined set of procedures.”¹³ Kim Raj Subedi states that qualitative inquiry is to unravel phenomenon in-depth rather than generalization of the finding.¹⁴

Oranga further states that there are five qualitative research designs. These include grounded theory, ethnography/ethnographic, phenomenological, narrative and

⁸ Macrotrends LLC, ‘Ilorin, Nigeria Metro Area Population 1950-2024’.

⁹ ‘Largest Cities by Population 2024’, accessed 7 May 2024, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities>.

¹⁰ Abdur-Razzaq M. B. Solagberu, ‘The Impact of Sufism on the Culture of the People of Ilorin, Nigeria’, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 32, no. 3 (1 September 2012): 400, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2012.727298>.

¹¹ Ahmed, Olutayo, and Yusuf, ‘Inter-Group Relations between the Igbo Migrants and Their Host Community in Agaka Quarters of Ilorin Metropolis, 1950-2015’, 60.

¹² Solagberu, ‘The Impact of Sufism on the Culture of the People of Ilorin, Nigeria’, 400.

¹³ Oranga and Matere, ‘Qualitative Research’.

¹⁴ Subedi, ‘Determining the Sample in Qualitative Research’, 10.

case study design.¹⁵ This study, therefore, seeks to employ narrative design. Parks posited that “Narrative research appeals to those interested in “constructivist-oriented, qualitative research that examines people’s experiences from their perspectives”¹⁶

To better understand the attitude of members of the Church on who is a tent-maker, what is expected of a tent-maker, and how members can be enlisted as tent-makers, this study will use key informant interviews; a qualitative research method which is more appropriate. According to Tremblay, “key informant technique is pre-eminently suited to the gathering of the kinds of qualitative and descriptive data that are difficult or time-consuming to unearth through structured data-gathering techniques such as questionnaire survey.”¹⁷

Moreover, Kibuacha further stated: “Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) are a pivotal qualitative method that provides exclusive insights from individuals with extensive knowledge or experience in a specific area.”¹⁸ Based on this, a non-probabilistic purposive sampling will be employed.¹⁹ Those to participate are those that the Church trained and has engaged as Lay-pastors, active Elders, Kwara Conference President, and Heads of the Department of the Religious Studies, Babcock University.

¹⁵ Oranga and Matere, ‘Qualitative Research’, 3–5.

¹⁶ Parks, ‘Story Circles: A New Method of Narrative Research’, 58.

¹⁷ Tremblay, ‘The Key Informant Technique’, 688.

¹⁸ Kibuacha, ‘Key Informant Interviews’.

¹⁹ Jeovany Martínez-Mesa et al., ‘Sampling: How to Select Participants in My Research Study?’, *Anais Brasileiros de Dermatologia* 91, no. 3 (2016): 326–30, <https://doi.org/10.1590/abd1806-4841.20165254>.

Method of Gathering Data

The Instrument of the qualitative survey (where needed) was be used alongside key informant interviews of selected individuals and focus group discussions; a semi-structured approach. This would be for the primary data collection. Those to interview would be those with experience in bi-vocational ministry and are recognized by the Church as Lay-Pastors, active Elders, Kwara Conference leaders and Heads of the Department of the Religious Studies, Babcock University.

The focus group discussion was involve the Lay--pastors to gain deeper insight into the tent-making ministry. Akyildiz and Ahmed posit that focus group discussions provide synergy effects on the participants, help unravel in-depth discussions, and collect high-quality data.²⁰ Therefore, a focus group discussion was be used to gain deeper insight into the experience of the Lay-pastors in Ilorin.

Alam says, “The generally suggested standard for qualitative research is collecting data until reaching the saturation points.”²¹ The saturation point is reached when data collection reaches the point of redundancy. Alam further submits that “saturation can be considered attaining the ultimate point of data collection by the researchers without adding anything in the databank.”²²

To get participants in the research, a non-probabilistic purposive sampling was used. This sampling is cost-effective and time-saving. Purposive sampling is the

²⁰ Seçil Tümen Akyıldız and Kwestan Hussein Ahmed, ‘An Overview of Qualitative Research and Focus Group Discussion’, *International Journal of Academic Research in Education* 7, no. 1 (30 December 2021): 6, <https://doi.org/10.17985/ijare.866762>.

²¹ Md. Kausar Alam, ‘A Systematic Qualitative Case Study: Questions, Data Collection, NVivo Analysis and Saturation’, *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal* 16, no. 1 (1 January 2021): 7, <https://doi.org/10.1108/QROM-09-2019-1825>.

²² Alam, 1.

process of collecting data from a subset or only a part of a population that fits the parameter for the research question²³ which then be expanded to make an inference.²⁴ This thesis aims to gather information from the opinion leaders/experts within the Church, thereby resorting to using non-probabilistic purposive sampling.

Books were also be reviewed, from the library and from the internet. This makes up for the secondary source. The secondary source was be obtained from published literature from the Library and unpublished material from appropriate and relevant authors. The internet, another secondary data source, was be used; here, Google Scholar and Google Book search engines, online journals and research platforms played prominent roles.

Sampling Procedure and Size

The sampling procedure followed in this study is based on situational-specific motifs. According to Jean-Luc Patry, “people demonstrate situational specificity when they behave differently in different situations.”²⁵ The participants in this study represent three different situations: the mission-employing organization, the mission trainer–seminary, and the missional Church – Laity.

Martinez-Mesa et.al submitted that “the most important factor to look for in determining the sample size for research is representativeness which reflects the

²³ Subedi, ‘Determining the Sample in Qualitative Research’, 5.

²⁴ J. Omona, ‘Sampling in Qualitative Research: Improving the Quality of Research Outcomes in Higher Education’, *Makerere Journal of Higher Education* 4, no. 2 (3 July 2013): 170, <https://doi.org/10.4314/majohe.v4i2.4>.

²⁵ Jean-Luc Patry, ‘Situation Specificity of Behavior: Triple Relevance for Research and Practice in Social Research’, *ResearchGate*, 1 January 2001, 41.

minimum number that is necessary for the research.”²⁶ Daniela's²⁷ position is the factors that are necessary in determining the sample size which are both internal and external factors: the recommendation of the research funding institution, the bodies of assessors, the ethical board, and accessibility to the research's population.

Martinez-Mesa et.al and Daniel agree on looking for a marker that they differently call saturation and sufficient marker. They also agreed that the population should be from 1 to 50 for academic qualitative research. This study, therefore, engaged six participants in interviews and focus group discussions as follows: two participants in the interviews and four participants in the focus group discussions. Stancy²⁸ and Boddy²⁹ agreed that “one case can produce an in-depth understanding that furthers knowledge.”

Leroy Thacker submitted that there are two types of measures to determine population sampling in research: target and accessible population. Target population refers to the specific and should be clearly described for accurate generalization, while accessible population are those who are accessible to the researcher as the name sounds.³⁰

The marked population for this study was from the districts within Ilorin and its vicinity and were four in number which are those who are engaged as Lay-Pastors

²⁶ Martínez-Mesa et al., ‘Sampling’, 327.

²⁷ Rusu Mocanasu Daniela, ‘Determining the Sample Size in Qualitative Research’, *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education* 4 (7 December 2020): 186, <https://doi.org/10.26520/mcdsare.2020.4.181-187>.

²⁸ Stacey, *ECRM 2019 18th European Conference on Research Methods in Business and Management*, 99.

²⁹ Boddy, ‘Sample Size for Qualitative Research’, 430.

³⁰ Leroy R Thacker, ‘What Is the Big Deal About Populations in Research?’, *Progress in Transplantation* 30, no. 1 (1 March 2020): 3, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1526924819893795>.

by the Church. Other targets are the Kwara Conference President and the Head of the Religious Studies department of Babcock University. This made the total targeted population to be six. In research, there are different sampling methods in qualitative research which include purposive and random samplings, and purposive sampling is the most applicable in all qualitative research designs.³¹ The non-probabilistic purposive sampling was adopted for locating the participants for this work.

Selection Criteria

This is the characteristic used to decide whether people are eligible to participate in a study and should thus be invited.³² The selection criteria here aim to define the eligibility of the participants in this research. Taherdoost posited that “qualitative research discusses two general criteria: the way to do things and the outcome of things.”³³ Based on this, a key informant interview approach to gather data and non-probabilistic purposive sampling was used to select the participants for the research. Those used were predetermined through their position and what they are doing as it relates to the Church’s mission obligation.

Data Analysis

This discussed the procedure that was used in analysing the data that were gathered in this research. Data were gathered through interviews.

³¹ Subedi, ‘Determining the Sample in Qualitative Research’, 5.

³² GET-IT Glossary MART, “Selection Criteria”.

³³ Taherdoost, ‘What Are Different Research Approaches?’, 54.

Thematic Analysis

This analysis was used to analyse data. Clarke et.al stated that “thematic analysis (TA) is a method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (‘themes’) within qualitative data.”³⁴ Thematic analysis is a good tool for discovering something about people’s views, experiences, opinions, knowledge or values using interviews, social media profiles or survey responses.³⁵

English was the language used for the interview. This reduced the effort of translating from the local language to English; all audio recordings were accurately transcribed. The only area where translating was needed was when a participant uses the local language, Yoruba, to express ideas or when there were interjections of the local language during the interview.

Triangulation

This is a method “used to increase the credibility and validity of research findings.”³⁶ Nancy Carter et.al posited “Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena.”³⁷

In research, there are different types of triangulation approaches, which include data, investigator, theory and methodological triangulation. According to Wilson, “data triangulation uses different sources of data which includes different

³⁴ Clarke and Braun, ‘Thematic Analysis’, 297.

³⁵ Caulfield, ‘How to Do Thematic Analysis | Step-by-Step Guide & Examples’.

³⁶ Helen Noble and Roberta Heale, ‘Triangulation in Research, with Examples’, *Evidence Based Nursing* 22, no. 3 (July 2019): 67, <https://doi.org/10.1136/ebnurs-2019-103145>.

³⁷ Nancy Carter et al., ‘The Use of Triangulation in Qualitative Research’, *Oncology Nursing Forum* 41, no. 5 (september 2014): 545.

times for data collection, different places from which to collect the data, and different people who could be involved in the research study.”³⁸

This study used data triangulation in its interpretation to boost the trustworthiness of the research. Collections through interviews and focus group discussion were from three different sources: the interview gathered data from the Babcock University Seminary head of Department, and Conference administrator (Kwara Conference President) while focus group discussions was used for the Lay Pastors within Ilorin City. The data collected from these sources were triangulated to clearly understand the concept of tent-making ministry and how it can be incorporated among the mission practitioners in the Church.

Research Questions

This study looked at the following research questions to seek how tent-making ministry could be used to equip Adventists in Ilorin for mission engagement with the Muslims. The first research question is “What is the worldview of the Tent-making ministry, particularly in the context of Muslim evangelism?” This dealt with the worldviews of the participants. This assisted the researcher in testing the opinions of the participants on the concept of tent-making ministry. The aim is to test their presuppositions about the tent-making method.

The second research question is “What is the Biblical foundation for tent-making ministry?” This was to provide a Biblical basis for the tent-making ministry. Through a clear understanding of the Biblical concept of tent-making ministry by the participants, the researcher can have a clue of the ground on which the participants anchored their views of tent-making ministry.

³⁸ Virginia Wilson, ‘Research Methods: Triangulation’, *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* 9, no. 1 (2014): 74, <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/ca/>.

The third and fourth research questions are “How can the Seventh-day Adventist Church effectively implement a tent-making ministry to make it an acceptable approach in Ilorin?” and “What can the Church do to equip tentmakers in Ilorin for effective mission work among the Muslims?” These two questions seek to provide a viable strategy for equipping the laities among the Adventist congregations in Ilorin to equip them for mission engagement with the Muslims in Ilorin. These questions seek to contextualize mission work through personal vocation without being overtly confrontational in witnessing.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical consideration is a necessity when using human participants in research work.³⁹ The rights⁴⁰ of all research participants must be respected under all circumstances. Some of these rights include the right to accept to participate or to decline participation, the right to honesty; that all information gotten from participants will be used as promised and that there will be no distortion or alteration of the information they will provide.

The research went through the ethical committee of the Adventist University of Africa⁴¹ and duly followed the procedures listed for all researchers. This thesis followed thoroughly all the measures put in place to protect and respect the rights of all participants in this research work: A consent form was served and filled out by all participants at will.

³⁹ Siti Roshaidai Mohd Arifin, ‘Ethical Considerations in Qualitative Study’, 32.

⁴⁰ Nii and Ogbewe, ‘Ethical Consideration Dilemma’, 98.

⁴¹ Ethics and Review Board, ‘Spearheading Research Ethics for All’, *Adventist University of Africa | A Seventh-Day Adventist Institution for Higher Learning in Africa*. (blog), 2, accessed 27 June 2024, <https://www.aua.ac.ke/ethics-and-review-board/>.

Each participant was respected for his/her opinions or views on a particular subject matter. The researcher adhered to ethical confidentiality and identity protection for all participants. All data will be saved in a secure file and after the end of the study, as all collected raw data had been deleted for ethical reasons.

Trustworthiness and Rigour

Evaluation of the rigour and the quality of research can never be over-emphasized.⁴² Rigour to define the trustworthiness, validity, and credibility of any research as adjudged by the use of theory and research methods.⁴³ Helen Noble and Joanna Smith stated that “the rigour or integrity on which qualitative research is conducted is evaluated by its credibility, however, quantitative research is evaluated through its reliability, validity and generalisability.”⁴⁴

Anney posited that for trustworthiness criteria of qualitative research, “it is wrong to employ the element of reliability and validity to ensure the rigour of the research findings, rather, dependability, credibility, transferability and confirmability should be considered.”⁴⁵ Credibility is crucial in qualitative research and a lot of factors contribute to the credibility of any qualitative research which include coherence, sample size, internal validity, reflexivity and ethical considerations.⁴⁶

⁴² Helen Noble and Joanna Smith, ‘Issues of Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Research’, *Evidence Based Nursing* 18, no. 2 (April 2015): 34, <https://doi.org/10.1136/eb-2015-102054>.

⁴³ Valerie Anderson, ‘Criteria for Evaluating Qualitative Research: Criteria for Evaluating Qualitative Research’, *Human Resource Development Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (June 2017): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.21282>.

⁴⁴ Noble and Smith, ‘Issues of Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Research’, 34.

⁴⁵ Vicent N Anney, ‘Ensuring the Quality of the Findings of Qualitative Research: Looking at Trustworthiness Criteria’, *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS)* 5, no. 2 (2014): 272.

⁴⁶ Anderson, ‘Criteria for Evaluating Qualitative Research’, 3, 4.

Credibility

Patton argued that credibility in qualitative research depends on three distinctive elements: “the method of data gathering and analysis, the training and self-presentation (reflexivity) of the researcher, and the philosophical belief in the value of qualitative inquiry; the methods, purposeful sampling, and holistic thinking.”⁴⁷

To guarantee the validity and reliability of qualitative research, credibility must be established.⁴⁸ On this note, to ensure credibility, the researcher engaged the participants in thorough interaction through in-depth interviews. All data interpretations were checked repeatedly with the participants. This assisted in dealing with subjectivity as pointed out under reflexivity.

Dependability

This study handled the issue of trustworthiness through personal assessment (reflexivity), as it can affect the research biases which is aimed at increasing its reliability. Reliability is like dependability which increases trustworthiness.⁴⁹ To ensure dependability, the finding must be consistent and could be repeated.⁵⁰ Standard procedures in the collection of data and analysis was used by the researcher, to keep a record of all modifications, decisions and the research activity to ensure that the method used is understood and could be repeated.

⁴⁷ M Q Patton, ‘Enhancing the Quality and Credibility of Qualitative Analysis.’, *Health Services Research* 34, no. 5 Pt 2 (December 1999): 1190. [*Emphasis is mine*].

⁴⁸ Raziye Ghafouri and Sudabeh Ofoghi, ‘Trustworth and Rigor in Qualitative Research.’, *International Journal of Advanced Biotechnology and Research* 7, no. 4 (2016): 1916.

⁴⁹ Zia Ul Haq Kakar et al., ‘Criteria for Assessing and Ensuring the Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research’, *International Journal of Business Reflections* 4, no. 2 (31 December 2023): 152, <https://doi.org/10.56249/ijbr.03.01.44>.

⁵⁰ Linda Amankwaa, ‘Creating Protocols for Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research’, *Journal of Cultural Diversity* 23, no. 3 (Fall 2016): 121.

Transferability

Ahmed Khalid states that “transferability is achieved through a thorough description of the research context.”⁵¹ “The researcher should give a clear description of the research context for it to be suitable for use in another similar situation in the future.”⁵² This was adhered to religiously in this research to make it easier for future research to evaluate if the results are applicable in other scenarios by giving them a comprehensive understanding of the situation and surroundings.

Conformability

This is the degree of objectivity of research. . It defines the range to which a study's conclusions are based only on the researcher's interpretations of the data, as opposed to being shaped by the researcher's prejudices or preconceptions. “It measures the degree of unbiasedness of the researcher in the research and its interpretation.”⁵³ I did all things within my power to permit the partakers to express their views during data collection and I never meddle with any information gathered. Rather, I engaged specialists and interact with all participants to acquire diverse viewpoints on the facts and analyses of data.

Chapter’s Summary

This chapter outlines the methodology for this thesis: This thesis used qualitative research methods. The research took place in Ilorin, Kwara, Nigeria.

⁵¹ Sirwan Khalid Ahmed, ‘The Pillars of Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research’, *Journal of Medicine, Surgery, and Public Health* 2 (1 April 2024): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gjmedi.2024.100051>.

⁵² Raziyyeh Ghafouri and Sudabeh Ofoghi, ‘Trustworth and Rigor in Qualitative Research.’, 1917.

⁵³ Kakar et al., ‘Criteria for Assessing and Ensuring the Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research’, 159.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling. An in-depth interview was conducted using a key informant procedure, with open-ended questions that allowed for expanding ideas.

Thematic analysis as a method of data analysis is discussed in this chapter, which involves data triangulation after data are collected from multiple sources. The Chapter discussed ethical considerations, such as ensuring that all participants are given a fair chance to express their views on the subject under discussion. It ended with an emphasis on trustworthiness, which would be enhanced through triangulation.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS, INTERPRETATIONS, AND PROPOSED STRATEGY

This Chapter analyses all data collected from all the three categories employed in this research. The sampling used was purposive sampling to select participants based on their roles. All the findings will be presented and interpreted, and later, efforts will be made to propose a strategy for how to use a tent-making ministry approach in witnessing to the Muslims in Ilorin. The manual method of data analysis was adopted in the interpretation of data.

Participants Description

The description of participants in this study is based on Patry's position on situational specificity behaviours.¹ He posited that people behave in a specific manner in social situations: it is safer to say that people behave differently in different situations (situation specificity). Therefore, it could be safer to accept that the position or role of the participants would have an influence on what they would do.

This study engaged six participants based on their involvement in the mission work in their respective positions: two are in the administrative position; Conference President and a Seminary Professor, the remaining four participants are those who are recognized by the Conference as tent-makers within Ilorin metropolis.

¹ Patry, 'SITUATION SPECIFICITY OF BEHAVIOR', 41.

Data was collected from the Conference Administrator (ADM), the administrator is currently the President of the Kwara Conference, and he is serving his second term in office. Before assuming the position of President, he had served as the District Pastor of Tanke District, in Ilorin. He had also served as the District Pastor of Amilegbe and Ganmon Districts, all in the Ilorin metropolis after he was voted as the President in 2020 before Workers were posted to those Districts. He was selected to participate in this study based on his position at the Conference and his understanding of the Ilorin environment.

The head of the Religious Studies Department of Babcock University (HD-B) is a Professor of Biblical Studies and also a Lecturer in the Religious Studies Department in the Babcock University Seminary. He was selected because of his position and role in the Seminary. He is considered to be a member of the board that is involved in the planning of the curriculum for the Department of Religious Studies.

The Lay-Pastors (LP1 – LP4) that were selected are serving in the Ilorin, Kwara Conference, and are of different professions. This study selected three Lay-Pastors and a Woman-Evangelist. One of them is currently a Secondary/Grammar School Teacher and is involved in overseeing a Church. He was among those who were enrolled and trained by the Union as a Lay-Pastor. He was commissioned by the West Nigeria Union Conference in 2019.

Another participant is an Architect and a Christian Radio Presenter at Albarka F.M 89.9 in Ilorin. He is using his profession to create interaction with the people. He also runs a minimarket that his wife is supervising, this minimarket also assists them in creating contact with those who patronize them.

Among the participants also is an administrator who works with the state government. She has the opportunity to relate with a particular people group, the

Hausa community, who reside in Ilorin. This also allows her to meet with a wider audience in Ilorin. Also, one of the participants is a retired civil servant who had used his profession to engage with people, including Muslims, in his place of work. Now that he is retired, he is still very involved in the tent-making ministry by carrying over his engagement with the people around him, including the Muslims, through his business.

Research Questions' Findings and Interpretations

This section will present the responses of the participants to various questions that this research asked. This research was guided by four main questions. Question one was dealt with in Chapter Three while question two on the Biblical foundation of tent-making ministry was dealt with in Chapter Two. Questions three and four have a few sub-questions to further access the in-depth views of the participants on the subject matter. ADM and HD-B were engaged in in-depth interviews while the LPs were involved in focus group discussions (FGD). Each research question will be discussed separately.

Worldview on Tent-making Ministry in the Context of Muslim Evangelism

Based on the submission of Creswell that “qualitative research begins with the philosophical assumption that emanates from the worldview, paradigm, or set of beliefs of the researcher,”² this study tried to access the worldview and the beliefs of the participants in the tent-making approach. The first question is “What is the worldview of the Tent-making ministry, particularly in the context of Muslim

² John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 15.

evangelism?” This question aimed to investigate the participants' views on tent-making ministry. Jacomijn, de Ruyter and Miedema introduced a peculiarity between worldviews: “organized and personal worldviews.”³

The organized worldview is built on values that have developed over a long period of time as an established system with definite traditions. This could relate to the organized view of mission to all the world that has become the ideology of the Church. The personal worldview on the other hand could be inspired by an organized worldview. This question seeks to understand how the organized worldview inspired the worldviews of the participants on adapting tent-making ministry to fulfilling members' calling to the gospel ministry of the Church in witnessing to the Muslims in Ilorin. The questions to each of the three groups are position-specific, though, the focus is the same.

The question posed to ADM is “How does the Conference view the tent-making approach in preparing Adventists to engage with the Muslim community, especially in Muslim-dominated areas like Ilorin?” He responded that the Conference views and accepts tent-making ministry as an effective method of mission to the Muslims in Ilorin. He further states that it is workable and ideal, it will be more effective than the direct evangelism approach.

The seminary professor was asked, “How does the seminary view the tent-making approach in preparing Adventists to engage with the Muslim community, especially in Muslim-dominated areas like Ilorin?” He responded that the Seminary's view is shaped by both Biblical principles and practical considerations for effective mission work.

³ Jacomijn C. van der Kooij, Doret J. de Ruyter, and Siebren Miedema, “Worldview”: The Meaning of the Concept and the Impact on Religious Education’, *Religious Education* 108, no. 2 (1 March 2013): 212, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2013.767685>.

The discussion question posed to the Lay-Pastors is “How do you view the tent-making approach in engaging with the Muslim community in Ilorin? LP2 responded by saying that the approach makes it easier to engage with the Muslims in Ilorin by providing goods and services to them, “you can use the opportunity to reach out to them.” LP1’s position is that it is a good innovation for it increases the number of evangelists involved in reaching out to the Muslims. LP3 presented his personal experience among the Muslims in his place of work in Ilorin. He said, “From my approach and direct involvement, it is the best method to reach the Muslims in Ilorin.”

Response LP4 viewed the approach from the attitude of the Muslims in Ilorin. The respondent states that the concept could be difficult in Ilorin because the Muslims in Ilorin are very conscious of their religion. The respondent further explains that most of the indigenes of Ilorin who practice another religion outside Islam are denounced. The respondent concluded that no Christian can claim any right in Ilorin.

Summary of Responses to Research Question One

From the responses above, all the participants accept that a tent-making ministry is an effective approach to engaging Muslims in Ilorin. They also view the concept as a good innovation in mission engagement that is based on Biblical principle. The submissions here will align with the mission refocus mandate of the global Adventist Church. Erton Köhler⁴ submitted that as the Church is aiming at reaching the Church with the gospel, Mission refocus should be well considered and should be understood as adjusting the way we accomplish our mission in a changing world.

⁴ Erton Kohler, ‘Mission Refocus: An Urgent Call’, *Adventist Review* 200, no. 12 (14 December 2023): 41.

The Biblical Foundation of the Tent-making Ministry

The second question reads thus: “What is the Biblical Foundation of the Tent-making Ministry?” This first question does not have any sub-question and it seeks to understand the understanding of the participants on the concept of tent-making ministry. This is grounded on the doctrinal theory, which seeks to understand the knowledge of the members of the Church concerning the plan of God for His creation.⁵ The aim is to assist the researcher in obtaining the understanding of the respondents on the concept of the tent-making ministry.

ADM responded that.

The Bible supports the concept of tent-making ministry for it is a good way of reaching Muslims because Muslims will not want to identify with the people they already know want to reach them maybe because those people are regular (*gospel*) workers. But if it is through this tent-making, since it is an underground effort, it is not something that they will be able to understand that it is an evangelistic approach. Before they knew, you could have become their friend and got close to them and it would not be difficult for you because they would have been able to trust you and that barrier of ‘this one is bringing a new religion’ would not be there again: It is friendship that has brought you together. It would be easier for you then to share (*the message*) with them because it is friendship that brought you together.

HD-B responded that “The tent-making approach refers to self-supporting ministry, where individuals fund their own mission work by engaging in secular employment, just as the Apostle Paul made tents to support his missionary activities (Acts 18:3).” LP1 responded that tent-making ministry is one of the methods used by the disciples, especially by the Apostle Paul. The respondent further said that anyone who will be a tentmaker will have another means or source of income.

LP3 said, “When we are talking about tent-making, we are talking about somebody who engages in personal ministry, spending his own resources to

⁵ Mark G. Harden, ‘A Congregational Study on Mission Readiness: Toward a Practical Ecclesiology of Practical Action’, 98.

evangelize, especially, in a Muslim-dominated community like Ilorin here.” LP2's position is that tent-making refers to the deeds of any Christian who dedicates himself/herself to the gospel ministry. He further stated that the tent-maker collects little or nothing from the Church, but does another job to offer support. LP4 responded that tent-making refers to the craft or profession of creating a tent, typically from animal hides, wool, or goat hair. This respondent cited Genesis 4:20, Exodus 26: 1- 14 and Acts 18: 3.

Summary of Responses to Research Question Two

The various responses gathered revealed that all the participants have a good knowledge of the Biblical idea of tent-making. The responses make it clear that they know that the Bible supports the approach and that Apostle Paul used the tent-making method as part of his mission strategies. All the Lay-Pastors' responses revealed that they know that tentmakers do not depend on the Church for support, but they have a means or their source of income; “spending his resources to evangelize.”

How to Effectively Implement a Tent-making Ministry in Ilorin

The third research question is “How can the Seventh-day Adventist Church effectively implement a tent-making ministry to make it an acceptable approach in Ilorin?” This question aimed to generate a possible strategy that could be used to equip tentmakers in Ilorin to engage with the Muslims. This question seeks to explore the Church's readiness to engage in mission work; this will demonstrate the action as has been explained through praxis theory.⁶ Praxis theory explains the practical involvement of the Church members in the mission goal as an organization.

⁶ Mark G. Harden, 98.

Some sub-questions were added to this question to generate more responses. Four sub-questions were posed to the ADM and the HD-B, while four additional sub-questions were added for the focus group discussion. The generated responses are presented here with a summary of the emerging themes.

Responses to Research Question Three from the ADM

The first sub-question out of the four posed to ADM is, “What challenges or factors do you think could hinder the success of the tent-making ministry in Ilorin?” ADM responded that there are religious fanatics within the community who are hostile and might limit the efforts of the tentmakers in Ilorin.

ADM responded to the second sub-question “How many tent-makers are currently active in the conference, and what measures are in place to support and recognize their contributions?” that “I do not know how many tentmakers working in the Conference since there is no organized forum to discuss it. But I know some people in Ilorin, Sao, and Oke-Ode communities to mention a few.” His response to a follow-up question on what support the Conference could render was “It will be a good idea if we can organize the tent-making ministry into a structured ministry where those who are interested can be trained and supported by the Conference.”

The third sub-question is “What specific provisions or resources do the Conference offer to support tentmakers, particularly those working in Muslim-majority areas like Ilorin?” He responded, “We haven’t offered any financial support for those engaged in tent-making ministry except to encourage them and pray for them.”

The fourth sub-question is “What is the Church’s official policy on the tent-making ministry, and how is this policy implemented within the conference to enhance outreach in Ilorin?” he responded, “I have not taken time to study the policy

on tent-making ministry because we haven't had a structured program on the ministry. The global Church does not have any policy statement to back the tent-making ministry like other alms of the Church organs as far as I know." He suggested that "The Church has a body, needs to come up with a clear policy on tent-making ministry and make it available to interested members." He further made it known that "If the church establishes a clear policy on tent-making ministry, it will go a long way to assist the Conference in their preparation of tentmakers for ministry"

From the responses from ADM, it is clear that there is no organized structure for tent-making ministry in the Conference, but there are a few members of the Church within the Conference who could be considered tentmakers, even, within the Ilorin metropolis. Therefore, there has never been any assistance given to any tentmaker except to encourage those who report their activities to the Church. ADM suggested the need for the Church (*Global Church*) to organize a structure for tent-making ministry for this will assist the Conference in preparing the tentmakers for ministry within the Conference.

Responses to Research Question Three from the HD-B

The first question posed to the HD-B is "What specific curricula or programs in the seminary support the development of a tent-making ministry tailored for witnessing to Muslims in Ilorin?" The respondent said the Global Center for Adventist Muslim Relations (GCAMR) plays a key role in this area, providing specialized training and resources.

The second sub-question is "What are the unique challenges Adventist tentmakers may face while engaging with Muslims in Ilorin, and how can they be mitigated?" The response presented three possibilities which are: Islam is deeply entrenched in Ilorin, and any perceived attempt to covert Muslims can be met with

resistance or hostility; in Muslim-majority communities, strict cultural norms dictate gender interactions, which can complicate outreach, especially for female tentmakers and lastly, Christians may be viewed with suspicion, seen as representative of Western ideologies or as outsiders. To mitigate against these challenges, "it is better to understand these possible challenges and prepare through training on possible ways of dealing with it"

The third sub-question is "What strategy or programs does the seminary implement to prepare students for these challenges on the mission field?" The respondent mentioned a three-step strategy that includes integrative lifestyle witnessing, community engagement and training and support. His response to the fourth sub-question "How does the Church's policy on tent-making influence the seminary's approach to training students for ministry in Muslim-majority areas like Ilorin?" was "The Seminary encourages students to acquire practical skills in areas such as healthcare, education, or business." He stressed that "These professions provide opportunities for engagement in regions where traditional missionary work is restricted."

From the responses from the HD-B on research question three, it is clear that the Seminary does not have a specific curriculum to address tent-making ministry to prepare their student as equipped tentmakers. The Seminary counts on the Global Centre for Adventist Muslim Relations (GCAMR) for training. What is not clear is the nature of the partnership or agreement between the GCAMR on training the seminarian and the frequency of the training. However, the seminary encourages its students to acquire skills in areas that will provide them with opportunities for mission engagement in areas where traditional missionaries are restricted.

Responses to Research Question Three from the Focus Group Discussion

Discussants were engaged with this first sub-question out of the four sub-questions “Do you believe the Church is actively encouraging and supporting tent-makers in Ilorin? Why or why not?” The first respondent, LP3, presented that the local Church where he belongs used to assist his efforts because he used to report his activities to the Church every Sabbath day. He said that the Church prefer to listen to what he is doing as a mission report. He testified that his local Church, Gaa-Akanbi, is in full support of this tent-making evangelism. In his response, he said, “A number of them (Church members) individually have contributed toward this mission, and even the Church as a body at time has given us money for the mission.” However, LP2 said that the Church is not involving the part-time Ministers who can use their vocation to reach out to the Muslims.

LP1’s position on the first sub-question was that though the local Church may be doing its best, however, the Conference representative, like the District Pastor/Leader, there is not much encouragement, but rather a competitive mindset with the tentmaker within the Church. Some Pastors, instead of accepting the efforts of the tentmaker as complimentary, it is seen as competitive/rival.

LP1 further expand his position in the following words:

There is an adage that says ‘If you can beat my stomach, you can also beat my buttock’... There should be a commitment either directly or indirectly to Provide a sense of belonging. Training of Tent-making evangelists is also important, but unfortunately, the Church is lacking in this aspect, most of the time, it is the full-time gospel workers that concern the church and the leaders. They (Tentmakers) should also be involved in ministerial training and other training programs.

Another sub-question, the second, is “What do you perceive as the primary obstacles to the success of the tent-making ministry in Ilorin?” LP3 responded that the major obstacle is finance, it is very expensive for an individual to carry on without the

support of other people. He justified his position on the level of poverty in the country for most of those he came in contact with sometimes looked up to him for financial assistance.

LP1 added that the hostile nature of the community is another major obstacle to the mission work among the Muslims in Ilorin. In his words “When they tend to understand your mission, they become hostile. Once (*someone who was a friend*) a friend may turn out to be one's enemy. They will say ‘So this is your intention all this while,’ so they become hostile.”

The third sub-question is “Do you think the tent-making approach is a viable and effective strategy for reaching Muslims with the Gospel in Ilorin? Why or why not?” LP3 said it is a very effective method for through the approach he had some people coming to the Church through this method and even have a Church established (*Branch Sabbath School*) somewhere in Ilorin as a result of this method. In his words:

We made friends with some people, visited them, prayed with them and later introduced Bible Study with them and through this, we have some of them coming to Church. Though some reject us, but some accept us... I even want to say that it is a better approach than an open crusade. Open crusade can meet with hostility and can even turn it into physical combat with you, but this tent-making approach is, in fact, the only way, I think, we can reach the Muslims in Ilorin, so to me it is very effective

LP1 responded that it is a workable approach in Ilorin. LP2 said, “No Muslim wants to be approached with the name of Jesus, but tent-making ministry makes it easier, because is an indirect approach.” He further said, “Tent-making ministry is one of the best methods in reaching out to people because it provides easy access to witnessing because you present Christ to people through your vocation.”

Under research question three, the fourth sub-question is “In your opinion, what practical steps can the Church take to ensure the tent-making ministry is effectively implemented and supported in Ilorin?” LP2 said that the Church need to

start engaging more Lay-Pastors, who will combine ministry work and vocation to reach to the people. LP2 further responded that tentmakers need to be supported and encouraged in word and prayer, and LP4 mentioned the support to include finance, morals and training. LP3 said what he thinks the Church/Conference can do is to support financially and in prayer. He added that to make tent-making approach to be effective, the Church must extend love to those who are coming to Church, to make them feel at home, to accommodate them, and let them integrate properly into the Church.

LP1 added that the way the Church can support the tent-making method is for the Church, most especially, the Conference workers, to see it as a collaborative work and not to see it as a competitive work. In his words “The Conference should let the workers know that whoever that is involved in tent making, they should not see it as someone they are competing with, but someone they should collaborate with, to work with, so that we would be bringing souls into the fold.”

As an addition, LP3 said the Church (Local) and the Conference should encourage the members by emphasizing the importance of such approach to evangelism so that Church members can adopt it and actively participate. LP3 gave the experience of what happen in his local Church where through the efforts of two women in the Church who engaged in praying with people has brought someone into the Church (*through baptism*) and the individual is very active in the Church today.

LP3 further added that while the Church need to encourage Church members of the need to engage in tent-making approach, those who are tentmaker should also brief their local Church of their activities. By briefing the Church, they would be inspired. He said that those two women got inspired through what they listen to during mission report from tent-making experience.

Summary of Responses to Research Question Three

The respondents to research question three on how the Church can effectively implement a tent-making ministry to make it acceptable in Ilorin, submitted that for effective implementation of tent-making ministry in Ilorin, all leaders must recognise its importance and place priority on it. It also presented that Church/Conference leaders must support tentmakers within their territory through training and retraining, finance, and words of encouragement and prayers.

The importance of an organized structure for tent-making ministry was pointed out. Also, the need for the Church's educational institutions to encourage training and retraining was emphasized. I want to infer here that the "sense of belonging" will include emotional security from being seen as "part-time" ministers by other full-time ministers as pointed out by Stephen.⁷

Some notable themes from the response are reporting from the tentmakers to ignite interest from members of the Church, support of tentmakers by the Church/Conference. Sub-themes under supports are financial support, training and retraining, protection from rivalry mind-set and encouragement.

Equipping Tentmakers for Effective Mission

The research question, which is research question four, that was posed is "What can the Church do to equip tentmakers in Ilorin for effective mission work among the Muslims?" this question aimed at discovering possible strategy that could be used to equip the tentmakers in Ilorin to engage the Muslims in mission. This also could extend to exposing to the Church what could be done to empower the professionals within its territory for mission engagement. Before delving into what

⁷ Stephens, 'Bivocational Ministry as the Congregation's Curriculum', 5.

could be done to better equip the tentmakers, it is appropriate to diagnose the possible challenges that tentmakers could face in their mission to the Muslims. Thus, I am presenting the response from the discussion.

Responses to Research Question Four

The first sub-question is “How can training be a morale booster for the tentmakers in Ilorin?” PL4 responded that the impact of training can never be over-emphasized, even to approach someone needs some orientation, therefore, let the Church and the Conference organize training on how to go about it properly. Such training will be a lot of benefit to those who are ready to embark on it. LP1 elaborated that training is very important in all aspects of life for it exposes one to know how to go about things; what to do, when to do it, and what not to do. Talking about the volatile nature of the environment, it is the training that will expose one to how to relate with certain groups of religion; and how you also relate with the Church, and with the Conference. In LP1 Words:

If there were no information or training, a tentmaker may see himself/herself as someone that is above board, then go beyond what he/she should do ... it is the training that will expose you to what the Church stands for, and what the Church is against so that one will not go beyond what he/she ought to.

During a follow up interaction on the importance of training for the tentmakers, he brought out three benefits of training which are: it accustom them of the latest development in the ministry, it broaden their knowledge and it gives them sense of belonging. LP4 said

Tentmakers should be trained and retrained from time to time to be able to meet up with the thread of things; to be able to keep up with current situation and develop new techniques. Tentmakers (*among the Muslims*) should have knowledge of Arabic language i.e. reading and speaking.

LP2 responded that

Even Jesus, before he sent his disciples in twos, he taught them out to reach out: Any house you get to say 'peace be to this house,' if a man of peace is there, he will let you in, if not, dust your shoe and leave there. Ilorin is fanatic (Muslim of Ilorin) about their beliefs, hence the need for training and retraining.

From further interaction with LP2, he said that not many people know what tent-making ministry is all about, hence the need for training and retraining.

The second sub-question is "How have you been able to combine your vocation with witnessing among the Muslims in Ilorin?" LP2 responded that his work allows for contact with the Muslims which acts as an avenue to share Christian faith with them. LP1 responded that combining personal work with tent-making ministry has not been an easy venture for "it involved going extra mile, since both are time demanding, a lot has to be sacrifice in order to do the two successfully."

LP4 responded that working in their midst as a civil servant allows for easy access to the Muslims for it provide an easy avenue to answer their questions about Christianity. In fact, by intentionally attending their occasion made it easy to witness among them. LP2 said that tent-making gives opportunity to share ones faith with Muslims.

LP3 responded that when he was still in active service, before retirement, many of his colleagues are Muslims and he used to engage them in discussion during his own spare time. But before then, they saw me as a trustworthy leader, who has their interest at heart. Because of this level of trust and interaction, many of them are able to bring their concern for advice. When this happen, that he would not just give advice, but go into the Bible to advise them. Therefore, they were able to appreciate the Bible and my religion.

He added that after his retirement, he continue with what he was doing in engaging people when in active service. In his word “I find time to combine the two and by the grace of God, I have not had any problem. Now that I have my small business, I still engage with people.”

To get more of the challenges, the third sub-question was asked about how they are able to combine their vocation with being a tentmaker. When the question ““What are some of the challenges that you are facing as a tentmaker in Ilorin?”” was asked. LP1 and LP4 said that being a tentmaker has not been an easy things, but it allows them to fulfil their role in the gospel commission. LP3 said finance is a great challenge in that some people are looking up to you to assist them financially.

The focus group discussion’s four sub-question is “Did you face any challenges when you were discovered to be a tentmaker with a Christian mission among Muslims in Ilorin?” Two answered “yes” while others answered “no” saying that this is due to their approach in engaging with the Muslims. It was further asked from those who answered no what the approach was, and the response was that “I start from the known to the unknown.” Respondent LP2 further noted that personal life is a good instrument in engaging with the Muslims.

LP1 responded that the challenges come in two different forms. The first challenge is from within the Church while the second challenge comes from outside.

The challenge from within is that some of the full-time Pastors who were supposed to see the tentmakers as collaborators, see them as competitors. Another challenge is coming from members who are ignorant of the concept of a tent-making ministry do ask them to resign from their secular work and join the ministry if they want to become pastors. Another phase of the challenge that is coming from the outside is coming from the Muslims who are too conscious of their religion and are ready to resist any move toward Bible dialogue or preaching. He further said that some of them “may not mind fomenting troubles.”

The response from LP2 was that the challenge is in referring to Jesus as the son of God. Another response from LP4 further stressed that there is limited “religion discussion,” in fact in some places, Christians are not allowed to pay a visit. LP3 responded that finance is the major challenge. This is because some of the people he came in contact with are in one need or the other that are more than what he could finance alone.

The fifth sub-question focused on personal experience as tentmaker, the question is “What are your experiences as a tentmaker in Ilorin?” LP4 responded that there is limit to what one can discuss in the matters patterning to religion in Ilorin. To buttress that, LP1 said the experience is that most Muslims usually build resistance around themselves. LP2 responded that is personal experience taught him people to share your faith by what they see in you.

LP3 gave a personal experience that there was a time he needed to give thirty Bibles as donation, at this time, the cost was more than what he could afford, and he had to inform his co-workers in the office. To the glory of God, he gave the testimony that he friends donated Bible, some gave him money to buy while some bought and gave to him.

LP3 continued, said that from his own experience, he said he could say in the affirmative that there are people who are thirsty for the true Word of God. He claimed that some Muslims remain in their religion because they do not know about (*true*) God. And by the time one introduce God to them, some of them are ready to accept God.

LP3 added that some are acting in ignorance and some of them are looking for people who to share their challenges with. He further said that some are happy when you go to them, while some are ready to come to you to open up their mind on what is

troubling them to you. He said, “I also discover that it is easier to convert Muslim women and young ones because they are ready to listen to you.”

Summary of Research Four Response from FGD: The responses from research question four brought out the need to understand that tent-making ministry requires close attention for it is not an easy venture: it is time-consuming and requires a good understanding of what is involved. It was brought to light that to empower tent-makers, the challenges faced by those involved would assist decision-makers in knowing what to do to assist them.

It was discovered that with the right assistance through training, encouragement and financial support, the tent-making ministry is a workable ministry and a promising method for reaching the Muslims in Ilorin. From the response, Ilorin is a field that is ready for ploughing, cultivating, nurturing and with a clear hope for a bountiful harvest: If the tent-making approach could be embraced and nurtured, this harvest/mission is possible.

Responses to Research Question Four from ADM: On what to do to equip the tentmakers, two sub-questions were posed to the ADM. This is the first sub-question to the ADM: “What in-house training or programs can the Conference offer to equip Church members in Ilorin who are interested in tent-making ministry but unable to pursue formal theological education?” This question was purposely asked to allow the respondent to see training as part of things to include in equipping the tentmakers in Ilorin.

ADM responded that the conference would be glad to engage trainers for those who are interested in tent-making ministry in the Conference. Further question was passed on how to get interested. He responded that all Church leaders need to make tent-making a priority since the majority of the population in Ilorin are Muslims. The

leaders should encourage the promotion and enlightenment campaign of the approach as per the effects of the ministry to the overall progress to the mission effort of the Church.

The second sub-question is “What are the things that the Conference are doing to make the tent-makers feel secure and fulfilled among other Full-time Pastors?” His response was “We are not doing anything yet since those who are engaged in the tent-making ministry are doing it on their own and not in connection with the Conference. We only encourage them whenever we meet them or they visit the office.”

Summary of ADM Response to Research Four: The Conference would be glad to be more involved in the tent-making ministry through the provision of support: encouragement and training of those who are interested in the tent-making ministry. But as it is now, the Conference is not doing anything in terms of financial support to any tentmaker since all those who are doing it are on their own.

Responses to Research Question Four from HD-B: Four sub-question were posed to the HD-B to get an in-depth response on what could be done to equip the tent-making ministry in the Church. According to Onongha, “One of the primary things the church may need to consider is the development of a curriculum for the training of tentmakers.”⁸ He further emphasized that “Consequently, many unemployed persons are those who have acquired ministerial training and for whom no employment opportunity may appear on their horizons.”⁹

The first sub-question seeks to present the benefits of tent-making ministry for the Adventists witnessing to the Muslims in Ilorin. The question is “What are the key

⁸ Onongha, ‘Tentmaking in the Twenty-First Century: Theological and Missiological Implications for Contemporary Adventist Missions’, 193.

⁹ Onongha, 193.

benefits of a tent-making approach for Adventists witnessing to Muslims in Ilorin?”

Response from the HD-B presents some key benefits of the tent-making approach and they include first, tent-making allows Adventists to enter and live in these areas (resistance belt) as professionals – teachers, healthcare workers, or businesspeople – rather than overt missionaries.

Second, in the Muslim cultures, work is highly valued. Adventists who contribute meaningfully to society through their professions are likely to gain respect and credibility, opening doors for relational ministry. Third, tent-making reduces dependency on external funding, allowing missionaries to sustain themselves. Lastly tent-making will promote effectiveness, and efficiency and the challenge of possible opposition creates the need for sincere spiritual growth.

The second sub-question is “How can a tent-making ministry provide both financial stability and active involvement in mission work for seminary graduates engaging with Muslims in Ilorin?” the response was that a tent-making ministry can offer both financial stability and active engagement in mission work for seminary graduates working with the Muslims in Ilorin by integrating professional careers with ministry efforts.

The third sub-question is “What steps can be taken to promote and encourage the tent-making approach among Adventist members, making it more widely acceptable and effective?” A few steps were presented as means of promoting and encouraging the tent-making approach among Adventists in Ilorin. These include first, Organize regular events to educate Church members on the Biblical basis for tent-making, emphasizing its effectiveness in mission work. Second, include tent-making as a topic in Sabbath school lessons, youth programs, and other Church initiatives to raise awareness at all levels.

Third, develop resources such as manuals, toolkits, and online courses that provide practical guidance for those interested in tent-making ministries. And lastly to provide financial support to members pursuing training in fields relevant to tent-making or for specific mission assignments. It was further pointed out that seminars, workshops, Bible Study and direct engagement should be encouraged.

The last sub-question is “What in-house training or programs can the seminary offer to equip Church members in Ilorin who are interested in tent-making ministry but unable to pursue formal seminary education?” Here, a good collaboration with the local Conference and the Seminary was said to be part of what the seminary could embrace in equipping Church members in Ilorin. Other things that the seminary could offer include short-term mission training workshops, vocational and professional skills training, Certificate programs in mission studies, mentorship and coaching programs, and community engagement and service projects.

Summary of Responses to Research Question Four from HD-B: The seminary recognized the tent-making ministry as a tool to enter the resistance belt through vocations. HD-B presented that the tentmakers are self-support and do not depend on “outside finance.” It is made clear also the importance of training and retraining for tent-makers. The theme that showed up in this response is the importance of support to tent-makers which includes, financial support, encouragement, promotion among members and training.

Proposed Strategy

From the findings above, the researcher wants to present the following strategy to equip Adventists in Ilorin for a mission among the Muslims through the tent-making approach. This strategy includes, but is not limited to: the promotion of

the tent-making ministry in all local Churches within the Ilorin metropolis, the Church, both local and Conference should encourage all those who are interested in the tent-making ministry.

All Church leaders need see the importance of tent-making ministry to be a viable method in engaging the Muslims with the gospel of Jesus Christ and embrace it for mission, platforms for encouraging those who are interested in tent-making ministry should be created at all the churches in Ilorin; those who are involved should be given time to report their activities for members of the Church to be ignited and see what they too can do to be part of the mission of the Church, thus fulfil the call to the gospel mandate.

There is a need for the Conference to collaborate with Adventist educational institutions in the training and retraining of the tentmakers within the Conference especially, those in Ilorin for the place is populated by Muslims majority and needs tentmakers to occupy them in the mission engagement of the Church.

As it has been presented, the Seminary should be an avenue where the training of potential tentmakers should take place, the Seminary board should be proactive in introducing tent-making programs into their curriculum to provide both training and incentives to all seminarians to be intentional about tent-making ministry. With a renewed collaboration with the Conference, the seminary should be ready to establish avenues where the Conference can send its tent-makers for continued training.

Also, the Seminary should include training in Arabic language in their Islamic studies and Greek and Hebrew are included for proper Biblical Studies. This will allow seminarians to be fully prepared to engage the Muslims in their territories, seeing that most of the territories in the West African Countries, particularly, the West Nigeria Conference where Ilorin is located, are dominated by the Muslims. With the

knowledge of Islam and Arabic, the seminarians would be prepared to meet the Muslims in their worldview and have proper instrument to do mission engagement with them.

This is the right time for the global Church to break away from the Laity – Clergy dichotomy; and to stop labelling some members of the Church as “common.” All efforts need to be put in place to incorporate tent-making ministry as part of the ministries of the global Church. Policy statements need to be created for the recognition of tent-making ministry in the Church. It could be inferred here that over the years, Church mission emphasis has been concentrated on Peter’s method of mission with a long neglect of Paul’s method of mission as it has been presented in this study.

As a matter of importance, the disparity between those professionals who are doing their best to get involved in the work of the Church as tentmakers and those in the full-time ministry needs to be addressed by the Conference. This would be in the education of all that are involved in understanding the role each mission practitioner is to perform. Identification of role is not relegation of one for another, rather it is to show what is expected of each practitioner. An example of this is shown in the offices in the Church: the office of the diaconry, presbyter-elder, and ministers-Pastor. There is no need for rivalry between the deacon and the elder in the Church if each of them knows his/her role.

It is also important for the Conference to be involved financially in supporting the activities of the tent-making ministry. The Church can do this through the allocation of funds to tent-making ministry in the annual budget of the Church/Conference. Through this, the Church would be able to attend to a call for

assistance where it is needed and support the interested tentmaker with funding to take care of travels, calls and visitation of their contacts.

Another important strategy that should be prepared for is the establishment of house-Church. Due to the challenging nature of engaging with Muslims, there is a need to prepare a “city of refuge” for would-be converts. Here, the Church need to do more studies on how to organize and implement house-church model in assimilating new Muslims convert. This house-church model will assist the Church in contextualizing the gospel (orthodoxy and orthopraxy) to the worldview of the new convert and act as a nurturing platform for their spiritual growth.

Conclusion

The findings presented in this research reveal that members of the Adventist Church in Ilorin have a good worldview of the tent-making ministry. They showed that tent-making ministry is a viable alternative model for engaging Muslims with the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was submitted through this study that the tent-making model would be more effective in reaching Muslims than the traditional approach which had lost its appeal and is prone to public confrontation/attack.

The participants' responses show that the Biblical position on tent-making is clear enough: all respondents said that tent-making is based on the Biblical principle of mission. Respondents presented that most of the mission practitioners beginning from Abraham in the Old Testament and extending to Paul in the New Testament used their profession as a vehicle for the mission work.

In as much as it has been established that the respondents have a good view of tent-making ministry, the study also shows that little is being done to fully tap from the potential this model to mission can offer the Church. Those who are involved are in the work out of passion for mission and with a sense of a call to the mission work

through their vocation: there is no structure put in place by the Conference to annex this potential, no means of encouraging them; the Conference do not even have a chronicle of the tentmakers in its territory.

The major themes that appeared in this research are centred on support for tentmakers. This support would include training and retraining, financial and moral support to encourage those who are interested in the tent-making ministry. Other themes include regular reporting and collaboration: those who are interested and are involved in tent-making ministry are counselled to report their activities to the Church to allow the Church to know what they are doing and how they can assist them. Reporting will signal synergy between the tentmakers and the full-time ministers. Collaboration is also shown to be what is needed to strengthen the tent-making ministry in the Conference. The Conference needs to collaborate with those who are interested in the tent-making ministry.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary

This chapter summarizes the tent-making approach for equipping Adventists to witness to the Muslims in Ilorin. Efforts had been made to establish the purpose of the Church which is the mission to all the world (cf. Matt. 28: 19-20). According to Dabrowski, ed., the mission takes the Church to land where religious freedom is restricted, but these places also need to be reached. He stated that other means need to be sought and these means include tent-making ministry.¹ Therefore, this summary presents the concept of tent-making ministry as a viable approach in equipping the Adventist members with a mission to the Muslims in Ilorin.

Furthermore, this study presented mission practitioners based on situational-specific behaviours. Three classes of mission practitioners include the mission employing organization – the Church/Conference, the mission training organization – Seminary and members of the missional congregation – the Lay-Pastors (Tentmakers). The focus here is to explore the tent-making ministry as a means to equipping members of the Adventist Church in Ilorin to engage the Muslims in mission.

¹ Rajmund Dabrowski, ed., *Statements, Guidance and Other Documents of Seventh-Day Adventist Church*, Fourth Expanded Edition (USA: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2010), 258.

The following themes came up from this study which present ways of equipping the Church members in Ilorin for mission to the Muslims, and they are: support, encouragement, weekly reporting of tent-making activities, promotion of the method, and training. This could be represented in the triangulation below.

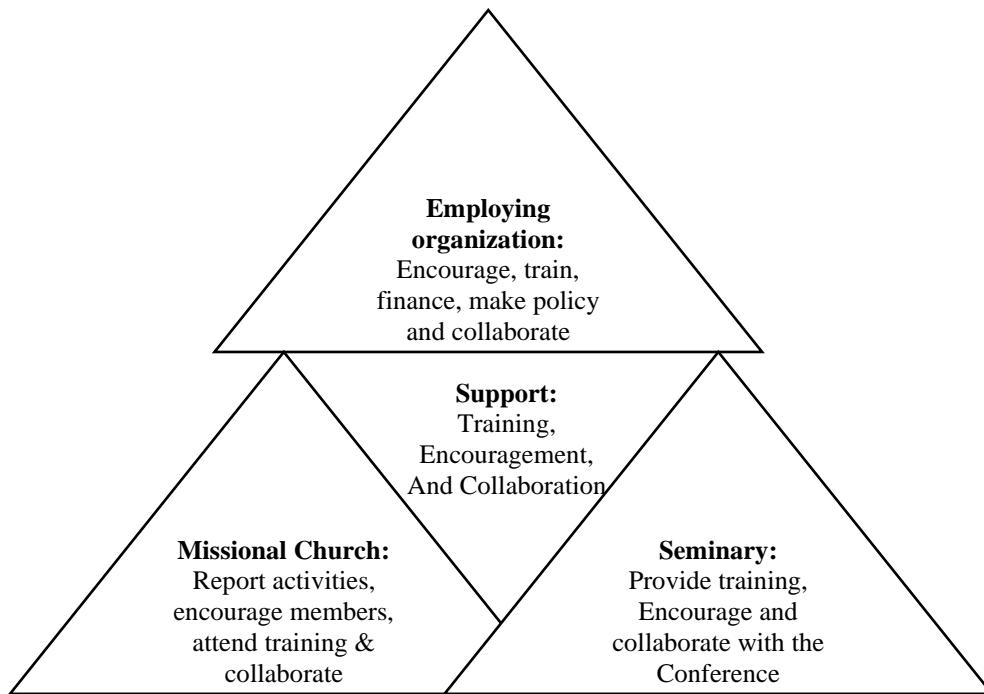


Figure 2. Triangulation of the major themes from the Findings

Emerging Themes

There are few themes that emerged in this study which could be put under support for the tent-making ministry. These include: Theme 1: Training, this could be inform of inclusion of tent-making in the curriculum the Church's institutions, workshop and seminal; Theme 2: Encouragement which include financial support, and moral support; Theme 3: Collaboration that involved tentmakers' reporting, promotion of tent-making ministry, synergy between the Conference and the educational institution of the Church and inclusion of tent-making ministry in the policy of the Church.

Training

From all the responses gathered, training appeared on the top list of what could be done to equip for tent-making ministry in Ilorin. Those who have an interest in tent-making ministry and were interviewed mentioned the importance of training to guide all interest in knowing what to do, how to do what to do and when to do what to do.

The seminary professor emphasized the importance of seminars and workshops for equipping tentmakers. The Conference promised her readiness to assist in the training of those who are interested in tent-making ministry. This training could come in the form of sponsorship, organizing regular seminars and worship for all those who are involved in the tent-making ministry.

The seminary could also seek means of introducing tent-making ministry to be part of the curriculum for the seminary student. This would even increase the relevance of the department to the outside world and in turns increase enrolment. It would be to contextualize mission world to meeting the needs of the society and also prepare the seminarian for the needs of the society.

Encouragement

Encouragement is an act that increases interest, motivates for continue efforts and create resilience among the actors. The responses made it clear that with proper encouragement, through financial and moral support, the tent-making ministry would be positioned in a place to engaging Muslims in witnessing. The findings presented that the financial needs of the tent-making ministry can be overemphasis; it include meeting the challenges of the prospects, and meeting the needs of the tentmaker in allow for ease of engagement.

Another area of encouragement is the moral support that those who have an interest in tent-making ministry need: So of those who responded lamented the confrontation they are meeting among the full-time minister. Some of the reports were that some full-time ministers considered the tentmakers as their rivals in the mission work. Therefore, some of the encouragement to give those who are interested in the ministry is to raise their status and let the Conference give them recognition as part of the workers of the Church. This would be made easy if the global Church could provide a policy statement for the tent-making ministry.

Collaboration

Collaboration is an act of working together to produce results. This study presented that all the alms of the missional Church: the local congregation, Conference/Mission field and educational institutions need to collaborate to make tent-ministry a viable tool in engaging the Muslims in witnessing.

From the study, collaboration should not be limited to the Church and the Educational institution, but with the health and publishing alms of the Church as well. The educational alms of the Church could prepare to provide training, the health institution could recruit health workers to join the Church as tentmakers and enrol in tent-making training, and the publishing alms work to assist in equipping tent-makers, seminary and Conference with resources that could assist in promoting and equipping tent-making ministry.

The Church health institution can increase its involvement in the effort of the Church by intentional collaboration with the Church in partnership with the tent-making ministry through medical missionaries. Health personnel could find acceptance in areas where missionary activities are restricted, thus be a competent tentmaker in such an environments.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the concept of tent-making is not a new idea to the members of the Church. Over time, through the history Church, the tent-making ministry has been with the Church: Peter was considered to depend on the Church for support. This could be understood in the light of the traditional mission method of today. Paul, who also operated alongside the first Apostle pioneered the idea of tent-making ministry as a term. He did not depend on the Church, but used his profession, tent-making, to support himself as he was engaging his generation with the gospel of Christ crucified.

The practice of the concept of tent-making did not start with Paul, this study presented that Abraham in the land of Canaan was a tent-maker; he was a Shepherd, and Joseph in the Court of Pharaoh was also a tent-maker, representing the Creator God in Egypt. Also, Daniel was a tentmaker in the court of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. All these are notable figures in the Bible who are tentmakers; on errands for the message of the Creator-God to all the places where they got to, depending on their professions.

This study has presented that now is the time to put an end to the missional dichotomy that exists between the Clergy and the Laity and embrace the mandate of the gospel commission collaboratively. This study also presented that for the mission of the Church to progress as it ought to be, all the stakeholders identified in this study must collaborate and provide needed synergies/supports to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the religious restricted areas; the Muslim communities.

This study, therefore, has established that the viable way of engaging the Muslims with the gospel of Jesus Christ is through the tent-making approach. The tent-making approach offers a promising strategy for reaching Muslims in Ilorin. By leveraging the skills and influence of local members, the Adventist Church can

overcome barriers and engage in a more meaningful and impactful mission. Further research and implementation are needed to fully explore and evaluate the potential of this approach.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations put forward for consideration after the end of this study. These recommendations are not exhaustive in themselves but are part of the findings from this study. They are:

1. The Church needs to stand up to her call for mission refocus.
2. All professionals within the Church in Ilorin must be called and encouraged to see the need to be part of the missional Church.
3. The Conference need to prepare to call professionals in Ilorin for dialogue on proper collaboration in the efforts of the Conference in engaging with the Muslims.
4. The Conference need to plan ways to support the Church members and encourage those who want to volunteer to be tentmakers in Ilorin.
5. The Conference need to provide a thorough explanation of the roles of each of the mission practitioners within the Conference to guide against competition between the full-time Ministers and the Tentmakers
6. As part of the needed support for the tent-making ministry, the local Conference need to add budget for a tent-making ministry as part of the annual budget.
7. The Church educational institution must be ready to shift attention from training on doctrine (cognitive training) alone but refocus on practical mission training – Praxis.

8. Tent-making (vocational) training needs to be part of the seminary curriculum.
9. Both the Church/Conference and the Seminary should push for the inclusion of tent-making ministry in the policy of the Church as part of the ministries of the Church.
10. Due to the peculiar nature of the mission to the Muslims, efforts should be made to train the tent-makers in Arabic language.
11. More efforts should be tailored towards doing further quantitative research to evaluate the effectiveness of the tent-making ministry in Ilorin.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORMS

CONSENT FORMS 1

This is asking you to participate in a research study entitled:
A TENT-MAKING APPROACH FOR EQUIPPING ADVENTISTS FOR WITNESSING TO MUSLIMS IN ILORIN, NIGERIA

Purpose: It is aimed at looking for a visible approach to equip Tentmakers to reach the Muslims in Ilorin with the gospel messages seeing that the city is a Muslim-dominated city.

Your involvement: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are going to participate in a discussion/interview to voice your views, opinions, or experiences about tent-making in Ilorin. The interview will take about forty minutes to complete. This will involve participating in a focus group discussion. There will be about four participants in the focus group: You will be asked about your opinions/perceptions or experience on the tent-making approach to witnessing. Each focus group discussion will take about forty-five minutes to complete. Your participation will add to knowledge about how best to do mission among our Muslim Cousins.

Benefit and Risk: There are no perceptible risks in involvement. If you sign the bottom of this Form, it means you are giving your consent to be in the study: You are NOT going to write your name on this Form. Only the researcher(s) will have access to the data and all data will be kept on a password-protected computer. If you participate, you will contribute to knowledge about fulfilling the gospel mandate handed over to the Church by Jesus Christ. It also implies that you allow the researcher to use your contribution verbatim (direct quotation). The researcher will answer any questions you have about the study now and you may ask them.

For further enquiry about this research, please contact the supervisor of the research: Dr. David Odhiambo, (odhiambod@aua.ac.ke) and ethics@aua.ac.ke.

Thank you.
Folorunsho M. Ayeni, (ayenim@aua.ac.ke)

Signature_____ Date_____

Approved by the *AUA Institutional Ethics Review Board*.

CONSENT FORMAT – 2

Conference Administrator - President

This is asking you to participate in a research study entitled:

A TENT-MAKING APPROACH FOR EQUIPPING ADVENTISTS FOR WITNESSING TO MUSLIMS IN ILORIN, NIGERIA

Purpose: The aim of this study is to look for a visible approach to equip Tentmakers to reach the Muslims in Ilorin with the gospel messages seeing that the city is a Muslim-dominated city.

Your involvement: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are going to participate in a discussion/interview to voice your views, opinions, or experiences about tent-making in Ilorin. The interview will take about forty minutes to complete.

Risk: There are no perceptible risks in involvement. If you sign the bottom of this Form, it means you are giving your consent to be in the study: Your participation will be anonymous and your identity will never be captured.

Benefit: If you participate, you will add to knowledge about fulfilling the gospel mandate handed over to the Church by Jesus Christ. It also implies that you allow the researcher to use your contribution verbatim (direct quotation). The researcher will answer any questions you have about the study and you should ask them now.

For further enquiry about this research, please contact the supervisor, Dr. David Odhiambo, (odhiambod@aua.ac.ke) and ethics@aua.ac.ke.

Thank you.

Folorunsho M. Ayeni, (ayenim@aua.ac.ke)

Signature _____ Date _____

Approved by the *AUA Institutional Ethics Review Board*.

CONSENT FORMAT – 3

Head of Religious Studies Department, Babcock University

This is asking you to participate in a research study entitled:

A TENT-MAKING APPROACH FOR EQUIPPING ADVENTISTS FOR WITNESSING TO MUSLIMS IN ILORIN, NIGERIA

Purpose: It is aimed at looking for a visible approach to equip Tentmakers to reach the Muslims in Ilorin with the gospel messages seeing that the city is a Muslim-dominated city

Your involvement: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are going to participate in a discussion/interview to voice your views, opinions, or experiences about tent-making in Ilorin. The interview will take about forty minutes to complete. You will be asked to voice your views, opinions, or experiences about tent-making and how Babcock University has positioned itself to prepare its Seminary graduates for tent-making ministry. The interview will take about forty minutes to complete.

Risk: There are no identifiable risks in participation. If you sign the bottom of this Form, it means you are giving your consent to be in the study: Your participation will be anonymous and your identity will never be captured.

Benefit: If you participate, you will contribute to knowledge about fulfilling the gospel mandate handed over to the Church by Jesus Christ. It also implies that you allow the researcher to use your contribution verbatim (direct quotation). The researcher will answer any questions you have about the study and you should ask them now.

For further enquiry about this research, please contact the supervisor, Dr. David Odhiambo, (odhiambod@aua.ac.ke) and ethics@aua.ac.ke.

Thank you.

Folorunsho M. Ayeni, (ayenim@aua.ac.ke)

Signature _____ Date _____

Approved by the *AUA Institutional Ethics Review Board*.

APPENDIX B
RESEARCH QUESTION PROTOCOLS

Research Questions

This thesis will look into the following questions:

1. What is the worldview of the Tent-making ministry, particularly in the context of Muslim evangelism?
2. What is the Biblical foundation for tent-making ministry?
3. How can the Seventh-day Adventist Church effectively implement a tent-making ministry to make it an acceptable approach in Ilorin?
4. What can the Church do to equip tentmakers in Ilorin for effective mission work among the Muslims?

Interview Questions for the HOD

What is the Biblical foundation for tent-making ministry?

1. What is your understanding of the Bible's position on the tent-making approach regarding equipping Adventists for mission work, particularly in witnessing to Muslims in Ilorin, Nigeria?

What is the worldview of the Tent-making ministry, particularly in the context of Muslim evangelism?

2. How does the seminary view the tent-making approach in preparing Adventists to engage with the Muslim community, especially in Muslim-dominated areas like Ilorin?

How can the Seventh-day Adventist Church effectively implement a tent-making ministry to make it an acceptable approach in Ilorin?

3. What specific curricula or programs in the seminary support the development of a tent-making ministry tailored for witnessing to Muslims in Ilorin?
4. What are the unique challenges Adventist tentmakers may face while engaging with Muslims in Ilorin, and how can they be mitigated?

5. What strategy or programs does the seminary implement to prepare students for these challenges on the mission field?
6. How does the Church's policy on tent-making influence the seminary's approach to training students for ministry in Muslim-majority areas like Ilorin?

What strategy can the Church apply to equip tentmakers in Ilorin for effective mission work among the Muslims?

7. What are the key benefits of a tent-making approach for Adventists witnessing to Muslims in Ilorin?
8. How can a tent-making ministry provide both financial stability and active involvement in mission work for seminary graduates engaging with Muslims in Ilorin?
9. What steps can be taken to promote and encourage the tent-making approach among Adventist members, making it more widely acceptable and effective?
10. What in-house training or programs can the seminary offer to equip Church members in Ilorin who are interested in tent-making ministry but unable to pursue formal seminary education?

Interview Questions for the Conference Administrator (President)

What is the Biblical foundation for tent-making ministry?

1. Is the conference aware that the tent-making ministry is a vital part of mission work, especially for reaching Muslims in Ilorin?

What is the worldview of the Tent-making ministry, particularly in the context of Muslim evangelism?

2. How does the Conference view the tent-making approach in preparing Adventists to engage with the Muslim community, especially in Muslim-dominated areas like Ilorin?

How can the Seventh-day Adventist Church effectively implement a tent-making ministry to make it an acceptable approach in Ilorin?

3. What challenges or factors do you think could hinder the success of the tent-making ministry in Ilorin?
4. How many tent-makers are currently active in the conference, and what measures are in place to support and recognize their contributions?

5. What specific provisions or resources does the conference offer to support tent-makers, particularly those working in Muslim-majority areas like Ilorin?
6. What is the Church's official policy on the tent-making ministry, and how is this policy implemented within the conference to enhance outreach in Ilorin?

What strategy can the Church apply to equip tentmakers in Ilorin for effective mission work among the Muslims?

7. What in-house training or programs can the Conference offer to equip Church members in Ilorin who are interested in tent-making ministry but unable to pursue formal theological education?
8. What are the things that the Conference are doing to make the tent-makers feel secure and fulfilled among other Full-time Pastors?

Focus Group Discussion Questions for the Lay Pastors

What is the Biblical foundation for tent-making ministry?

1. Based on your understanding of the Bible, how would you define and describe the tent-making ministry, particularly in the context of mission work among Muslims?

What is the worldview of the Tent-making ministry, particularly in the context of Muslim evangelism?

2. How do you view the tent-making approach in engaging with the Muslim community in Ilorin?

How can the Seventh-day Adventist Church effectively implement a tent-making ministry to make it an acceptable approach in Ilorin?

3. Do you believe the Church is actively encouraging and supporting tent-makers in Ilorin? Why or why not?
4. What do you perceive as the primary obstacles to the success of the tent-making ministry in Ilorin?
5. Do you think the tent-making approach is a viable and effective strategy for reaching Muslims with the Gospel in Ilorin? Why or why not?
6. In your opinion, what practical steps can the Church take to ensure the tent-making ministry is effectively implemented and supported in Ilorin?
7. How can training be a morale booster for the tentmakers in Ilorin?

What strategy can the Church apply to equip tentmakers in Ilorin for effective mission work among the Muslims?

8. How have you been able to combine your vocation with witnessing among the Muslims in Ilorin?
9. What are some of the challenges that you are facing as a tentmaker in Ilorin?
10. Did you face any challenges when you were discovered to be a tentmaker with a Christian mission among Muslims in Ilorin?
11. What are your experiences as a tentmaker in Ilorin?

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VITA

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Kwara Conference, Kwara State:

Youth Ministries Director. Oct., 2020 – Present

Skill -

- Providing training through seminars, workshops and lectures to local and Federation Youth Leaders.

- Conduct Induction and Investitures among the Youth Clubs.

- Supervised Youth Ministries Evangelism

District Leader. December, 2018 - Present.

Amilegbe District (District Leader). Dec. 2022 - Present

Skill –

- Revive the Youth Ministries program in the district

- Organize training for Church officers.

- Extend and strengthen language Church among the growing Hausa Speakers in the district.

- Supervise and head the management of the Church School in the district.

Rore District (District Leader). Nov., 2021 - Dec. 2022

Skill –

- Revive the Youth Ministries programs by reorganizing the Youth Ministries clubs

- Revive spiritual activities of the Church

- Supervised and headed the management of the Church School in the district.

Idofin District (Pioneer District Leader). July, 2018 - Oct., 2021

Skill –

- Prepare the Zone for district status

- Raise spiritual awareness among members

- Prepare the members to embrace the operations of Local administration through the Church Board

- Organize the Youth Ministries clubs in the area.

Global Mission Pastor. February, 2010 - September 2014.

Skill -

- Pioneer the Mission work in Tsaragi among the Nupe Speakers in Edu local government, Kwara State.

- Oversee the Young Church in Share (a boundary community to Tsaragi) among the Yoruba speakers in Ifelodun local government.

- Conduct Health rallies in the area and visit the community's healthcare centres and Schools for health education.

- Initiated the creation of the Zion Multi-purpose Co-operative Society in Share.

EDUCATION

Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State. Sep., 2014 - July, 2018.

- BA, Christian Religious Studies.

University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State. June, 2002 - Oct., 2005

- Dropped

VOCATIONAL SKILL

- Chief Executive Officer of Aye-Funsho International Enterprise. January 1996 – January, 2010.

LICENSE

- Ministerial Credential. Dec., 2019

CERTIFICATIONS

- Fashion Design and Dressmaking. Nov., 1995.

- Youth Ministries Basic Training, August 1998, April, 1999

- OYiM Training. August, 2019

- Youth Leadership Training. Dec., 2020

- Club Ministries Training. Feb., 2023, Nov., 2023