

THESIS ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Missiology

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: A CONTEXTUALIZED MISSION APPROACH FOR ENGAGING THE HAUSA MUSLIMS IN UYO, NIGERIA THROUGH INTENTIONAL FRIENDSHIP

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This research explored a contextualized mission approach for engaging the Hausa Muslim community in Uyo, Nigeria, through intentional friendship. It was observed that conventional evangelistic methods, such as public preaching and open-air evangelism, often yield minimal results among Hausa Muslims due to their deep-rooted culture and religious perceptions. Many in the community view Christianity, particularly the Seventh-day Adventist Church, with suspicion; this is often due to misunderstandings of its beliefs and a lack of sensitivity to their worldview.

The purpose of this study was to identify the perceived barriers to effective evangelism among Hausa Muslims in Uyo, explore mission strategies appropriate for their context, and develop a relational approach, which can be implemented for engaging them with the gospel. A descriptive research design was employed, involving interviews and focus group discussions. Based on the findings, the

researcher developed a friendship-based evangelism model aimed at building trust and relationships as a bridge for gospel outreach.

The study found that intentional friendship can be a highly effective method for reaching Hausa Muslims. This approach leads to a noticeable change in the community's perception of the Adventist Church, and opened doors for spiritual conversations. The results demonstrated that relational evangelism builds trust, fosters mutual respect, and paves the way for meaningful gospel engagement. The study concluded that building intentional friendships is important to reaching the resistant community, like the Hausa Muslims in Uyo. It is recommended that the Church should train members in relational witnessing on how to communicate the gospel in a culturally sensitive manner.

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A thesis

presented in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Missiology

by

Aniefiok Joseph Oyuhontem

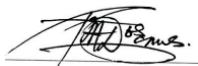
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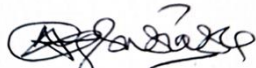
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Dedicated to God Almighty first, and then

My wife Emem Aniefiok and my son, Emmanuel Aniefiok Joseph

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

The Hausa Muslim community in Uyo, Nigeria, represents a unique subset of Nigeria's diverse religious and ethnic landscape. Abdulaziz submits that as one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria, the Hausa people bring a rich cultural heritage and deep-seated Islamic beliefs that shape their worldview and daily practices.¹ This community, though originally concentrated in northern regions, has extended into various parts of the country, including Uyo, contributing to a complex mosaic of cultural and religious diversity within the city.

The presence of Hausa Muslims in Uyo poses both opportunities and challenges for Christian missions, specifically in understanding the best ways to approach them with the gospel without creating cultural dissonance. Globally, the mission to reach Muslim communities with the gospel remains one of the most challenging frontiers for Christian outreach.² The Muslim population, which exceeds 1.5 billion worldwide, displays a high level of religious commitment and a profound adherence to Islamic teachings.³ In many contexts, such as in Northern Nigeria

¹ James Barnett, Murtala Ahmed Rufa'i, and Abdulaziz Abdulaziz, "North-Western Nigeria: A Jihadization of Banditry, or a 'Banditization' of Jihad," *CTC Sentinel* 15, no. 1 (2022): 46.

² Wolfgang Lepke, "An Evaluation of a Contextual Witnessing Project within a Resistant People Group" (PhD Thesis, Andrews University, School of Education, 2001).

³ Andrew McKinnon, "Christians, Muslims and Traditional Worshipers in Nigeria: Estimating the Relative Proportions from Eleven Nationally Representative Social Surveys," *Review of Religious Research* 63, no. 2 (June 2021): 303–15, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13644-021-00450-5>.

Christian communities are sparse, even nonexistent due to deeply entrenched religious beliefs and systemic barriers to the gospel.⁴ Unfriendly governments, influential Islamic leaders, and strong religious convictions often prevent Muslim populations from hearing or engaging with Christian teachings resulting in limited exposure to the gospel message.⁵

In many African settings, including Nigeria, the association of Christianity with Western ideology and lifestyle compounds this challenge. Among some Muslim communities, Christianity is often perceived as an extension of the Western culture, which has led to resistance against the gospel message.⁶ This resistance has contributed to a widening gap between Christians and Muslims, limiting meaningful religious engagement.⁷ Also, on the account that Muslims are resisting the gospel publicly poses a serious missiological threat to the Christian missions in Muslim communities.⁸

Larry G. Lenning observes that reaching Muslims with the gospel requires a nuanced approach, as public preaching and traditional evangelistic campaigns have proven largely ineffective, particularly in communities like Uyo.⁹ Moreover, Ajayi,

⁴ Kevin Livingston, "David Bosch an Interpretation of Some Main Themes in His Missiological Thought," *Missionalia: Southern African Journal of Mission Studies* 18, no. 1 (1990): 3–19.

⁵ Greg Livingstone and Gregory Livingstone, *Planting Churches in Muslim Cities: A Team Approach* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1993), 56

⁶Ibid. 57

⁷ Livingstone and Livingstone, *Planting Churches in Muslim Cities*.

⁸ James Paul Dretke, *A Christian Approach to Muslims: Reflections from West Africa* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Publishing, 1979), 34

⁹Larry G. Lenning, *Blessing in Mosque and Mission* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1980),

agreeing with Larry, confirmed that witnessing to Muslims in Nigeria through public preaching is fading away, for it is neither popular nor convincing to draw Muslims.¹⁰

Bauer further posits that the Seventh-day Adventist distinct message and traditional outreach methods are inadequate for effectively engaging with Muslims.¹¹ Furthermore, Muslims often resist conventional evangelistic approaches, such as public campaigns, due to cultural and religious disparities. Recent academic research also underscores the importance of relationship-based strategies in mission work, especially in multi-religious settings.¹²

Similarly, Omonokhua highlights how valuable dialogue initiatives can be in creating spaces for mutual respect and understanding, showing that friendship can be a powerful way to break down biases and build trust.¹³ Therefore, this study focuses on Mission strategies centered on friendship to provide a culturally respectful way to engage with the Hausa Muslim community in Uyo. According to Omonokhua, these approaches resonate with the Hausa's communal values, prioritizing relationships and kinship.¹⁴ Furthermore, Robert stresses the significant role that cultivating authentic friendships plays for missionaries. Their goal is to create a welcoming environment where people feel comfortable discussing their faith. This approach emphasizes the need for strong personal connections, as research shows that traditional evangelistic

¹⁰ William Olaseinde Ajayi, "Aspects of Protestant Missionary Work in Northern Nigeria, 1887-1910," *Odù: Journal of Yoruba and Related Studies* 3, no. 1 (1967): 40–55.

¹¹ Bruce Bauer, *Adventist Responses to Cross-Cultural Mission: Global Mission Issues Committee Papers Volume 1, 1998-2001*, (2006). accessed June 12, 2024 <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=missions-books>.

¹² F. C. A. Omonokhua, "Fostering Peaceful Coexistence between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria: A Case Study of Interfaith Dialogues," *National Catholic Reporter* 1. no 3 (2018): 14-17

¹³ *Ibid.* 17

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 17-23

methods may not resonate deeply with the Hausa community. This disconnect is largely due to cultural differences and pre-existing perceptions.¹⁵ By prioritizing relationships, missionaries can help bridge those gaps and foster meaningful conversations.

In the same vein, it is historically affirmed that Muslim communities have shown a preference for personal and relational approaches over public or what I may call confrontational methods of religious engagement.¹⁶ The idea of using an incarnation approach is important, especially when considering the thoughts of Langmead, who suggests that contextualization emphasizes the need for mission practices that truly resonate with different cultures. He points out that contextualization means adapting mission messages and methods to fit better the cultural and religious backgrounds of the people being reached.¹⁷

This approach not only respects the Islamic heritage of the Hausa Muslims, but also creates pathways for meaningful dialogue. Similarly, scholars argue that contextualization must go beyond mere translation of language and include an understanding of the cultural narratives, beliefs, and values that shape the community's identity.¹⁸ This study looks at a mission approach that values forming intentional friendships with Hausa Muslims in Uyo. It aims to improve how we understand effective missionary work in areas with different religions. The research

¹⁵Robert, Dana L. Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 35, no. 2 (2011) 100-107, accessed May 16, 2024. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/239693931103500208>

¹⁶ Dretke, *A Christian Approach to Muslims*.

¹⁷ Ross Langmead, "Mission and Contextualization," *Journal of Tribal Studies* 2, no. 1 (1998): 14. Accessed November 7, 2024, <http://www.rosslangmead.com/Downloads/Articles/Contextualisation1998.pdf>

¹⁸ Hesselgrave, D. J., and Doss, G. R., *Understanding World Missions: Linking History, Theology, and Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications., 2018).

shows that friendship can help encourage interfaith dialogue, understanding, and cooperation. It also highlights the need for strategies that respect and connect with the unique beliefs of the Hausa Muslim community in Uyo.

Additionally, in many African countries, particularly Nigeria, studies have shown that traditional public evangelistic campaigns have proven ineffective in reaching the Muslim populations, who may perceive these efforts as external encroachments on their faith and culture.¹⁹ In Uyo, the Akwa Ibom state capital in Nigeria, this global trend is also experienced. The city has a diverse religious landscape, including a significant Muslim minority.²⁰

In line with the Great Commission mentioned in Matthew 28:19-20, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Uyo district has organized multiple public evangelistic campaigns aimed at winning souls for the kingdom of God. Unfortunately, these efforts are yet to draw any attendees from the Hausa Muslim community. This poses a serious question about the effectiveness of the current evangelistic approach and the need for an alternative mission approach tailored to the specific cultural and religious context of Uyo's Hausa Muslim community, and that is the core objective of this study.

The study will do so by understanding the unique cultural and religious dynamics of the Hausa Muslim community in Uyo, and explore a more receptive and culturally sensitive approach to witnessing to the Muslims in the Uyo city. Furthermore, by adopting these alternative strategies, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Uyo district can develop a more inclusive and effective approach to evangelism that respects and understands the Hausa Muslim community's unique

¹⁹ Dretke, *A Christian Approach to Muslims*. 36

²⁰ Ajayi, "Aspects of Protestant Missionary Work in Northern Nigeria."55

context. This tailored strategy has the potential to foster genuine relationships and open doors for sharing the gospel in a culturally appropriate and impactful manner.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, the Seventh-day Adventist church in Uyo district (SDACUD) conducted several public evangelistic campaigns and recorded many conversions to Christianity. However, despite these numerous efforts, there was a noticeable absence of Hausa Muslim participants. This revealed a significant gap in the Church's ability to effectively engage this specific group. Their lack of involvement indicated that the existing evangelistic approaches did not resonate with the cultural, religious, and social dynamics of the Hausa Muslims in Uyo.

To address this gap, the study proposed an alternative mission approach, a friendship-based mission strategy tailored to the Hausa Muslims in Uyo. Rather than evaluating the existing methods, the research focused on developing a contextualized framework grounded in cultural sensitivity and relational engagement. The proposed strategy emphasized the use of hospitality and interfaith dialogue as effective means of building relationships and creating meaningful opportunities to share the gospel in ways that aligned with the worldview and cultural realities of Hausa Muslims in Uyo.

Purpose of the Study

The study focused on a contextualized mission approach for engaging the Hausa Muslims in Uyo, Nigeria. It aimed to develop an alternative mission approach that was context-based for effectively reaching the Hausa Muslims in Uyo. The approach leverages intentional friendship. Also, by understanding the unique cultural, social, and religious context of the Hausa Muslims in Uyo, the study proposed a methodology that fostered genuine relationships and meaningful religious dialogue,

with the intent of helping them become more comfortable exploring the Christian faith.

Significance of the study

This study provided a significant contribution to mission strategy by developing a contextualized mission approach for engaging Hausa Muslims in Uyo. It addressed the pressing need for culturally appropriate evangelism by equipping the local church with the tools that respect the Islamic worldview while effectively communicating the gospel. Also, the personal ministry department will use these contextualized mission approaches to lead Muslims to Christ, furthermore the Adventist-Muslim Relations (AMR) department in our churches will be able to educate members using the findings of this research to relate better with Muslims, and Akwa Ibom Conference (AKC) and other conferences within the territory of eastern Nigeria union conference (ENUC) may adopt these contextualized mission strategies for effective outreach to Muslims. Finally, the study served as a key resource for missionaries and religious leaders seeking to understand and engage Hausa Muslims more thoughtfully. Ultimately, it promotes missional effectiveness, interfaith understanding, and a Christ-centered witness grounded in friendship and cultural sensitivity.

Research Question

The study was guided by the following research questions designed to enhance the focus and structure of the investigation:

1. What is the worldview of the Hausa Muslim community in Uyo?
2. What is the Biblical foundation of the Friendship Mission?

3. What factors influence the decision of Hausa Muslims in Uyo to abstain from participating in public evangelistic campaigns organized by the Seventh-day Adventist Church?
4. What contextualized strategy can be developed to reach the Hausa Muslims in Uyo?

Limitations of the Study

This study faced three potential limitations. Firstly, the research specifically focused on Hausa Muslims in Uyo, Nigeria, which limited the applicability of the findings to other Hausa communities or Muslim groups elsewhere in Nigeria or globally. Secondly, there were up to fifteen settlement groups of Hausa Muslims within Uyo. Not every settlement group had a representative in the sample size due to their distance. The sample size consisted of seven individuals for one-on-one interviews and five for focus group discussions, selected non-randomly from the seven settlement areas in Uyo.

Thirdly, some Hausa Muslims in Uyo (HMU) were unable to communicate fluently in English due to their level of education and, if compelled, may have provided scant details of their religious understanding. Therefore, those individuals were interviewed in pidgin English and later transcribed and translated into standard English for data analysis, during which some meaningful data may have been lost in the process of translation.

Delimitation of the study

The study was limited to male and female Hausa Muslims in Uyo who had lived in the city for the past ten years. Participants were aged eighteen and above. Consequently, the researcher, being a man, may not have been able to relate closely to

Muslim women, due to the sensitive nature of Islamic religious philosophy and ethics. Hence the researcher trained and involved his wife to work with the female participants in the study. But that they may refuse or reject any form of interaction with their wives, will be beyond the control of this work.

Reflexivity

My commitment to exploring effective mission strategies to Muslims, particularly in Uyo, is deeply rooted in my personal experiences, values, and beliefs. I officially began my gospel ministry as a Pastor on February 13, 2011, in what was then the Southeast Conference of the Eastern Nigeria Union Mission (ENUM), now known as ENUC. Prior to this, I served as a Global Mission Pioneer from 2005 to 2010. Throughout my ministry, I have had the privilege of serving as a district pastor in various locations, including Nkwot, Ikot Ekpene, and Eket, as well as a church pastor in Abak and Ikot Abasi.

Over nearly two decades of dedicated service, I have witnessed the conversion of 335 souls to Christ, which is a testament to God's grace. However, I have observed a notable absence of conversions among the Hausa Muslim community in Uyo despite the significant number of Hausa Muslims in this area. This raises a key question: Why haven't traditional evangelism methods like public campaigns successfully converted Muslims? This fascination fuels my desire to learn how to effectively engage with this community. Adopting a more strategic method for missions directed at Hausa Muslims is not just important, but crucial for improving our outreach initiatives in the future. Although my personal experiences might cause some apprehension when interviewing the Hausa Muslims (HMs) in Uyo, I plan to keep my composure throughout this experience. By doing this, I will be able to collect

the most precise and valuable data for analysis and ultimately reach insightful conclusions.

Methodology

This section considers, in a nutshell, the methodology for the study. It includes the research approach and design, population and sampling, data collection procedure and analysis, and ethical considerations.

Research Approach and Design

This research employs a qualitative methodology, which includes diverse methods that allow researchers to explore the social world and gain insights into distinctive ways individuals or communities experience life.²¹ The study adopted a phenomenological research design, a subset of qualitative research, to facilitate a deeper understanding of the participant's religious experiences.²²

Population and Sampling

This study examined the Hausa Muslims residing in Uyo, the capital of Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria. With a population exceeding 1,393,000,²³ Uyo is primarily a Christian city, which also hosts a significant population of Hausa Muslims who had migrated from northern Nigeria, alongside other people groups. The study specifically focused on the Hausa Muslim group. The sample comprised of seven individuals, selected non-randomly from four distinct settlement areas within Uyo, as

²¹ John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SCM Press, 2016), 28.

²² John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (London: Sage Publications, 2018), 13.

²³ "Uyo, Nigeria Metro Area Population 1950-2024," Macrotrends, accessed June 23, 2024, <https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/cities/206379/uyo/population>.

well as five people for a focus group discussion that were selected from two separate settlement areas within Uyo. Hence, a total of twelve participants were selected from five settlement areas for the study.

Data Collection, Procedure, and Analysis

Data were collected depending on the specific research questions to be addressed. Research Question 1 was answered best on the information gathered from previous study done on the Islamic worldview. To answer Research Question 2, about the biblical basis for the friendship approach, data was collected through the library survey of the Bible, covering both the Old and New Testaments to establish a biblical and theological foundation for friendship evangelism. Also, a similar review was conducted to include Ellen G White's insights about the friendship approach to mission.

For Research Question 3, which explored why Hausa Muslims in Uyo did not participate in public evangelistic outreach when invited, data were gathered through interviews and the analysis of documents related to Islamic theology and practice, as well as relevant literature from libraries and online sources. This data helped us create an informed and effective strategy for our mission to reach Hausa Muslims in Uyo.

Consequently, the Hausa Muslims in these categories who were not fluent in English were interviewed in pidgin English, and the data collected was then transcribed²⁴ and translated into English. To ascertain the accuracy of the translation, a back-translation was performed. Depending on the availability of five Hausa

²⁴ "Uyo, Nigeria Metro Area Population 1950-2024," Macrotrends, accessed June 23, 2024, <https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/cities/206379/uyo/population>.

Muslims, a focus group²⁵ discussion was conducted to collect data from them. The data collected from documents, focus group discussions, and interviews of Hausa Muslims (HMs) were analyzed and synthesized using the research questions as a guideline to identify themes and patterns from the analysis.²⁶ The analyzed and synthesized data were used to develop a strategy for Christian missions to Muslims in Uyo.

Ethical Considerations

The study obtained ethical clearance from the Adventist University of Africa Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (AUA-ISERC)²⁷ by submitting its consent form and data collection instruments to them for review and approval. After the approval, all the participants to be interviewed signed the consent form before they were interviewed.

Definition of Terms

This segment of the study defines some terms that are relevant to the study.

Approach: In this study, *approach* refers to a planned and purposeful method or strategy used to engage Hausa Muslims with the gospel. It involves thoughtful steps shaped by cultural understanding, biblical principles, and missiological insight to ensure meaningful and respectful communication of the Christian message.

²⁵ C. Bradbury-Jones, S. Sambrook and F. Irvine, "The Phenomenological Focus Group: An Oxymoron?" *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 65, no. 3, (2009): 663-71. Accessed May 10, 2024. [10.1111/j.1365-2648.2008.04922.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2008.04922.x). 38

²⁶ Saraswati Dawadi, "Thematic Analysis Approach: A Step by Step Guide for ELT Research Practitioners," *Journal of NELTA* 25, no. 1-2 (2020): 62, accessed June 19, 2024 <https://doi.org/10.3126/nelta.v25i1-2.49731>.

²⁷ Adventist University of Africa, Nairobi, Kenya. "Welcome to the AUA Ethics Committee," accessed April 10, 2024, <https://www.aua.ac.ke/ethics-and-review-board/>.

Contextualization is defined as taking all necessary processes to ensure that the gospel of Christ is expressed in a way that is appropriate for insiders and their circumstances.²⁸

Friendship: In this study, friendship refers to a mutual relationship marked by trust, respect, care, and shared experiences. It involves openness, emotional connection, and a willingness to support one another across cultural or religious boundaries.²⁹

Friendship Evangelism: Friendship evangelism can be defined as the intentional sharing of the gospel of Christ by the community of faith through establishing caring relationships with persons who are not part of the community so that they can be converted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Hausa: In this study, *Hausa* refers to an ethnic group predominantly found in northern Nigeria and in other parts of West Africa. They are known for their rich cultural heritage, distinct language (Hausa), and strong Islamic identity, with Islam deeply integrated into their daily life, values, and worldview.³⁰

Intentional Friendship: In this study, intentional friendship refers to a deliberate and strategic effort to build genuine, trust-based relationships with Hausa Muslims for the purpose of sharing the gospel. It emphasizes consistent presence,

²⁸ Burgess, Richard, "Contextualization Among Nigeria's Muslims: An Analysis of Two Missionary Approaches," *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 39, no. 1 (2015): 3–14.

²⁹ David J. Hesselgrave, *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991), 132.

³⁰ Usman Mustapha and Muhammad Abubakar, *Islamic Traditions in Northern Nigeria: Continuity and Change in Religious Practices* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 203.

mutual respect, and cultural sensitivity as a foundation for meaningful witness and relational evangelism.³¹

Missions include a range of targeted initiatives that the church actively engages in to fulfill its missionary work around the world, with a primary focus on sharing the gospel.³²

Muslim: A *Muslim* is a follower of Islam, a monotheistic religion founded on the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad as revealed in the Qur'an. Muslims believe in one God (Allah), observe the Five Pillars of Islam, and strive to live according to Islamic teachings in all aspects of life.³³

Worldview also refers to culturally molded presuppositions that underline how a group of individuals in a society tend to perceive and react to reality.³⁴

Chapters' Outline

Chapter 1 gives introduction of the study, as shown above. Chapter 2 deals with the biblical foundation of this study. Chapter 3 deals with the literature review and chapter 4 will delve into the Methodology of this study. Chapter 5 will submit an analysis of the data and develop a strategy to reach Hausa Muslims with the gospel in Uyo. Finally, chapter 6 will give the summary, conclusion, and recommendations.

³¹ Gordon R. Doss, *Introduction to Adventist Mission* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2018), 45.

³² Craig Ott et al, *Encountering Theology of Mission Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 15.

³³ John L. Esposito, *What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 98

³⁴ Charles H. Kraft, *Issues in Contextualization* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2016), 37.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION OF FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM

This chapter focuses on the biblical teachings on friendship evangelism. Biblical resources will be examined to better understand the mandate for bringing others to faith in Christ through a friendship approach. The importance of friendship evangelism is highlighted. Also, the writings of Ellen G. White are explored for additional perspectives. Friendship evangelism can be defined as the intentional sharing of the gospel of Christ by the community of faith through establishing caring relationships with persons who are not part of the community so that they can be converted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Also, God has always sought an intimate relationship with humankind.¹ Although sin caused a visible break in the relationship between God and humanity, the Lord sought to restore fellowship and communion with lost humankind.

Theological Foundations for Friendship Evangelism

The theological basis for friendship in mission begins in Genesis 3, where, after the fall, God seeks Adam and Eve, asking, “Where are you?” This divine question reveals God’s longing for a restored relationship—a core element of true friendship. Friendship, at its heart, involves mutual desire, presence, and dialogue.

¹ Marcellus Tyrone Robinson, “A Friendship Evangelism Seminar for the Bladensburg Seventh-day Adventist Church,” (DMin diss. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 2008), 55

(Genesis 3:9,15,21) God's call to Abraham highlights His deep concern for all people and serves as an inspiring reminder for the church about its mission. This call is central to God's redemptive work and underscores the importance of outreach as well. Despite the difficulties the Christians face in their attempts to reach the Muslims with the gospel, Claire maintains that it is possible to reach them through friendship.² As earlier mentioned, it appears that Muslims have a special preference for personal witnessing. Also, Claire and David submit that Muslims are the objects of God's love. In no way are Muslims under some special condemnation that places them beyond the reach of that love.³

The move of God to save human beings is identified as tagged in "Missio Dei" or "the mission of God." Thus, the mission is embedded in the very nature of God; the God of the Bible is a missionary God, the one who came to seek and save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). Enoch Wan asserts that; 'the church engages in mission as it is formed and transformed by the triune God whose nature is missional and that the missionary initiative comes from God alone.'⁴ Bosch submits that "Mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God. God is a missionary God by nature."⁵

² Claire L. Adida, David D. Laitin, and Marie-Anne Valfort, "Identifying Barriers to Muslim Integration in France," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 107, no. 52: 22384–90, accessed May 10, 2024 <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1015550107>.

³ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁴ Enoch Wan and Linda Gross, "Christian Missions to Diaspora Groups: A Diachronic General Overview and Synchronic Study of Contemporary USA," *Global Missiology English* 3, no 4 (2006): 1–22. Accessed September 1, 2024 <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.14248.70409>

⁵ Livingston, "David Bosch an Interpretation of Some Main Themes in His Missiological Thought."

Friendship in the Old Testament

A careful examination of the Old Testament reveals that friendship play pivotal role in God’s redemptive engagement with humanity. The bible does not merely present friendship as a social arrangement but as a divine strategy through which God advances salvific mission. One of the earliest and most profound examples is the friendship between God and Abraham. In Isaiah 41:8, God refers to Abraham as “my friend” (*'ahav*), emphasizing the personal and covenantal nature of their relationship. This divine-human bond was deeply missional.

God called Abraham not only for personal fellowship but to be the father of a nation through whom “all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen. 12:3). This promise finds its missiological echo in the New Testament, where Paul affirms that “Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham” (Gal. 3:8). The scriptural preservation of these relationships is intentional, showcasing God’s method of working through relational bonds.⁶ As Christopher J. H. Wright explains, God’s mission is carried out through people in relationship, personal, communal, and covenantal. Abraham’s friendship with God was not an isolated spiritual experience but a model of how God partners with individuals to fulfill a broader redemptive purpose.⁷

Another powerful example is the friendship between God and Moses. In Exodus 33:11, the text says, “The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.” This extraordinary statement reveals the depth of relational intimacy between God and Moses (Exod 4:10–16; 7:1–2; 32:1–35). This face-to-face

⁶ The Holy Bible, New International Version (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:8.

⁷ Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible’s Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 221.

communion became the platform for delivering the law, leading Israel, and establishing the covenant at Sinai. Moses' friendship with God was critical for Israel's identity and mission. His intercession on behalf of the people (e.g., Exod 32:11-14) reflects not just leadership, but deep covenantal advocacy rooted in relational trust. In many ways, Moses prefigures Christ, the ultimate intercessor and friend of sinners (John 15:13–15).

Another powerful example of friendship's theological importance is seen the relationship between Ruth and Naomi. Ruth, a Moabite widow, chose to accompany her Israelite mother-in-law, Naomi, despite cultural and national differences. Her famous words “Where you go I will go... Your people will be my people and your God my God” (Ruth 1:16)—reflect loyalty and a deep covenantal alignment with Naomi and Yahweh. This act of steadfast love (*hesed*)⁸ resulted in Ruth's integration into the covenant community of Israel and her inclusion in the Messianic lineage (Matt. 1:5). As Daniel I. Block notes, Ruth's story is a literary and theological gem that celebrates God's providence through faithful human relationships.⁹

Additionally, the friendship between David and Jonathan stands as a model of covenantal loyalty that was critical to the unfolding of God's plan. The text notes that “the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David” (1 Sam. 18:1), and their mutual commitment is further solidified through a covenant (1 Sam. 20:16 -17). Jonathan's protection of David ensured the survival of God's chosen king and preserved the Davidic line. These narratives collectively affirm that God often works through friendship to carry out His redemptive purposes.

⁸ “Hesed” is the Hebrew term commonly used to denote covenantal loyalty, steadfast love, and mercy, integral to God's covenant relationship with His people.

⁹ Daniel I. Block, *Judges, Ruth*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 608–609.

Furthermore, the mentorship between Elijah and Elisha (1 Kgs 19:19–21; 2 Kings 2) reflects a prophetic friendship that facilitated the transmission of divine mission (2 Kgs 2:1–14). Elisha's loyalty to Elijah, even in his final moments, reflects a relational bond that went beyond institutional succession. Elisha's repeated refusal to leave Elijah "As surely as the LORD lives... I will not leave you" (2 Kgs 2:2, 4, 6)—indicates a covenant-like loyalty. The double portion of Elijah's spirit that Elisha received was not just a spiritual inheritance, but a continuation of divine mission through relational fidelity.¹⁰ Friendship here preserves prophetic witness and extends God's redemptive work.

Though often remembered for their failures, Job's friends (Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar) initially practiced true friendship. Job 2:11–13 records that they sat in silence with Job for seven days, mourning with him. This empathetic act of presence illustrates the pastoral aspect of friendship. However, their error came when they prioritized dogma over relationship. Their story warns against a theology that lacks empathy and shows that friendship, when rightly practiced, can be a conduit of God's compassion (Job 2:11–13; 42:7–9).

Whether through Abraham's faith, Ruth's loyalty, or Jonathan's support for David, these relational dynamics become conduits of divine action. Far from being marginal, friendship in the Old Testament functions as a theological and missiological motif that reflects the heart of God's mission to restore humanity to Himself, as Roger observed that salvation is possible only through God's design.¹¹ Also, the account of Genesis chapter three reveals that God Himself initiated the course of saving

¹⁰ Ibid. 609

¹¹ R. Hedlund, "Mission Paradigms in the Old Testament," *Indian Journal of Theology* 1, no. 3, (1995): 24–34. Accessed August 19, 2024. <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dmin/658/>

humanity from the course of sin. Also, the basic element of friendship is longing for each other.

God, in the beginning, sought out Adam and Eve in the garden after their disobedience; ever since, God has been on the business of seeking sinful mankind. Interestingly, the origin and initiation of the covenant relationship are fully grounded and secured in God. Through the covenant relationships with humanity, God initiates dialogue with humankind as a friend speaking to a friend. These components of friendship evangelism are revealed in the covenant relationship between the Lord and Noah, Abraham, Moses, the prophets, and His people, Israel, in the Old Testament.

Missiological Reflection

The Old Testament shows that God's mission is based on relationships. He doesn't work alone but chooses to carry out His plans through friendships built on trust and covenant. From the beginning, God walked with Adam, called Abraham His friend, and spoke with Moses face-to-face, showing that friendship is key to His work. Abraham, Moses, and Elijah teach us that a close relationship with God leads to a life of mission and service. Ruth's loyalty to Naomi also shows how faithful friendship can cross cultural and religious boundaries.

Jonathan's support for David and Elisha's loyalty to Elijah, reveal how strong relationships help keep God's purposes alive. In all these stories, God is the one who takes the first step. He invites people into friendship with Him, not just to bless them, but to use those relationships to bless others. Friendship in the Old Testament is not just background; it is central to how God works. God's mission often begins, grows, and continues through simple, faithful friendships.

Friendship Evangelism in the New Testament

In the New Testament, there are numerous modes of sharing the gospel in order to reach out to people. Among the notable ones is that of friendship evangelism, which Christ Himself practiced throughout His earthly ministry. One of the striking statements Jesus makes is found in Luke 19:10, where He said, “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” In simple terms Jesus is saying He came to build back friendship with the lost sheep of Israel in order to win them back to God. His approach to ministry was irresistible as its central theme was “love” for the undeserving.

He mingled with people of all classes, drawing them to a closer relationship with Him.¹² Even the likes of the Pharisees, who plotted to eliminate Him, could not be left out, as it can be seen in one of them named Nicodemus (John 3). Christ indeed was a friend concerned with the wholistic being of individuals. Moreover, in emulating the Savior, the apostle Paul, among many, can be singled out as a great advocate of friendship evangelism. Hence, his mode of evangelizing left a challenge to followers of Christ in his time to this day on how to carry out a viable ministry. Friendship evangelism, commonly referred to as relational evangelism, focuses on sharing the Christian faith within the framework of personal relationships and friendships. This approach is grounded in several passages of the New Testament, highlighting its significance as an effective evangelism method.

Jesus’s Methods of Evangelism

Christ utilized multiple methods of witnessing. For example, in Luke 5:3-11, a crowd gathered around Jesus, prompting Him to teach while standing in a boat. This

¹² Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1942), 143.

can be viewed as a form of public evangelism. However, one of the most notable methods is friendship evangelism. This approach involves establishing relationships with individuals, identifying their felt needs, and addressing those needs to meet their spiritual requirements, as Ellen G White rightly put it, “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’”¹³

This strategy has proven significant in reaching entire communities effectively. A particularly insightful example of friendship evangelism in the New Testament is the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well in John 4:1-26. The following section delves into this passage to explore the concept of friendship evangelism.

Context of the Passage

In chapter 4:1-3, John provides the rationale for Jesus' departure from Judea as He journeyed to Galilee. Jesus sought to avoid conflict with the Pharisees, who were closely scrutinizing the activities of both Him and John the Baptist. Although He was not one to evade confrontation when it was in accordance with the Father's will, Jesus recognized that the time for a direct engagement with the Jews regarding His mission had not yet come. The source of contention in this passage arose from the Pharisees' attempt to instigate a rivalry between Jesus and John concerning the number of baptisms being performed in their ministries. In John 4:2, it is clarified that while Jesus Himself was not baptizing, His disciples were carrying out that task. To avert

¹³ Ibid.,143.

unnecessary conflict in ministry and to remain focused on His primary objective "the salvation of humanity," Jesus chose to leave Judea and travel northward to Galilee.

Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman as recorded in verses 4-8

Jesus decided to pass through Samaria to Galilee (v. 4). This determination had nothing to do with resources. Travelers had built up a well-utilized course among Galilee and Judea that circumnavigated the area of Samaria.¹⁴ It could be understood that Christ's decision to pass through Samaria was both shocking and provocative in the context of the relational issues between the Jews and the Samaritans at that time. Upon Jesus' entering the city of Sychar with his disciples, Jesus stopped at the water well (v. 7) that had historical and religious significance to both the Jews and the Samaritans.

However, it is here that He met a Samaritan woman and He initiated a discussion with her. His choice to travel through Samaria was considerably questionable and provocative to his disciples. Because tradition had directed and informed that Jews and Samaritans cannot blend. For a Jewish man to converse with a Samaritan woman was viewed as unfathomable and improper. This made a little difference to Jesus, and He started conversing with her.

Cultural and Social Barriers (John 4:9-10)

He initiated conversation by asking her for water. No doubt about it, however, this was no little inquiry, "because it was viewed as unthinkable for Jews to drink from a similar vessel as Samaritans."¹⁵ His behavior towards this woman was

¹⁴ Craig L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2001), 25

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 100

“radically counter-cultural.”¹⁶ However, Jesus was setting up an incentive for the woman. He was affirming to her that she was worthy and that He had something significant to offer her, and that He could be honored by her taking part in the relationship.

The enmity between the Jews and Samaritans was vivid, and Jesus ‘request for water meant abandoning the Jewish tradition. This is seen in verse 9, just how can Jesus, a Jew, ask a Samaritan for a drink? But Jesus reply in vs. 10 corrects the woman’s posed question in v. 9 that the “encounter with him means a radical reversal of normal standards: man, for all his possessions, is in truth poor, and Jesus’ poverty only conceals the riches of his gift.”¹⁷ For man to attain God’s riches, two requirements are prescribed—a realization of man’s emptiness and self-realization. The other one is the ability to recognize God whenever man has an encounter with Him. “Yet the knowledge may precede the recognition, since there is knowledge of God’s gift which precedes natural receipt of the gift a questioning, waiting knowledge, which contains the prior understanding from which, the encounter with the revealer, recognition springs.”¹⁸

As the discussion advanced, Jesus delicately prepared his language with profound truth. He discussed the concept of the “living water” with her. When she concentrated on religion and culture, he concentrated on friendship. He tenderly tested with this profound truth, engaging her inquisitiveness. The reader needs to note an accentuation posed by Jesus as He replied the woman and said to her: “If you knew

¹⁶Craig L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John’s Gospel*, 100

¹⁷ Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, The Johannine Monograph Series 1 (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014), 178.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 178.

the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink’, you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water” (John 4:10).¹⁹ According to Jewish tradition, the woman was not deserving of Jesus' time simply because she was a Samaritan, and being a woman was a second strike. But Jesus took the time and the activity to converse with this wicked woman about the living water. He did not prohibit her from offering her this blessing.

Jesus the Contextualized Theologian (John 4:15-18)

“I have no husband” (John 4:17, NIV). This response indicated that the woman claimed to be single. It carried dual undertones: the first being her attempt to hide the sinful life she led, while the second was a tease directed at Jesus. Jesus immediately counters this by addressing the woman with sympathy and concern for her past wrongdoing. The mention of five husbands might suggest that none of the five men had made a legitimate commitment to her.

The woman tried to cover up the wrongness of her unlawful physical relationships and insubordination, which led to unethical behavior that was both dangerous and wrong (Gen 38:24; Exod 22:16; Deut 22:13-29; 1 Thess 4:3). However, Jesus demonstrated His divine omniscience by revealing the woman's secrets, affirming, “you spoke truly,” when she admitted to having no husband. Jesus reaches out to her by asking for water and expressing concern about her social status, an issue that had troubled her for a long time. Craig observes that Jesus' refusal to be deterred by her “gender, ethnicity, and moral reputation” affirms that He was a savior to and for all, thereby providing a model for mission today.²⁰

¹⁹ Ibid., 112

²⁰ Craig L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel*, 100.

From the study, Jesus' interaction with the woman in this passage in relation to friendship evangelism, some principles emerge. A few critical ones are identified here. First, Jesus sought ways to facilitate his ministry to this woman by asking for water from her. Second, Jesus took an interest in the woman's social life. He did not just begin by presenting His mission but sought to engage the woman in an area of her life that had troubled her. These kinds of approach enabled Him to present himself and his mission. One may also observe from this passage that because of the cordial approach towards this woman, the cultural barriers that had existed between the Samaritans and the Jews were bridged to facilitate the communication of the gospel.

Paul and Friendship Evangelism (1 Cor 9:19-22)

Became a Slave. A second NT text that could provide some insights on friendship evangelism is 1 Corinthians 9:19-22, where Paul said he was all things to all men that he may win some. Paul says he made himself a servant to all (v. 19). The discussion of this passage will be illuminated by reference to Paul's missionary activities in Acts of the Apostles. The word "servant" in Greek δούλος in 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 intends to make a captive of, lessen to subjugation; figuratively give oneself entirely to the master's bidding and servitude, as well as making themselves their servant. It happened by way of becoming a "slave multiple times, bring into subjugation multiple times, be under servitude, given, and make worker."²¹

In this unique circumstance, Paul gives himself completely to the services and needs of the targeted persons. As it were, he needed to be one with the people he needed to evangelize. Thus, he was implying a self-imposed bondservant. He found joy in being a bondservant for his master with no remuneration or benefit. "Because

²¹ Spiros Zodhiates and Warren Baker, eds., *Hebrew-Greek Key Word Study Bible: King James Version* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG, 1991), 17-18.

he is compelled to do as such, he was happy to consent to the propensities, customs, and assessments of others beyond what many would consider possible, without trading off principle.”²² In light of this, Paul alluded to himself as “a nurse and a father” as stated in 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8, 10-11. Just like it uniquely seemed to be, Paul wanted to be near those he needed to witness to through friendship. He made it known that he was not far off from them. He resembled an attendant to serve them and a father who loves them so beyond a reasonable doubt. Paul’s anxiety for souls is only vast in each element of evangelism through friendship.

Paul repeatedly told his companions of the relationship he had with them in the Lord, and he referred to himself as “a nurse and a father.” The Greek word “αγαπητός, which implies beloved or cherished, is related to the labor by a nurse τρόπος and a father πατήρ.”²³ Generally, a father implies love, assurance, haven, provisions, as well as personality for a family. Fathers normally provide leadership in the family as well as take care of the family. These three words utilized in the text show how Paul identified with the believers and non-believers. He saw the need to try and be nearer than a companion so as to evangelize them. Genuine nurses are thoughtful and caring, so are genuine fathers for their children, as is Paul in witnessing through friendship to them.

The witness expressed incidentally that in the interaction between himself and the people, “regardless of their ethnic background, constantly showed awareness of Paul’s obligation to the Lord.”²⁴ This was all done to gain souls for the savior because

²² *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (SDABC), ed. Francis D. Nichol (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1978), 73.

²³ Zodhiates and Baker, 16-18.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 18

he had acknowledged obeying Jesus and as he went on God's errands. He embraced those who did not know the law by partnering with them and giving them the chance to win many for Christ. He adapted to all their condition to win them for Christ.

All Things to All Men

In terms of religious practice, Paul emphasizes that evangelism often manifests itself as friendship.²⁵ Without this understanding, one might miss the significance of training disciples for Christ. By stepping outside of his comfort zone, Paul became a “συγκοινωνός,” a collaborator and friend, working to gain the trust of others and ultimately lead them to discipleship with his Lord.²⁶ This suggests that establishing a friendship is crucial for building a relationship between those being sought for Christ and the Church. Paul's adaptability allowed him to approach ministry in a balanced manner, particularly regarding matters that did not conflict with core principles.

Nevertheless, he firmly stood his ground on issues of principle and never wavered. His ultimate objective in adjusting to the lifestyles of his target audience was to win some of them to Christ. Some principles are also obvious for friendship evangelism from our study of Paul's approach in 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 and illustrated from some facets of ministry in the works of other apostles. Friendship evangelism requires willingness to adapt or contextualize the gospel, identify with the audience's challenges and weaknesses. However, faithfulness to the core elements of the gospel is an imperative. Ellen White is one the pioneers in the Seventh-day Adventist church who championed friendship evangelism.

²⁵*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (SDABC), ed. Francis D. Nichol (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1978), 73.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

Ellen G. White and Friendship Evangelism

Ellen G. White has been considered by many to have written much on friendship evangelism. White identified a few elements and opportunities of friendship evangelism. These include breaking hindrances, developing relationships, expectations, and confidence. This section presents and briefly discusses some of her statements on these aspects.

Barrier Breaker

Over time, the service does meet with human obstacles and boundaries.

This can be physical or spiritual at the point when the message of God meets with restriction; God gives it extra power, so that it might have more remarkable impact. Blessed with divine vitality, it will carve its way through the most grounded hindrances and triumph over each obstacle.²⁷

Furthermore, these obstacles are prevalent to numerous believers since Christ also encountered them in His ministry.

Commenting on this, Ellen White opines that to accomplish a leap forward into unwelcoming territories, fellowship is essential. The workers of God, through friendship while presenting the gospel, should remember that hindrances will exist, yet they can be overcome by creating a favorable climate of friendship. The workers of the Lord will be revitalized by Him to harvest for Christ. It is only required by the workers to be friendly to the people they intend to reach out in order for these spiritual or physical boundaries to be broken.²⁸

²⁷ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1946), 20.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

Deepens Relationship, Faith, and Hope

The production of empowering relations extends confidence, besides developing everlasting expectations in individuals.²⁹ This should be possible when we meet them where they are and attempt to give reality clearness. White suggests: “Figure out how to encounter the individuals in their context. Try avoiding topics which stimulate contention, leave not your guidance alone of a character to confound the mind.”³⁰ Essentially, the focus is to attract the individual’s attention. Reality, when exhibited in a well-disposed way expels enmity and builds up harmony. White considers this as extraordinary as well as serious labor where everybody should be involved.

Conclusion

The evidence from the Old and New Testament passages chosen for this research on friendship evangelism indicated that this type of evangelism method involves drawing nearer to the community being evangelized. The technique attracts mankind closer to the Lord. It was observed that Christ adopted a friendship technique for witnessing to the Samaritan woman. Also, Apostle Paul utilized it in his ministry. And Ellen G. White encouraged believers on the significance of friendship evangelism. Therefore, Christ followers need to utilize this method of evangelism to enhance their efforts of reaching those who have not found the Lord, including Muslims.

²⁹ Ibid., 20.

³⁰ Ibid., 20.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines the current literature on friendship evangelism, specifically highlighting its principles and methods for engaging the Hausa Muslims in Uyo. It aims to offer a thorough understanding of this evangelistic approach's theoretical and practical elements.

Definition of Friendship Evangelism

Friendship evangelism is a term used in Christian contexts to describe the practice of building relationships with people of other faith communities to share one's faith.¹ Also, friendship evangelism has been identified as a genuine and effective method of sharing the Christian faith in a relational and non-confrontational manner.²

According to Timothy M. Monsma and Paul Hiebert, the friendship evangelism approach emphasizes the importance of authentic relationships and the contextualization of evangelism within the cultural and social contexts of individuals.³

¹ Emilio Abdala Dutra, "A Discipleship Model for Evangelism in Northeast Brazil," (DMin diss. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 2005), 55.

² Robinson, "A Friendship Evangelism Seminar for the Bladensburg Seventh-Day Adventist Church."

³ Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008),

It can be seen as a respectful way to engage in evangelism, focusing on building trust and mutual understanding before discussing matters of faith.⁴

Also, Richardson discusses friendship evangelism within the broader context of Christian missions, emphasizing the role of trust and mutual respect in effective evangelistic efforts. He advocates a relational approach prioritizing understanding and dialogue over persuasion and conversion.⁵ However, some scholars critique friendship evangelism for potentially blurring the lines between genuine friendship and the instrumental use of relationships for proselytization purposes.⁶

Critics argue that this approach may sometimes lead to shallow or insincere relationships if the primary motive is conversion rather than genuine care and friendship. Also, Frost and Hirsch critique traditional friendship evangelism for its potential to create "friendship bubbles" that insulate Christians from engaging with the broader society.⁷ They advocate for a missional approach that integrates everyday life with intentional acts of witness and service, aiming to authentically embody the gospel in all aspects of life, which creates opportunities for interaction.⁸

⁴ Timothy M. Orr, *Are Christian College Students Equipped to Share Their Faith with Their Muslim Friends? A Plan of Action* (Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University, 2016), 13, accessed April 22, 2024 <https://search.proquest.com/openview/3b96d414fb7f353c8fc8a3a8602f74b9/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>.

⁵ Alan Richardson, *An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament*, 1958, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958).

⁶ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*.

⁷ Alan Hirsch and Michael Frost, *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2001).

⁸ *Ibid.*, 56.

Principles of Friendship Evangelism

Building Genuine Relationships

This first principle emphasized is placed by Bowen on the importance of authentic relationships as a foundation for friendship evangelism. He further highlights that genuine friendship, characterized by mutual respect and love, creates a natural context for sharing the Gospel,⁹ particularly with specific people groups of Hausa Muslims. Similarly, Pippert mentioned the role of vulnerability in building genuine relationships. She believes that sharing personal struggles and being open about one's faith journey can foster deeper connections and create opportunities for meaningful spiritual conversations.¹⁰ She emphasizes the importance of personal storytelling in building genuine connections for evangelism.¹¹ Wright underscores the importance of relational integrity, stressing that evangelism should not be manipulative. He argues that genuine relationships, characterized by honesty and transparency, build trust and provide a credible witness to the gospel.¹²

Also, Stott emphasizes that authentic relationships involve listening and understanding before sharing the gospel. He asserts that genuine friendships built on empathy and interest in others pave the way for effective evangelism.¹³ Jerram in agreement with Stott asserts that effective friendship evangelism is built on trust and

⁹ John Bowen, *Evangelism for Normal People: Good News for Those Looking for a Fresh Approach* (New York: Augsburg Fortress, 2002), 33.

¹⁰ Rebecca Manley Pippert, *Out of the Saltshaker and into the World: Evangelism as a Way of Life* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 2021). 23,

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010). 33

¹³ John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015).

respect, adding that, building trust with individuals from different faith backgrounds requires a sincere interest in their lives and beliefs, fostering an environment where open and honest conversations about faith can occur.¹⁴

Similarly, Willard discusses the importance of authentically living out the Christian faith in everyday interactions. He suggests that when Christians embody the teachings of Jesus in their lives, it naturally attracts others and opens doors for sharing the gospel.¹⁵ Rebecca Manley Pippert, in line with Willard, adds that practitioners of friendship evangelism advocate for living out Christian values as a testament to one's faith. She argues that demonstrating the love and teachings of Jesus through actions often speaks louder than words, making the gospel more attractive to non-believers.¹⁶

Hirsch focuses on the missional aspect of relationships, suggesting that everyday interactions and friendships are mission opportunities. He emphasizes the need for Christians to be deeply embedded in their communities, living out their faith in tangible ways that naturally lead to sharing the gospel.¹⁷ Butterfield, who came to faith through genuine friendships, also advocates for hospitality and intentional relationship-building. She submits that welcoming others into our lives and homes reflects Christ's love and creates a conducive evangelistic environment.¹⁸

¹⁴ Jerram Barrs, *The Heart of Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005).34

¹⁵ Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus's Essential Teachings on Discipleship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014). 35

¹⁶ Pippert, *Out of the Saltshaker and into the World*, 2021.

¹⁷ Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Apostolic Movements* (Brazos Press, 2016).

¹⁸ Rosaria Butterfield, *The Gospel Comes with a House Key: Practicing Radically Ordinary Hospitality in Our Post-Christian World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018).

Hospitality in Christian Perspective

Alexander Strauch postulates that hospitality is not merely entertaining friends, but a powerful tool for spreading the gospel. He emphasizes that by opening our homes to others, we embody Christ's love and create opportunities for meaningful conversations about faith.¹⁹ Also, Butterfield, in agreement with Strauch advocates for radical hospitality as a means to engage non-believers. She suggests that Christians should invite strangers and those with different beliefs into their homes, fostering genuine relationships where faith discussions can naturally arise.²⁰

However, Butterfield laments that hospitality is becoming an almost a forgotten Christian virtue in our style of life today, particularly in big cities with their rampant crime on the streets, their locked-in apartments, and all their affluent, urban, and bourgeois devices that attempt to create privacy in our homes and our lives. She also points out that in the New Testament, hospitality was a distinctive mark of Christians and Christian communities.²¹

She added that one of the most prominent features in the picture of early Christianity, which is so rich in good works, is undoubtedly its hospitality.²² One of the common themes in the literature is the connection between Christian hospitality and the concept that God Himself who is the ultimate host who also shows hospitality to humanity both in creation and redemption. In this way, God's hospitality is both a

¹⁹ Alexander Strauch, "Building Loving Christian Community Building Bridges to Friends and Neighbors," 1993, accessed September 16, 2024, <https://www.biblicaleldership.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/SampleChapters-the-hospitality-commands.pdf>.

²⁰ Rosaria Butterfield, *The Gospel Comes with a House Key: Practicing Radically Ordinary Hospitality in Our Post-Christian World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018). 13

²¹ Ibid. 15

²² Rosaria Butterfield, *The Gospel Comes with a House Key: Practicing Radically Ordinary Hospitality in Our Post-Christian World*.

motivation for the believer's hospitality and an example to follow. In other words, God encourages His followers to practice hospitality without expecting material benefits.²³

Furthermore, Christine Pohl opines that the distinctive quality of Christian hospitality is that it offers a generous welcome to the 'least,' without concern for advantage or benefit to the host. Such hospitality reflects God's greater hospitality that welcomes the undeserving, provides the lonely with a home, and sets a banquet table for the hungry.²⁴ Similarly, Longkumer asserts that "hospitality invites others to experience the redemptive hospitality of God."²⁵ Fleming submits that Christian hospitality is an outworking and a reflection of God's hospitality.²⁶

Bramblet, in agreement with Fleming, argues that the hospitality of God is described as being revealed through creation, His dealings with His people in the Old Testament, the mission of Jesus Christ, and the ultimate promise of the kingdom of God. In the creation account, God prepares a safe home (the garden of Eden) with abundant provision before creating humanity as His guests.²⁷ Furthermore, Bramblet concludes that it is in response to the hospitable nature of God that His people are to welcome strangers and make them guests. He maintains, that "It is becoming clear

²³ Pippert, *Out of the Saltshaker and into the World*, 2021.

²⁴ Christine D. Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2024),

²⁵ Bendanglemla Longkumer, "Hospitality as a Paradigm in Integral Mission: An Ecumenical and Indigenous Exploration," *QUEST: Studies on Religion & Culture in Asia* 4, 2020, accessed May 22, 2024, <https://www.theology.cuhk.edu.hk/quest/index.php/quest/article/view/81>.

²⁶ Jody B. Fleming, "Spiritual Generosity: Biblical Hospitality in the Story of Lydia (Acts 16:14–16, 40)," *Missiology: An International Review* 47, no. 1 (January 2019): 51–63, accessed June 13, 2024 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091829618794942>.

²⁷ Philip D. Bramblet, "Do Not Neglect to Show Hospitality to Strangers: Developing and Implementing a Program of Home Hospitality at Furnace Creek Baptist Church," (PhD diss. Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, 2024): 86.

that, as Christians, there is a requirement to welcome strangers and care for them, which is a reminder of God’s hospitality toward us.”²⁸ These fits with a basic principle of the Scripture, that believers ought to treat others the way God has treated them in Christ. For example, Ephesians 5:1-2 says, “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (ESV).²⁹ Where the culture shows hostility to believers, the church shows hospitality to one another.³⁰

Cross-Cultural Communication

Cross-cultural communication is another aspect of the principle of friendship evangelism. Culture is the framework within which God works out his purposes.³¹ Culture forms an inseparable part of the context and the content of the word.³² Kim submits that the book of Daniel is full of cultural aspects that illustrate how God uses culture to communicate his salvific purpose in a cross-cultural setting efficiently.³³ Ting submits that cross-cultural communication involves interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds, recognizing the differences and similarities between cultures, and effectively conveying messages across cultural boundaries.³⁴

²⁸ Bramblet, “Do Not Neglect to Show Hospitality to Strangers.” 13

²⁹ Ibid. 13

³⁰ Pohl, *Making Room*. 19

³¹ Sung Ik Kim, *Proclamation in Cross-Cultural Context: Missiological Implications of the Book of Daniel* (Seoul, Korea: Sahmyook University Press, 2006).

³² Ibid., 35.

³³ Ibid., 35.

³⁴ S. Ting-Toomey and Tenzin Dorjee, *Communicating Across Cultures*, 2nd ed. (New York: Guilford Press, 2018), 33

Similarly, Ting maintained that the concept of cross-cultural communication is essential in friendship evangelism, because it helps build relationships based on mutual respect and understanding,³⁵ adding that understanding one's own cultural biases and perspectives and those of the other person is critical. This involves recognizing differences in values, beliefs, norms, and communication styles.³⁶ Also, Kraft in line with Ting, emphasizes the need for missionaries and Christian evangelists to be culturally sensitive. This involves understanding the cultural beliefs, values, and practices of the people they are engaging with.³⁷ By respecting and appreciating cultural differences, missionaries can effectively communicate the gospel in a way that resonates with the local population. According to Ting-Toomey, cultural awareness helps avoid misunderstandings and fosters effective contextualization and communication.³⁸

Cultural Contextualization

Kim asserts that cross-cultural evangelism necessitates a thorough understanding of the cultural context in which one is operating. He emphasizes that this, involves more than simply learning about the beliefs, customs, and practices of the target culture, it also requires the ability to effectively communicate the message of the gospel within that cultural framework. Specifically, this means finding ways to convey the gospel of Christ in a manner that resonates with the Hausa Muslims' perceptions of the demographics of Uyo. He maintained that the book of Daniel, with

³⁵ S. Ting-Toomey, *Communicating across Cultures*, 17–29.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Charles H. Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1996).

³⁸ Ting-Toomey, *Communicating across Cultures*, 2008.

its narrative of faithful living in a foreign culture, offers insights into cultural contextualization for contemporary evangelism approach.³⁹

Similarly, Kraft discusses contextualization, which involves presenting the gospel message in a way that is relevant to the cultural context of the audience. Which may involve using local language, symbols, and metaphors to convey biblical truths.⁴⁰ He further maintained that contextualization is essential for people from diverse cultural backgrounds to understand and embrace the gospel.⁴¹

Pocock stresses the need for cultural sensitivity and contextualization in friendship evangelism.⁴² He underscores the fact that understanding and respecting cultural differences is essential for building trust and communicating the gospel in ways that resonate with individuals from diverse backgrounds.⁴³ Kim further argues that adaptation involves modifying the presentation of Christian beliefs and practices to align with local cultural patterns without compromising core theological principles and adding that this approach enhances the acceptability and accessibility of the gospel message among diverse cultural groups.⁴⁴

³⁹ Kim, *Proclamation in Cross-Cultural Context*, 2006.

⁴⁰ Charles H. Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1996).

⁴¹ Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness*, 1996.

⁴² Michael Pocock, Gailyn Van Rheenen, and Douglas McConnell, *The Changing Face of World Missions: Engaging Contemporary Issues and Trends* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 13-23

⁴³ Ibid. 23

⁴⁴ Sung Ik Kim, *Proclamation in Cross-Cultural Context: Missiological Implications of the Book of Daniel* (Seoul, Korea: Sahmyook University Press Institute for Theological Research, 2006).

Contextualization

The term contextualization has been used by different categories of people with different backgrounds without a proper or full understanding of the term.⁴⁵

However, David J. Bosch explains that the term "contextualization" was first used in the 1970s by the Theological Education Fund. It focused on training and developing people for church ministry. The concept quickly became popular and started to refer to various theological models.⁴⁶

Jeff Vandersfelt in Bosch explains that contextualization means adapting how we share the gospel to fit different cultures. It is important to keep the core message of the gospel while making it relatable to the audience.⁴⁷ These definitions indicate that the gospel should adapt to different cultures while maintaining its original meaning. This resonates well with the Hausa Muslims in Uyo.

Contextual Hermeneutics

This involves the process of interpreting and applying biblical texts in cross-cultural contexts, as it is central to effective evangelism.⁴⁸ Kim identifies how the book of Daniel, written in a context of exile and cultural tension, provides principles for interpreting scripture in ways that resonate with diverse cultural audiences while remaining faithful to its original message.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Burgess, Richard, "Contextualization Among Nigeria's Muslims: An Analysis of Two Missionary Approaches."

⁴⁶David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Missions* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991). 33-57

⁴⁷ Ibid. 57

⁴⁸ Mark S. Williams, "Aspects of High-Spectrum Contextualization in Ministries to Muslims," *Journal of Asian Mission* 5, no. 1 (2003): 75-91.

⁴⁹ Kim, *Proclamation in Cross-Cultural Context*, 2006.

Avoiding Cultural Imperialism

Pocock noted that it is important to avoid imposing one's cultural norms and values on others. Pocock warns against cultural imperialism, advocating instead for a humble approach that seeks to understand and appreciate the cultural context of those being evangelized.⁵⁰ Similarly, Kirsteen emphasizes the importance of cultural sensitivity in friendship evangelism. He discusses how understanding and respecting cultural norms, values, and communication styles are crucial for building authentic and intentional friendships across cultural boundaries.⁵¹ Kim submits that cross-cultural evangelism often involves embodying the message of the gospel in the lived experiences of the missionary or evangelist. This principle, sometimes referred to as incarnational ministry, emphasizes the importance of immersing oneself in the culture of the people being reached, identifying with their struggles and joys, and demonstrating the love of Christ through compassionate action.⁵²

Cultural Adaptation

Kraft advocates for cultural adaptation in mission work. This involves adapting ministry strategies and approaches to fit the cultural context of the target population.⁵³ The above assertion by Kraft resonates with the new approach this study is proposing, which is intentional friendship as a strategy for mission. Because missions are a global enterprise, missionaries must be intentional in humbling themselves by becoming aware of other cultures and also spending time to learn how

⁵⁰ Pocock, Van Rhee, and McConnell, *The Changing Face of World Missions*.

⁵¹ Kirsteen Kim, "Mission Studies in Britain and Ireland: Internationalizing Theology," *Journal of Adult Theological Education* Vol.3, 8, no. 2 (2011): 130–52, accessed May 26, 2024 <https://doi.org/10.1558/JATE.v8i2.130>.

⁵² Kim, *Proclamation in Cross-Cultural Context*, 2006.

⁵³ Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness*, 1996.

life is viewed through another culture and various perceptions of reality.⁵⁴ By being flexible and willing to learn from the local culture, missionaries can effectively communicate the message in a way that resonates with the people they are serving.

Agreeing with Kraft, Ogbonnaya advocates that missionaries and evangelists who engage other people groups with the gospel through friendship should as a matter of necessity, avoid ethnocentrism, the belief that one's own culture is superior can be a significant barrier.⁵⁵ Missionaries and evangelists must strive to overcome this by adopting a learner's posture and being open to different cultural expressions of faith.

The Worldview of the Target Culture

Kraft emphasizes the importance of understanding the worldview of the target culture.⁵⁶ He suggests that missionaries need to engage in worldview analysis to identify cultural barriers to the acceptance of the gospel. By understanding the underlying beliefs and assumptions of the culture, missionaries can effectively communicate the gospel in a way that addresses the worldview concerns of the people they are ministering to.⁵⁷ Consequently, Scheyder observed that Past rejection of missional efforts resulted from the foreignness of the cultural perspective in which it was packaged. He adds that if missionaries of today are to be effective communicators of a universal Gospel message, they must recognize the cultured glasses they bring

⁵⁴ Hannah Scheyder, "Missions Are Local: Looking through the Reality-Defining Spectacles of Culture for Effective Cross-Cultural Gospel Communication." *Lutheran Mission Matters* Vol. 10, 3 no 3, (2022): 263.

⁵⁵ Joseph Ogbonnaya, "African Perspectives on Culture and World Christianity," *Journal of world Christianity*, (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017).95

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵⁷ Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness*, 1996.

with their communication of that message and they must be ready to listen and also learn from the people's cultural lenses to be better missional bridges of cosmic truth.⁵⁸

Listen and Learn

"Listen and learn as a principle of friendship evangelism," stresses the importance of active listening and understanding in the context of sharing one's faith within friendships. This approach suggests that effective evangelism involves genuinely engaging with others, empathetically listening to their perspectives, and learning from their experiences before seeking to share one's own beliefs.⁵⁹ Joseph Cordner and Robert Belton discuss "Listen and Learn" as a foundational principle of friendship evangelism, emphasizing its role in building trust, understanding, and meaningful connections before engaging in discussions about faith.⁶⁰ Similarly, Timothy Tennent, in his theological reflections on evangelism, stresses the importance of relational engagement in sharing the gospel. He suggests that listening actively to the spiritual journeys and questions of others enables Christians to better contextualize their message of faith within the realities and concerns of their friends.⁶¹

Also, Johnson argues that listening and learning from others are essential components of effective friendship evangelism, particularly in contemporary cultural contexts.⁶² He stresses that friendship evangelism often emphasizes listening as a key

⁵⁸ Scheyder, "Missions Are Local."

⁵⁹ Laurence Ewoo Andrews, "Strategy to Evangelize the Ahanta Middle Class" (DMin diss., Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI, 2024), 17-32.

⁶⁰ Joseph Cordner Macaulay and Robert H. Belton, *Personal Evangelism* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2013), 56.

⁶¹ Timothy C. Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church Is Influencing the Way We Think about and Discuss Theology* (Zondervan Academic, 2009).

⁶² Ben Campbell Johnson, *An Evangelism Primer: Practical Principles for Congregations* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1983), .

principle for building bridges and fostering authentic relationships and trust that can lead to spiritual conversations.⁶³ Furthermore, Robinson emphasizes the importance of active listening and empathy in friendship evangelism. This approach involves genuinely listening to others' concerns, joys, and challenges, thereby demonstrating Christ-like compassion and understanding.⁶⁴

Methods of Friendship Evangelism

Friendship evangelism is an approach to sharing one's faith that emphasizes building genuine relationships with others as a means to introduce them to Christian beliefs and values. However, this method contrasts with more direct or confrontational evangelistic strategies, aiming instead to cultivate trust and rapport over time. Here are some methods of friendship evangelism as highlighted by scholars.

Building Authentic Relationships

Sherwood postulates that building authentic relationships depends on understanding cultural changes in this globalized world with diverse cultural norms and beliefs. Also, she adds that cultural understanding and respectful engagement are crucial aspects of effective friendship evangelism today.⁶⁵ It was noted that building authentic relationships as a foundation for mission engagement with other people groups is a concept that resonates across various religious and spiritual teachings.⁶⁶

⁶³ Johnson, *An Evangelism Primer*.

⁶⁴ Robinson, "A Friendship Evangelism Seminar for the Bladensburg Seventh-Day Adventist Church."

⁶⁵ Sherwood G. Lingenfelter, *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008).

⁶⁶ Lingenfelter, *Leading Cross-Culturally*.

While Lingenfelter's perspective focuses on Christian principles, similar ideas can be found in other faith traditions and contemporary discussions on interpersonal relationships.

Similarly, in the context of Buddhism, the Dalai Lama emphasizes the importance of compassion and genuine concern for others as fundamental to building meaningful connections. In his book "The Art of Happiness," co-authored with Howard Cutler, the Dalai Lama discusses how developing empathy and compassion toward others fosters deeper relationships and contributes to personal happiness.⁶⁷

Hanh advocates mindfulness and compassionate living as essential to nurturing genuine relationships. His teachings emphasize deep listening, understanding, and loving-kindness as practices that foster harmony and connection with others. Hanh's writings reflect values of love and compassion akin to those advocated in friendship evangelism.⁶⁸

Also, Brené Brown explores themes of vulnerability, courage, and empathy in her work on human connection. She argues that authentic relationships are built on vulnerability and wholeheartedness, where individuals engage openly and honestly with each other.⁶⁹ Here Brown underscores the importance of authenticity and emotional honesty in fostering meaningful connections, which aligns with the foundational principles of trust and respect in friendship evangelism.⁷⁰ These scholars offer diverse perspectives on building authentic relationships, each emphasizing

⁶⁷ Bstan-'dzin-Rgya-Mtsho and Howard C. Cutler, *The Art of Happiness: A Handbook for Living*, 10th anniversary ed (New York: Riverhead Books, 2009).

⁶⁸ Nhất Hạnh, *The Art of Communicating*, First edition (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2013). 45

⁶⁹ Brené Brown, *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead* (New York: Avery, 2015). 89

⁷⁰ Brown. 91

different aspects such as empathy, mindfulness, vulnerability, and mutual respect. Their insights contribute to a broader understanding of how building genuine and authentic relationships is foundational to friendship evangelism.

Active Listening and Empathy

Aldrich emphasizes the importance of active listening and empathy in friendship evangelism. This approach involves genuinely listening to others' concerns, joys, and challenges, thereby demonstrating Christ-like compassion and understanding.⁷¹

Authentic Witnessing through Lifestyles

Coleman asserts that lifestyle evangelism suggests that one's own life and actions should serve as a testimony to the transformative power of faith. He advocates for kindness and hospitality to one's neighbors and friends which can open door for dialogue. He submits that Jesus' method of discipleship involved living among people and demonstrating God's love through daily interactions and actions.⁷² Learning from Jesus' approach to mission, which was more of friendship and love. Also, looking at it, in the concept of social justice. Ronald J. Sider, known for advocacy on social justice in Christianity, argues that evangelism should not aim at individual salvation only, but also address systemic injustices and demonstrate Christ-like compassion in tangible ways.⁷³

⁷¹ Joe Aldrich, *Lifestyle Evangelism: Learning to Open Your Life to Those around You* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2006).

⁷² Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism, rev. ed.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006). 19

⁷³ Ronald J. Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: Moving from Affluence to Generosity*, 2nd ed., 1 vol. (New York: Thomas Nelson, 2015). 63

Engaging in Meaningful Conversations

Stott opines that friendship evangelism includes intentional conversations about faith.⁷⁴ In his book, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, he stresses the importance of dialogue and understanding in effective evangelism, where believers engage in respectful conversations about faith that are sensitive to the context and needs of the listener.⁷⁵

Additionally, with the rise of digital communication and social media, friendship evangelism has also adapted to include online interactions and digital platforms.⁷⁶ Certainly, in today's world, friendships can be easily developed with the increasing interest in social media. Also, in support of social media as a channel for making new friends, Schultze points out that Christians can leverage digital media to build relationships and engage in meaningful conversations about faith. This approach, he observes, acknowledges the changing landscape of social interaction and communication preferences among younger generations.⁷⁷

Prayer and Dependence on the Holy Spirit

The possibility of everything rests in the able hand of God; the friendship approach to mission depends on the Holy Spirit's leadership, and that is through prayer. Stetzer highlights the role of prayer and dependence on the Holy Spirit in

⁷⁴ John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015). 55

⁷⁵ Ibid. 57

⁷⁶ Quentin J. Schultze, *An Essential Guide to Public Speaking: Serving Your Audience with Faith, Skill, and Virtue* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020). 82

⁷⁷ Ibid. 85

friendship evangelism.⁷⁸ This practice acknowledges that true transformation and conviction come from the work of the Spirit, not merely from human effort.

Evangelism Approaches to Muslims

In this section, different approaches to Muslim evangelism are examined.

The Confrontational/ Debate Approach

For a better understanding of this approach, scholars are consulted, Naynwoka, in his work, shows that polemic or debate dominated many examples of Christian interaction with Muslims during the late Ottoman Empire (1800 to 1918) era.⁷⁹ He continues to say that even though Christian workers had much knowledge of Islam, the majority of them identified Muhammad as the antichrist mentioned in the Bible (1 John 2:18, 22) and called the Qur'an a false book that encourages all manner of fleshly desires.⁸⁰ Also, he submits that this approach is not widely used today. Missionaries such as Henry Martyn, Karl Pfander, and St. Clair Tidall, who tried to win Muslims through public debate, used it in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁸¹ They debated in marketplaces and produced apologetic and polemical English and vernacular literature.⁸²

However, according to Nyagwoka, this approach was never successful in terms of converts, but instead often aroused increased Muslim hostility towards

⁷⁸ Ed Stetzer and Daniel Im, *Planting Missional Churches: Your Guide to Starting Churches That Multiply* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2016).45

⁷⁹ Joseph Bosire Nyagwoka, “*Evangelism and Folk Islam: A Case Study in South Coast of Kenya*” (DTh diss., University of South Africa, Pretoria South Africa, 2017). 11

⁸⁰ Ibid. 12

⁸¹ Ibid. 12

⁸² Ibid. 12

Christians.⁸³ He submits that in the South Coast of Kenya, this approach is still being used by both Christians and Muslims, and it has created a lot of hostility between the two communities.⁸⁴ In some cases, it has resulted in the loss of life and property, more especially when Muslims are defeated in a debate, or are offended in the process. Due to the violent nature of this approach, it is therefore advisable to encourage the evangelists and missionaries to engage the Muslims in intentional friendship evangelism. Phil Parshall in Nyagwoka suggests that instead of missionaries using confrontational discussion with Muslims, they should prioritize the use of a “classic” approach.⁸⁵ The classic approach refers to a generally acceptable way of engaging individuals from other faith groups in a respectful and culturally sensitive approach.

Also, in the twentieth century, another scholar named Schlorff called the debate or polemic approach the ‘direct approach, in the sense that, this approach favors polemic arguments only as the last option, and at the same time, it favors adherence to a non-circuitous presentation of the gospel.⁸⁶ He adds that presenting Christ to a Muslim needs an expert in avoiding arguments and confrontation. Nyagwoka submits that some missionaries are still using this approach, although many avoid it due to the violent nature of the approach.⁸⁷

⁸³ Ibid. 13

⁸⁴ Ibid. 13

⁸⁵ Ibid.14-16

⁸⁶ Ibid. 16

⁸⁷ Ibid.16

Traditional Evangelical Approach

The traditional evangelical approach to Muslims typically involves direct proclamation of the Christian gospel with the aim of converting them to Christ.⁸⁸ This approach is rooted in the evangelical theology, which emphasizes the need for all individuals, including Muslims, to hear and respond to the message of Jesus Christ for salvation. Also, this approach prioritizes the verbal proclamation of the gospel message.⁸⁹ Similarly, this approach is based on biblical teachings such as the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20, where Jesus instructs his disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. Colin Chapman points out that, Evangelical Christians emphasize the urgency of verbal proclamation and conversion as essential elements of their faith and mission.⁹⁰

Nyagwoka observes that this approach was pioneered by Samuel Zwemer from 1867 to 1952 who was known to be the “apostle to the Muslims,” during the early 1890 and 1916.⁹¹ Although, there are advantages and disadvantages to almost everything in life, hence, the disadvantages of this approach used previously outweigh its merits, therefore, there is a need for intentional friendship as a strategy to engage Muslims. Consequently, this approach also poses many challenges to the Muslim converts and the missionary churches as well, because Islamic law forbids them from joining any other religion apart from Islam.⁹²

⁸⁸ Andre’ K. Mickel, “A Discovery of the Evangelization Practices Towards Muslim Doctors by Campus Leaders of the Christian Medical and Dental Associations in the United States” (DMin. diss., Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, OH, 2024).

⁸⁹ Colin Chapman, *Cross and Crescent: Responding to the Challenges of Islam* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 48.

⁹⁰ Chapman, *Cross and Crescent: Responding to the Challenge of Islam*, 49.

⁹¹ Nyagwoka, “Evangelism and Folk Islam,” 15

⁹² Ibid. 26

Critics of this approach say that it is too Western, while the defenders say, it is biblically sound, as they see it from their perspective as sowing the seed that could bear fruit in time. This approach, although said to be too Western, is still being used by some churches in the South Coast of Kenya to evangelize Digo Muslims, however, successful evangelists have not used this approach as a mission strategy.⁹³

Institutional Approach

Many denominational missions used the institutional approach in Muslim countries wherever they are allowed.⁹⁴ They have tried to win Muslims through hospitals, schools, and orphanages, with the assumption that by demonstrating love, kindness, and humility through this approach, the walls of prejudice will break down. Fry and King in Nyagwoka mention that some missiologists say that more teachers, doctors, nurses, and agriculturalists should be sent to Muslim countries, since their deeds will speak louder than words. This approach is still valid in some places where institutions have been established. They are known to help overcome prejudice and win a hearing for the gospel.⁹⁵ However, the flip side of this approach is where there are no such institutions, missions will not be carried out or where it is not allowed, therefore, there should be a simple and effective strategy, hence the need for an intentional friendship approach.

⁹³ Ibid. 35

⁹⁴ Daniel Oyebode Akintola, "Towards New Approaches in Missiological Encounters with Muslims in Northern Nigeria" (MTh Thesis., University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa, 2018).

⁹⁵ Nyagwoka "Evangelism and Folk Islam." 17

Dialogue approach

This approach is known to have been pioneered by Temple Gaidner (1873-1928) and then more fully developed and popularized by Kenneth Gragg (1968).⁹⁶ It is motivated by the sincere love that seeks to reconcile Muslims and Christians.⁹⁷ He further says the approach calls for Muslims and Christians to unite in Christ.⁹⁸ Nicholas maintains that “dialogue involves the principle of open religion; Christianity and Islam open not just to a clearer understanding of their sources but also to truth from each other’s sources and perspectives.”⁹⁹

Similarly, Terry in Nicholas¹⁰⁰ provide four purposes of dialogue, namely:

- (a) To learn what Muslims believe and to appreciate their beliefs about their culture;
- (b) To seek to establish both contact and rapport based on sincere, honest friendship;
- (c) To learn how to witness to them; and
- (d) To ultimately bring them to salvation in Christ.¹⁰¹

However, this approach’s good intentions could be noted to cause problems among Muslims and Christians, as Nasr in Nicholas argues that interreligious dialogue is also at a theological impasse. Muslims have real difficulty with the fact that Christians are reluctant to accept the authenticity of Muhammad as a post-Christ prophet who received a major message from heaven.¹⁰²

⁹⁶ Ibid. 17

⁹⁷ Laurie Fortunak Nichols and Gary Corwin, eds., *Envisioning Effective Ministry: Evangelism in a Muslim Context* (Wheaton, IL: Evangelism and Missions Information Service, 2010). 29

⁹⁸ Ibid. 40

⁹⁹ Ibid., 40.

¹⁰⁰ John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson, eds., *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1998).

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 40.

¹⁰² Ibid. 40

Christians, on the other hand, feel that the Muslims' recognition of Jesus does not cost them anything, a corresponding recognition of Mohammad by Christians would go against everything they are told by the weightiest religious documents in their possession.¹⁰³ Thus, instead of leading to mutual understanding, with many Christians, these consist, once again, portray Islam as the last great enemy to be conquered.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, although this approach seems to be having its own challenges, I am oblivious of as to what extent this approach has been used by the Christian denominations in Uyo, Nigeria, in evangelizing the Hausa Muslims.

Contextual Approach

According to Nyagwoka, this is the approach that portrays a picture where the missionaries attempt by all possible means to become like Muslims for the sake of gospel presentation in religious and cultural forms that Muslims can identify with. Nyagwoka asserts that the contextualization approach means making concepts or ideals relevant in a given situation.¹⁰⁵ Similarly, Nichols and Corwin add that Contextualization is the translation of the unchanging content of the Gospel of the Kingdom into a verbal form that is meaningful to the peoples in their separate cultural groups and within their particular situations.¹⁰⁶ This resonates with the direction of study in order to make the gospel of Christ relevance to the Hausa Muslims in Uyo, who are culturally difference.

¹⁰³ Lydia Bosede Akande and AbdulGafar Fahm Olawale, "Christian-Muslim Relations in Nigeria: Areas of Convergences for Peaceful Coexistence," *Malaysian Journal of Islamic Studies (MJIS)* 7, no. 1 (February 6, 2023): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.37231/mjis.2023.7.1.205>.

¹⁰⁴ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Islamic-Christian Dialogue-Problems and Obstacles to be Pondered and Overcome," *The Muslim World* 88, No. 3-4 (1998): 218–37.

¹⁰⁵ Nyagwoka, "Evangelism and Folk Islam."

¹⁰⁶ Nichols and Corwin, *Envisioning Effective Ministry*.

Nyagwoka gives Massih's views that the contextual approach does not forget "the offense of the gospel" but seeks to avoid the objectionable factor. At the same time, it calls for a change in the missionary lifestyle, worship forms, theological terms, and strategy.¹⁰⁷ He further explains that supporters of contextualization argue that the missionary strategy for Muslim evangelism needs a major overhaul.¹⁰⁸ First, the missionary has to make initial contact with Muslim leaders even if they do not become Christians, hence making him or her reduce the possibility of obvious opposition by befriending them.¹⁰⁹ Secondly, families, relatives, and groups of friends should be the initial conversion goal rather than individuals. Thirdly, in the beginning, only basic theological concepts should be presented and following this concept, adequate time is allowed for the change to take place. And lastly, converts are not to be encouraged to reject Islam, instead, they are allowed to remain in the state in which they were called (see I Corinthians 7:20). By so doing, it might influence their friends to Christianity.¹¹⁰ Contextualized friendship evangelism can be an alternative method of reaching Muslims.¹¹¹

Friendship and Relationship Building Approach

Rebecca opines that one of the effective approaches to Muslim evangelism involves building genuine friendships with Muslims based on mutual respect and

¹⁰⁷ Nyagwoka, "Evangelism and Folk Islam," 43

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 43.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 43

¹¹⁰ Nichols and Corwin, *Envisioning Effective Ministry*.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 14.

understanding.¹¹² This approach emphasizes the potential of a long-term relationship rather than immediate conversion. Friendship can often serve as a bridge for interfaith dialogue and understanding.¹¹³ This method focuses on dialogue, listening, and learning from each other's perspectives, fostering trust and openness.¹¹⁴ Similarly, John Kaltner emphasizes the importance of mutual respect and understanding in interfaith dialogue. Developing friendships with Muslims can create opportunities for learning about each other's religious beliefs and practices in ways that can lead to greater understanding and appreciation.¹¹⁵

This mutual respect forms a foundation for meaningful dialogue that transcends theological differences. Also, on the issues of dialogue and listening in the context, of Christian-Muslim relations, David Ford points out the role of dialogue and active listening in building bridges of understanding.¹¹⁶ Listening is one of the factor that help to keep and grow friendship. Ford further shows that dialogue requires a willingness to listen attentively and respectfully to the beliefs and concerns of others, which can lead to deeper appreciation and empathy in friendship.¹¹⁷ This approach encourages Christians to engage in genuine dialogue that values the perspectives and

¹¹² Rebecca Jepkemei Lagat, "Towards Understanding Mission to Muslims in Kenya: A Missio-Dei Perspective," *Missionalia: Southern African Journal of Missiology* 45, no. 3 (2017): 220–235, accessed May 16, 2024 <https://doi.org/10.7832/45-3-190>.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹¹⁴ Robert L. Dana, "Global Friendship as Incarnational Missional Practice," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 39, no. 4 (October 2015): 180–84, <https://doi.org/10.1177/239693931503900404>.

¹¹⁵ John Kaltner., *Building Bridges: Interreligious Dialogue on the Path to World Peace*. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016). 56

¹¹⁶ David F. Ford, *The Future of Christian-Muslim Relations: Essays in Honor of David Thomas* (Georgetown: Georgetown University Press, 2011).

¹¹⁷ Ford, *The Future of Christian-Muslim Relations*.

experiences of their Muslim counterparts. Hence, this study focuses on friendship evangelism as an alternative and effective strategy and approach to evangelizing Hausa Muslims in Uyo.

The Islamic Worldview

This segment explores the Islamic worldview. It will begin with a brief introduction of Islam as a religion. Then, it will continue with the definition of worldview. Also, it will give the three fundamental principles of the Islamic worldview. The Islamic concept of the universe will be considered. Besides, there will be a section on the Islamic traditions. The Islamic beliefs will then be delineated. Moreover, Islamic culture will be discussed. Finally, some signs and symbols used in the Islamic religion will be outlined, and the Islamic worldview on friendship.

Islamic Religion

The Arabic word “Islam” originally comes from the Arabic term “Salam” (this generates the word Salaam: Peace). It also means “submission to Allah,” Islam means peace attained through voluntary self-surrender to God.¹¹⁸ The prophet Muhammad gave the religion he founded in the seventh century the name Islam.¹¹⁹ There are several sects of the Islamic religion. However, the two largest of these sects are the *Sunni* and the *Shi’a*.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Asni Fahm, “Analysis of the concept of two Kalima Shahadah Al-Tauhid and Al-Risalah according to the Qur’an and Al-Hadith,” *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 7, no. 10, (2017), 374-353, accessed September 1, 2024 <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/FathullahAsni/publication/322715814>

¹¹⁹ Patrick Sookhdeo, *A Christian’s Pocket Guide to Islam* (Scotland: Christian Focus Publisher, 2001), 9.

¹²⁰ El-Sayed El-Aswad, *Muslim Worldviews and Everyday Lives* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2012), 17.

The term "Sunnah" comes from Arabic and refers to the traditions and practices of the Prophet Muhammad. This is why the term "Sunni" is derived from it. Sunni Muslims make up the largest group within Islam, accounting for roughly ninety percent of all followers.¹²¹ Shi'a is second to Sunni. Its believers were Islamic followers whose pioneers supported 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. He was a cousin and son-in-law to Muhammad who was expected to be the fourth caliph but was murdered in AD 661.¹²² Several divisions of the Shi'a sect include the Twelvers, Ismaili, Zaydi, Druz, Nizari, and Bohara. Among these, three are dominant: the Twelvers, Ismailis, and the Zaydis.¹²³

Worldview

Worldview is "a set of basic assumptions about reality, which builds the foundation for our beliefs, values and resulting behavior, hence, culture manifested in behavior patterns."¹²⁴ The Islamic worldview is theistic and ethical. It is theistic because it is a fundamental belief in Islam that God brought life and existence into being. This concept of God is basic to the Islamic worldview.¹²⁵

There are two sources upon which the Muslim worldview is based, the Qur'an and Sunnah.¹²⁶ The literal meaning of the Qur'an is "recitation" or

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Patrick Sookhdeo and Christopher Bedloe, *A Christian's Pocket Guide to Islam* (Christian Focus, 2001),

¹²³ El-Aswad, *Muslim Worldviews and Everyday Lives*.

¹²⁴ P. G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*.

¹²⁵ Muhammad Abdullah and Muhammad Junaid Nadvi, "Understanding the Principles of Islamic Worldview," *The Dialogue* Vi, no. 3, 270.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 271.

“readings.”¹²⁷ Muslims believe that Muhammad received the Qur’an directly from God, while Sunnah consists of tradition about the lifestyles of the prophet Muhammad recorded in the hadith.

Hadith are records of Muhammad’s teachings, deeds, and sayings as noted by his friends.¹²⁸ In Islam, the Holy Qur’an is the final revelation for humankind. Also, the prophet Muhammad sealed all prophets (Qur’an 33:40).¹²⁹ Islam is not just a set of beliefs and religious rituals; it represents a complete civilization. It includes faith, practices, legal systems, and moral guidelines that tackle ethical dilemmas. Furthermore, it functions as a political entity, a cultural system, and a means for spiritual development.¹³⁰

The Three Fundamental Principles of the Islamic Worldview

The Islamic worldview is founded on three core principles: *Tawhid* (Theism), *Khalifah* (Vicegerency), and *‘adalah* (Justice).¹³¹

Tawhid (Monotheism)

This principle emphasizes the belief in Allah as the sole deity. Allah is the creator the supreme ruler of the universe, omnipotent, omnipresent, and sustainer of

¹²⁷ Michael D. McCullar, *A Christian’s Guide to Islam* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Pub., 2008), 23.

¹²⁸ Muhammad Abdullah and Muhammad Junaid Nadvi, “Understanding the Principles of Islamic Worldview,” 271.

¹²⁹ Mohamed Aslam Mohamed Haneef, “Islam, the Islamic Worldview and Islamic Economics,” *IJUM Journal of Economics & Management* 5, no. 1 (1997): 42.

¹³⁰ Awoniyi, Peter Ropo, “The Phenomenon of Islam in Contemporary Nigeria and National Development.” In *Christian-Muslim Relations in West Africa*, edited by Sawwini, N. and Ayegboyin, D. (Ibadan, Nigeria: Baptist Press, 2012). 59.

¹³¹ Muhammad Abdullah and Muhammad Junaid Nadvi, “Understanding the Principles of Islamic Worldview,” 272.

all things including humankind. Tawhid influences every aspect of life in Islam. Being a Muslim fundamentally means believing in the oneness of God, as stated in the Qur'an (112:1-4). Muslims hold that the God they worship is the same deity revered by Christians and Jews.¹³²

Khalifah (Vicegerency or Caliphate)

This principle emphasizes that sovereignty is exclusively Allah's, with humans acting as His representatives. People are unable to exercise any power beyond what has been assigned to them, as described in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Every believer is given the honor of being a Vicegerent, which means each person is accountable to Allah. As Allah's representatives on earth, humans are entrusted with the care of everything in the world.¹³³

'Adalah (Justice)

Justice is defined as moral rightness based on ethics, rationality, law, natural law, religion, or equity.¹³⁴ This concept encompasses the punishment for violations of these principles. In the Islamic worldview, justice is achieved when everything is in its rightful place. These principles mandate equal treatment for all individuals, with 'adalah' being a vital moral virtue in Islam, second only to the belief in God as the sole object of worship and the prophethood of Muhammad. Justices are also required in polygamous marriages, which are permitted in Islam, where Muslim husbands must treat all their wives equally.¹³⁵

¹³² Mohamed Aslam Mohamed Haneef, "Islam, the Islamic Worldview and Islamic Economics," 44.

¹³³ Ibid., 273.

¹³⁴ Ibid. 273.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 274.

The Islamic Concepts of the Universe

In Islamic philosophy, the universe is a complex network made up of different social factors and beings, both human and non-human, along with various forces that can be seen or unseen.¹³⁶ This Universe encompasses the heavens, the earth, and everything in between. Beyond the tangible world, there exists the equally real realm of the unseen (gha'ib). For Muslims, the world is a dynamic, living reality, not merely a mechanical construct (alam ar-ruh).¹³⁷ Angels ('alam al-mala'ika), Jinn ('alam al-jinn), heavens (alam al-ins), and the eschatological realm (alam al-akhira).¹³⁸ While humans have the freedom to choose their faith, the rest of the universe is inherently in submission to Allah, making it intrinsically Islamic.¹³⁹

Islamic Tradition

Tradition involves the transmission of beliefs and practices from one generation to the next, often accepted as authoritative and unquestioned.¹⁴⁰ In Islam, the foundation of its tradition lies in the Qur'an and Sunnah, the teachings and practices of the prophet Muhammad. The Islamic way of life, known as Sharia,¹⁴¹ or "the path" is derived from these sacred sources and encompasses the comprehensive

¹³⁶ El-Aswad, *Muslim Worldviews and Everyday Lives*, 2012.

¹³⁷ Mohamed Aslam Mohamed Haneef, "Islam, the Islamic Worldview, and Islamic Economics," *IJUM Journal of Economics and Management* 39–65.

¹³⁸ El-Aswad, *Muslim Worldviews and Everyday Lives*.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ Mohammad Hameedullah Khan, *The Schools of Islamic Jurisprudence: A Comparative Study* (New Delhi, India: Kitab Bhavan, 1991).

¹⁴¹ Humaira Ahmad, "Islamic Tradition and Its Defining Characteristics," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 3, no. 01 (March 2013): 60, accessed August 10, 2024 <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.31.03>.

legal and moral framework that guides Muslims.¹⁴² Shariah represents the ethical guidelines and lifestyle that Muslims are expected to adhere to, passed it down through generations.¹⁴³ At the heart of Shariah are the five pillars of Islam, essential practices that every Muslim must observed to align with the divine will of God. These pillars are *Shahadah*, *Salat*, *Zakat*, *Sawm* and *Hajj*.¹⁴⁴

Shahada (Declaration of Faith)

The Shahada is the declaration of faith and the first pillar of Islam, affirming monotheism and the acceptance of Muhammad as the final prophet. It is usually recited in daily prayers and during significant religious rituals.¹⁴⁵ Fathullah also, explores the historical evolution and contemporary significance of the Shahada in Muslim communities, emphasizing its role in maintaining religious identity and unity among believers.¹⁴⁶

Salat (Prayer)

Salat (Prayer) is the second pillar and requires Muslims to perform ritual prayers five times a day facing the Kaaba in Mecca. It serves as a direct connection

¹⁴² John L. Esposito, "Introduction: The Islamic Tradition," in *Handbook for Interreligious Dialogue*, ed. John Borelli, accessed April 18, 2024, <https://www.usccb.org/committees/ecumenical-interreligious-affairs/introduction-islamic-tradition>.

¹⁴³ Kathleen Tracy, *Islamic Culture in Perspective* (Hockessin, DE: Mitchell Lane Publishers, 2015), 6.

¹⁴⁴ Sookhdeo, and Bedloe, *A Christian's Pocket Guide to Islam*, 49.

¹⁴⁵ Fathullah Al Haq Muhamad Asni, "Analysis of the concept of two Kalima Shahadah Al-Tauhid and Al-Risalah," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 7, no. 10, 353.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 353

between the worshipper and Allah, fostering spiritual discipline and mindfulness.¹⁴⁷ In his work *Ramadan T* examines the practice of Salah among Muslim youth in Nigeria, discussing challenges such as balancing prayer with modern lifestyles and opportunities for fostering religious devotion within diverse socio-cultural contexts.¹⁴⁸

Zakat (Almsgiving)

Zakat, the third pillar, involves giving a portion of one's wealth to those in need, typically 2.5% of one's savings and investments annually. It aims to purify wealth and support the community's welfare. Similarly, Haddad in his article analyzes the role of Zakat in contemporary Muslim societies, addressing issues such as effective distribution, modern interpretations, and its impact on social welfare programs.¹⁴⁹

Sawm (Fasting during Ramadan),

The fourth pillar of Islam involves fasting from dawn until sunset during Ramadan. Fasting helps people develop self-discipline, feel compassion for those in need, and reflect spiritually. Ahmed also looks at how urban Muslim communities observe fasting. He talks about the challenges they face, such as maintaining fasting traditions within different cultural backgrounds and their evolving significance in today's society.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷Shalihin N. and Sholihin M., "Ramadan: The Month of Fasting for Muslim and Social Cohesion—Mapping the Unexplored Effect," *Heliyon* 8, no. 10 (October 7, 2022). accessed November 10, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e10977>.

¹⁴⁸ Shalihin and Sholihin, "Ramadan: The Month of Fasting for Muslim.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. 3-4

Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca)

Hajj, the fifth pillar of Islam, is a pilgrimage to Mecca that every Muslim must perform at least once in their lifetime, provided they are physically and financially capable. It represents unity, equality, and spiritual rejuvenation. However, in his book, Awan examines modern trends in Hajj pilgrimage, such as logistical difficulties, the influence of globalization on the pilgrimage experience, and its lasting spiritual importance for Muslims around the globe.¹⁵¹ The Five Pillars of Islam serve as core principles that guide the religious practices and beliefs of Muslims worldwide.

Also, scholars provide valuable insights into how these pillars are understood, practiced, and interpreted in diverse cultural and societal contexts, ensuring their relevance and continuity in contemporary Muslim life. Furthermore, the first pillar of Islam which is Iman or Faith embraces six principles that are described in Islam as the ‘Articles of Faith.’

The Article of Faith

In addition to the five Pillars of Islam explained above, Muslims also live by the following six principles that fully explain *faith* in Islam. They are discussed below.

Beliefs in Allah Alone

At the heart of Islam is the conviction in the singularity of Allah, referred to as Tawhid. The Qur’an does not seek to prove Allah's existence; rather, it takes it for granted.¹⁵² Muslims express this belief through the *Shahadah* declaring, “There is no

¹⁵¹ Anjum Awan, *Essentials of Islamic Sciences* (New Delhi, India: Adam Publishers, 2020), 195.

¹⁵² Sookhdeo, and Bedloe, *A Christian’s Pocket Guide to Islam*, 15.

god but Allah, and Muhammad is His prophet.” This declaration is fundamental to Islamic theology. As Reza Aslan explains, “When Muslims say “Allahu Akbar” (meaning, “God is greater”), they are not comparing God to anything greater specific but affirming that God is inherently greater than all else.”¹⁵³

Belief in Angels/Jinn and Satan

In Islam, it is believed that Allah created angels from light, and they serve as His messengers.¹⁵⁴ These pure, genderless beings surround Allah’s throne in the seventh heaven. They fulfill various roles, including acting as guardians for Muslims, as mentioned in the Qur’an (41:30-31). Some of these angels also serve as escorts for the dead while others mediate on behalf of human beings.¹⁵⁵ Each person is accompanied by two recording angels. Notably, the Qur’an mentions two significant angels: Gabriel and Michael (2:97-98).¹⁵⁶

In Islam, there is also a fallen angel named Satan called *Iblis*, which is also found in Christianity. The account of the Qur’an on Satan is that he was present when Adam was created but refused to bow down to him and worship him as Allah commanded all angels (Qur’an 38:77). There is a controversy in Islamic theology about whether Satan is a fallen angel or a jinn. Jinns are invisible creature born of smokeless fire (Qur’an 15:26, 27). They are seen to have power and intelligence and can be good or bad.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Reza Aslan, *No god but God* (New York: Harper & Row, 2005), 150.

¹⁵⁴ Sookhdeo, and Bedloe, *A Christian’s Pocket Guide to Islam*, 16.

¹⁵⁵ Michael D. McCullar, *A Christian’s Guide to Islam*, 38.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 40.

Belief in the Holy Books

Muslims recognize four holy books: The Qur'an and three parts of the Bible which are the Pentateuch or (Law of Moses), the Psalms of David, and the Gospel of Jesus (Qur'an 4:13). Muslims refer to Christians and Jews as the "people of the Book" (*ahl-al-kitab*). Muslims believe that Allah provided the Qur'an to Muhammad because the original scriptures given to Jews and Christians were altered.¹⁵⁸ They view the Qur'an as the final and complete revelation from Allah.¹⁵⁹

Belief in Prophets

In Islam, it is believed that Allah communicates His will to humanity through prophets. Muslims recognize Adam as the first prophet of Allah, and Abraham as the first Muslim. Islamic sacred texts mention a total of 124,000 prophets. In Islam, there are two categories of prophets: messengers and regular prophets. Messengers were appointed to convey specific messages to the people, while regular prophets received authentic scriptures to share with the public.¹⁶⁰ Islam acknowledges nine principal prophets among many mentioned in the holy scriptures: Noah, Abraham, David, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. In Islam, these prophets are not to be venerated. Their lives are meant to serve as models for all humanity. Muhammad is recognized as the last messenger who concludes the line of prophets.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ Sookhdeo and Bedloe, *A Christian's Pocket Guide to Islam*, 16.

¹⁵⁹ Michael D. McCullar, *A Christian's Guide to Islam*, 41.

¹⁶⁰ Sookhdeo and Bedloe, *A Christian's Pocket Guide to Islam*, 2001.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

Belief in the Day of Reckoning

Islam teaches that on the judgment day, Allah will use scales of justice to hold each person accountable for their actions.¹⁶² The Qur'an discusses the concepts of resurrection, judgment, paradise, and hell. When a person dies, their body returns to the ground, while their soul enters a state of unconsciousness. During the judgment, Allah will summon both the living and the deceased to determine their eternal destinies. Allah will render the final judgment, and individuals will traverse a narrow path known as Jahannam. The wicked will descend into hell, whereas the righteous will be admitted to paradise.¹⁶³ As a result, on the day of judgment, the virtuous will enter paradise while the wicked will be sent to hell.

Also, the Islamic view of paradise is notably different from the Christian interpretation of Heaven. In the Islamic paradise, the virtuous will enjoy spiritual and otherworldly delights, such as luxurious clothing, beverages, honey rivers, and rare fruits. Men will also be given *Houris*, beautiful virgins, for their pleasure (Qur'an 44; 56).¹⁶⁴ Hell in Islam has seven entrances and levels, each corresponding to the severity of a person's sins. The unrepentant and idolaters will be tormented, wearing clothes of pitch and having only boiling water and pus to drink.¹⁶⁵

Belief in Predestination and Freewill

Islam teaches that Allah has planned everything that happens. However, Muslims have different views on whether this means people have no free will. Some

¹⁶² Sookhdeo and Bedloe, *A Christian's Pocket Guide to Islam*, 17.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 42.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 43.

Muslims believe that people have complete free will, but most believe that individuals automatically fulfill their roles as determined by Allah. This view supports the belief in predestination.¹⁶⁶

The Islamic Culture

Here examined Islamic culture as it relates to the rites of passage, specifically focusing on birth, marriage, and death. Additionally, it will look into the Islamic lifestyle regarding food, clothing, and festivals will also be considered. Meanwhile, Luzbetak describes culture as:

A design for living and it is a plan according to which society adapts itself to its physical, social, and ideational environment. A plan for coping with the physical environment would include such matters as food production and all technological knowledge and skills...Cultures are but different answers to essentially the same human problems.¹⁶⁷

Islamic Rites of Passage

Birth. In Islamic societies, family and community are very important. Family members care for one another and are friendly to others. This leads to community celebrations during major events like births and weddings.¹⁶⁸ The arrival of a child in a Muslim family brings happiness to the whole community, particularly to the child's closest relatives. The Qur'an prohibits parents from feeling discontented with the birth of a child due to the child's gender.¹⁶⁹ After the birth of a child, he or she is bathed and dressed.

¹⁶⁶ Sookhdeo and Bedloe, *A Christian's Pocket Guide to Islam*, 17.

¹⁶⁷ Louis J. Luzbetak, *The Church and Cultures* (Techny, IL.: Divine Word, 1963), 60-61.

¹⁶⁸ Charlotte Guillain, *Islamic Culture* (Chicago, IL: Heinemann Library, 2013), 28.

¹⁶⁹ Abdulkader Tayob, *Islam: A Short Introduction: Signs, Symbols and Values* (Oxford, England: Oneworld Publications, 1999), 45.

Subsequently, the father softly murmurs the adhan (call to prayer) into the baby's right ear. The baby's tongue is also gently coated with sugar, crushed dates, or honey to express the parents' desires for a prosperous life for their child. A naming celebration called aqiqah is arranged for the baby on the seventh day following its birth, during which friends and family gather to hear the baby's name.¹⁷⁰ The baby is then circumcised if he happens to be a boy as a sign of his belongingness to the Islamic faith.¹⁷¹

Marriage. A nikah is a contract in Islam for marriage. Both the bride and groom must agree to it before the ceremony. This contract explains the terms of their marriage. A couple is only considered married once they both give their consent to this agreement.¹⁷² The groom presents the bride with a unique gift. Typically, the couple also receives presents from their relatives and friends. An Islamic wedding occurs can be conducted in a family residence. During the ceremony, selected verses of the Qur'an are recited, and special prayers are conducted with an Imam or marriage officer leading the proceedings. The celebration that follows Islamic weddings is known as Walimah, during which families and friends enjoy delicious meals together.¹⁷³

Death. When a Muslim is close to death, and noticed by the family members, they assist him or her in seeking Allah's forgiveness and reciting the Shahadah if he or she is able to do so or hears it from the family prior to passing away. Once death

¹⁷⁰ Charlotte Guillain, *Islamic Culture*, 29.

¹⁷¹ Cath Senker, *Islam: Signs, Symbols and Stories* (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2010), 22.

¹⁷² Charlotte Guillain, *Islamic Culture*, 30.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 31.

occurs, the body is cleaned, and perfume oil is applied by relatives, followed by wrapping the deceased in a special white cloth. Subsequently, Salaat al-Janazah, the Islamic funeral prayer, is performed before the shrouded body is interred. Mourning for the deceased lasts for three days.¹⁷⁴

Food. The Qur'an outlines the guidelines concerning which foods Muslims are allowed to consume and which ones are prohibited. Foods that are permissible for Muslims are called halal, while those that are forbidden are referred to as haram. Pork, meat from improperly slaughtered animals, and alcohol fall under the category of haram. To properly slaughter an animal for consumption, it is essential to recite a blessing while cutting the animal's throat.¹⁷⁵

Clothing. Modesty is a principle for dressing highly required of Muslim men and women. This principle requires them to cover parts of their bodies and wear loose-fitting clothes. The application of this principle varies from country to country. Muslim men and women in Pakistan wear a long, loose shirt and pants called *Shalwar-kameez* whereas in Saudi Arabia Muslim men wear a long robe with a scarf on their heads called a *Keffiyeh* or *shemagh*. Muslim women who cover their heads cover it with a scarf or *hijab*. They can also wear an *abaya* or *burqa*, a long gown, and a *niqab*, a veil over their faces.¹⁷⁶

Festivals

Muslims observe various blessed days, referred to as Mubarak days, which provide occasions for community celebrations, introspection, and the enhancement of

¹⁷⁴ Charlotte Guillain, *Islamic Culture*, 32.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

spiritual connections. These festive days foster a sense of togetherness and promote the principles of gratitude and kindness within families and communities.¹⁷⁷ These festivals include

Ramadan. There is a month in the Islamic calendar known as Ramadan, during which adult Muslims observe a fast by refraining from eating or drinking from dawn until sunset. Each evening of Ramadan, they conclude their fast with dates, water, and a nourishing meal at sunset. This practice of fasting represents self-discipline and educates Muslims about the importance of not being greedy.¹⁷⁸

- a. ‘id al-Fitr: This feast follows the Ramadan fast. Muslims wear new clothes and eat a special dinner during this festival. Rich Muslim people assist the poor Muslims so that none of them is left out of the celebration that takes place during this festival.¹⁷⁹
- b. ‘id al-Adha: This is the festival of sacrifice. This celebration is meant to honor the trial of the prophet Ibrahim's devotion to Allah. Muslim households sacrifice a sheep, goat, or cow to represent the idea that all Muslims should willingly relinquish their desires for the sake of Allah.¹⁸⁰
- c. Islamic New Year: This event is known as the Day of the Hijrah, marking the moment when Muslims believe Muhammad relocated from Mecca to Medina in 622 CE. His migration to Medina is thought to have contributed to the

¹⁷⁷ El-Aswad, *Muslim Worldviews and Everyday Lives*, 33.

¹⁷⁸ Cath Senker, *Islam: Signs, Symbols and Stories*, 24.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 28.

expansion of Islam. During the Islamic New Year, narratives about Muhammad are conveyed.¹⁸¹

- d. Lailat ul-Miraj: Muslims celebrate a special night when Muhammad ascended to the heavens to receive instructions from Allah. During this journey, he was told to inform Muslims about the importance of praying five times daily. People observe this occasion by reciting the Qur'an and performing special prayers....¹⁸²
- e. Lailat ul-Qadr: This is referred to as the Night of Power and occurs towards the end of Ramadan, the night when Muslims believe Muhammad received the initial revelations of the Qur'an. Muslims commemorate this occasion by reciting the Qur'an.¹⁸³

Islamic Signs and Symbols

The distinction between a sign and a symbol lies in the fact that a sign conveys a single, specific meaning, while a symbol can represent multiple interpretations.¹⁸⁴ This section will discuss signs and symbols used in Islam under nature and colors.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹ Charlotte Guillain, *Islamic Culture*, 26.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ Cath Senker, *Islam: Signs, Symbols and Stories*, 4.

¹⁸⁵ Antonio Rodrigues, "Islam and Symbolism," *Military Review* 88, no. 3 (May-June 2008): 106.

Nature

The following are some important symbolisms from nature used in Islam.

- a. Light represents the brilliance of the Islamic faith and signifies the revelation received by Muhammad that initiated the Islamic religion.
- b. Water represents fertility, creation, and growth across various aspects of life.
- c. Gardens are symbols of paradise (*Firdaus*).
- d. The Rainbow symbolizes the union of human and cosmological dualisms.
- e. Trees represent strength, grandeur, elevation, and celestial beauty.
- f. The sun represents heavenly brilliance, the source of life, excitement, and purity.
- g. The eagle represents fierce strength in battle, nobility, and power.
- h. The crescent moon and star: This represents a symbol of Islam and marks the start of Ramadan.

Colors of Islam

- a. Green: It also represents Islam and signifies renewal and energy. Additionally, it embodies the joy and contentment that Muslims experience when they lead virtuous lives.
- b. White: This is believed to be the color of angels. It is also the colour of the shroud which covers Muslim corpses before burial. A sheik's gandoura or gown and *qamis*, a long tunic worn by students, are all white.
- c. Black: it is complex in its symbolic meaning. Whereas it could have a positive connotation, it also has a negative connotation. It is believed that Muhammad wore a black wool tunic when he conquered Mecca. This

gives the black color a positive meaning in Islam. However, it is also a symbol of bad omen.

d. Red: the color red symbolizes the life force.

The Islamic Worldview on Friendship

Friendship in Islam is not simply a social construct but a spiritually significant bond rooted in revelation.¹⁸⁶ It is an institution that fosters moral development, community cohesion, and spiritual accountability. The Qur'an and Hadith repeatedly emphasize the importance of choosing friends wisely, as relationships have the power to influence belief, behavior, and even one's ultimate fate. In addition, Islam provides a balanced framework for interacting with non-Muslims through ethical friendship and peaceful coexistence, without compromising religious identity.¹⁸⁷

Quranic Perspective: Brotherhood and Righteous Companionship

Surah Al-Hujurat (49:10) states, "Believers are like brothers, so make peace with each other and be mindful of Allah to receive His mercy." In Islam, friendship among Muslims is important as it promotes mutual support and moral guidance. This bond helps strengthen the community and encourages each other to do good. Tafsir Al-Jalalayn highlights the importance of supporting and reconciling with friends.¹⁸⁸ Similarly, *Surah At-Tawbah 9:71* adds: "The believing men and believing women are

¹⁸⁶ Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*, vol. 4 (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2000), 329–330.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. 330

¹⁸⁸ J. Al-Mahalli, & J. As-Suyuti. *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* (Amman, Jordan: Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2007).

allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong...” This demonstrates that friendship in Islam is action-oriented. It involves mutual accountability, encouraging goodness (ma’ruf), and discouraging wrongdoing (munkar).¹⁸⁹ Scholars such as Imam al-Qurtubi interpret this as an injunction for believers to associate with those who inspire uprightness and submission to Allah’s will.

Friendship with Non-Muslims

Islam does not prohibit friendships with non-Muslims; instead, it draws boundaries of loyalty and faith. *Surah Al-Mumtahanah 60:8-9* clearly states:

Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes — from being righteous toward them and acting justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.

This text encourages friendship between Muslims and non-Muslims. The text explains that Islam allows kindness and fairness towards non-Muslims, but one should not compromise their beliefs. Friendships that encourage understanding and peaceful coexistence are encouraged, as long as they align with Islamic values. Tafsir Ibn Kathir highlights the importance of being kind and fair to non-Muslims who are peaceful and respectful. The key principle is that such friendships must not compromise a Muslim’s loyalty to Islam, their core beliefs.¹⁹⁰ Therefore a sensitive approach like friendship will fit into this concept. *Surah Al-Ma’idah (5:51)*, reads, “O you who believe, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies (awliya). They are allies of one another...”

¹⁸⁹ Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an* 8 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Kutub al- 'Ilmiyyah, 2003), 77.

¹⁹⁰ Ibn Kathir, I. *Tafsir Ibn Kathir (Abridged)* (Riyadh, Saudi Arabi: Darussalam, 2003).

The text forbids Muslims from taking the Jews and Christians as allies. It's often viewed in political and cultural contexts rather than as a simple ban on interfaith relationships. Many scholars believe it warns against forming alliances that might threaten Muslim identity or independence.¹⁹¹ Some modern scholars, like Yusuf al-Qaradawi, suggest that we should understand this verse in a way that promotes peaceful living together while staying true to key Islamic beliefs. This thoughtful approach shows how the verse is important in today's diverse societies.¹⁹²

Hadith Teachings

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stated, "A person follows the religion of their companion, so everyone should be mindful of whom they choose as friends."¹⁹³ This Hadith highlights the importance of building friendships with morally good and spiritually strong people, as they can positively influence your character and beliefs. Imam Nawawi also stresses the benefits of having righteous friends.¹⁹⁴ The Prophet (PBUH) stated, "A good friend is like a musk-seller, while a bad friend resembles a blacksmith..."¹⁹⁵ He adds that good companions positively impact one's character and behavior, similar to the pleasant scent of musk, whereas poor companions can harm one's moral integrity.

¹⁹¹ M. W. Khan, *The Quran: A New Interpretation* (New Delhi, India: Goodword Books, 2009).

¹⁹² Y. Qaradawi, *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam* (Plainfield, IN: American Trust Publications, 2001).

¹⁹³ I Nawawi, *Riyadh as-Salihin* (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1975), Abu Dawood, Hadith 4833; Tirmidhi, Hadith 2378.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari bi Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari* (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Ma'rifah, 2000),⁷⁹, commentary on Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith 2101; cf. Sahih Muslim, Hadith 2628.

Friendship is viewed as an avenue for enhancing faith and steering clear of sinful actions. Fath al-Bari stresses the importance of selecting uplifting friends. Friendship can be a means of dawah, allowing Muslims to showcase Islamic values and encourage others to embrace the faith through their positive behavior and character. Islamic scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan emphasizes the importance of kindness in friendships to promote peaceful outreach.¹⁹⁶

Friendship as a Means of Dawah

Friendship in Islam is also a strategic tool for dawah (inviting others to Islam). The Prophet's interactions were marked by gentleness, patience, and empathy. His relationship with non-Muslims such as Mut'im ibn 'Adi and Abdullah ibn Ubayy, shows that cordial relations were part of his method for creating space for dialogue and trust.¹⁹⁷ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, a modern Islamic thinker, emphasizes that kindness, patience, and non-confrontational friendship are essential for peaceful outreach.

In his book *The Prophet of Peace*, he notes: "Real dawah begins when hearts are won over by compassion, not confrontation. Friendships create bridges over which the truth can walk."¹⁹⁸ Moreover, Sufi traditions also value companionship (*suhbah*) as a vehicle for spiritual enlightenment. In *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*, Imam al-Ghazali teaches that righteous friends help purify the soul and keep it oriented toward

¹⁹⁶ M. W. Khan, *The Quran: A New Interpretation*.

¹⁹⁷ Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' Ulum al-Din 2* (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Ma'rifa, 2009), 275–278.

¹⁹⁸ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Prophet of Peace: Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2009), 63–65.

Allah.¹⁹⁹ He classifies friends into four categories, encouraging believers to seek out those who *remind them of Allah and correct them with wisdom*.²⁰⁰

Missiological Reflection

From a missiological perspective, the Islamic understanding of friendship presents both opportunities and challenges. The emphasis on shared moral values and peaceful coexistence provides a bridge for friendship evangelism through hospitality, ethical dialogue, and character witness.

However, the guardedness in forming intimate relationships with non-Muslims, especially in traditionalist communities, may limit open interaction. Therefore, mission approaches must respect Islamic boundaries while fostering trust through authentic friendship, mutual service, and moral integrity. The concept of being friends without compromising faith is deeply embedded in Islam and can be a starting point for Christ-centered witness that is respectful, compassionate, and non-threatening.

As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 9:22, “I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some,” friendship with Muslims can be explored as a spiritually intentional relationship that fosters mutual support, moral growth, and community strength, by which mission can occur. It can be rooted in divine revelation and shaped by prophetic wisdom. Islam permits and even encourages friendships with non-Muslims, provided they uphold justice and religious

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 65.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 65.

integrity.²⁰¹ For Christians engaging Muslims in mission, understanding the Islamic worldview on friendship is vital for meaningful, respectful, and effective outreach.

Summary

This chapter reviews the literature on friendship evangelism's different concepts, principles, and approaches. Friendship evangelism is not only about finding a relational strategy for transmitting religious beliefs but also about fostering genuine understanding and dialogue across cultural boundaries. Scholars also emphasize the importance of contextualization, dialogue, ethical sensitivity, and theological reflection in effectively communicating the Christian message in diverse global contexts. It concludes with the Islamic worldview and practices. Also, the Islamic view of friendship blends divine guidance with practical wisdom. Whether among Muslims or across faith boundaries, friendship must reflect truth, sincerity, and righteousness. It is a sacred responsibility that shapes individuals, strengthens the ummah, and opens doors for peaceful coexistence and missional engagement.

²⁰¹ Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*, 329–330.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This chapter briefly discusses the methodology employed to explore the effectiveness of intentional friendship as a mission approach to the Hausa Muslims in Uyo, Nigeria. It also discusses the research design, data collection methods, ethical considerations, and limitations encountered during the study. The methodology is that part of research that involves a process through which knowledge about the world can be acquired to answer research questions.¹ In other words, it is a systematic way to solve a problem.² It is also defined as the study of methods by which knowledge is gained.³ With the help of methodology, one gets information through varying means such as interviews, focus group interviews, etc.⁴ This data enables the researcher to unravel what he or she intends to understand.

Research Setting

The Geographical Boundaries of Nigeria

Nigeria is an amalgam of ancient Kingdoms, Caliphates, Empires, and City-states with a long history of organized societies. Its boundaries were drawn as a result

¹ Dipak Kumar Bhattacharyya, *Research Methodology* (New Delhi, Excel Books, 2006), 17.

² John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (London: Sage Publications, 2018).

³ Akintola, "Towards New Approaches in Missiological Encounters with Muslims in Northern Nigeria."

⁴ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 2nd ed (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2007), 117.

of trade (from slavery to pepper or ivory) and overseas territorial ambitions of Western European power in the 19th century. The name Nigeria was adopted in 1898 to designate the British protectorates on the river Niger.⁵ Nigeria was a former British colony. The name “Nigeria” (meaning Niger Area) was first suggested by Flora Louisa, the girlfriend of Lord Fredrick Lugard, the former British Governor-general of the colony, in 1914.⁶

Nigeria got its political independence from the British in October 1960. It is the most populated Black country in the world, as well as the largest populated country in Africa. It has a total land area of 923,768 sq. km. (356,668 sq. mi.) making it the 14th largest country in Africa in land mass. Its coastline, on the Gulf Guinea, stretches 774 km (480 mi.).⁷ Nigeria is bordered by Chad, Cameroon, Benin, Niger, and the Atlantic Ocean in the south, Nigeria.⁸

Adherence to Islam, Christianity, or Indigenous African religions is central to how Nigeria identifies themselves. Religious affiliation estimates vary, however, due to the lack reliable census data and the facts that many of Nigeria’s Muslims and Christian adhere to beliefs and practices associated with indigenous religions. According to 2011 report, about 50.8% of Nigeria’s population are Christians 47.8% are Muslims and 1.4% adhere to other religions. Among Christians, 24.8% are

⁵ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., *Nigeria: A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1992), 13-17 accessed July 5, 2024 https://www.loc.gov/resource/frdcstny.nigeriacountryst00metz_0/.

⁶ Ibid., 29.

⁷ Jibril Ibrahim, “Politics of Religion in Nigeria: The Parameters of the 1987 Crisis in Kaduna State,” *Review of African Political Economy* 45 (1989): 72, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4006011>.

⁸ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., *Nigeria: A country study*, 17

Catholic, 74.1% are protestant, 0.9% belongs to other Christian denominations and a few of them are orthodox Christians.⁹

The Brief History of Akwa Ibom State

Akwa Ibom is one of thirty-six States in Nigeria. It is located in the coastal southern part of the country, lying between latitudes 4°32'N and 5°33'N North and longitudes 7°25'E and 8°25'E East. The State is bordered on the east by Cross River State, on the west by Rivers State and Abia State, and the South partly by the Atlantic Ocean and partly by Cross River State.¹⁰ It was created in 1987 from the former Cross River State and is currently the country's highest oil and gas-producing State.

Along with English, the main languages spoken here are Ibibio, Annang, Oron. Administratively, Akwa Ibom is divided into 31 Local Government Areas: Abak, Eastern Obolo, Eket, Esit-Eket, Essien Udim, Etim-Ekpo, Etinan, Ibeno, Ibesikpo-Asutan, Ibiono-Ibom, Ika, Ikono, Ikot Abasi, Ikot Ekpene, Ini, Itu, Mbo, Mkpat-Enin, Nsit-Atai, Nsit- Ibom, Nsit-Ubium, Obot-Akara, Okobo, Onna, Oron, Oruk Anam, Ukanafun, Udung-Uko, Uruan, Urue-Offong/Oruko, and Uyo.

Historically, it is believed that the people of Akwa Ibom State arrived in what is now known as Nigeria between 1200 and 1500 BC.¹¹ Akwa Ibom State was created out of Cross River State on September 23, 1987.¹² The main ethnic groups of the state are Ibibio, Annang, and Oron. The people are predominantly of the Christian faith and few people practice African traditional religions. However, due to migration,

⁹ Ibid.17.

¹⁰ Essien Ukpe Ukoyo Ukpe, *The People and Culture of Akwa Ibom State* (Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, AKSU University Press, 2015), 48.

¹¹ Ibid., 48.

¹² Ukpe, *The People and Culture of Akwa Ibom State*, 48.

there is a notable number of Muslims in the state. The Ibibio are the largest group, while the Annang, the second largest group, speak a variant dialect of the Efik language. The Oron is an ethnic group (akin to Efik) found in five of the State's Local Government Areas. Located at the Ocean and contiguous to Oron is a group of Ibibio called Eket. The Annang, Efik and Ibibio languages belong to the Benue-Congo language family, which forms part of the Niger-Congo group of languages. Uyo is the capital city of Akwa Ibom State.¹³

History of Uyo

Uyo is the capital city of Akwa Ibom State, located in southern Nigeria. It serves as an administrative, cultural, and economic hub of the state.¹⁴ It is bounded in the west by Abak, east by Uruan, north by Ikono, Ibiono Ibom, and Itu, and in the south by Etinan, Ibesikpo/Asutan, and Nsit Ibom Local Government Areas.¹⁵ During the colonial era, Uyo was made a district headquarters in 1905. Provincial and divisional administration was later introduced in Eastern Nigeria and Uyo became the administrative headquarters of Uyo province controlling former divisions of Eket, Opobo, Uyo, and Enyong. In 1976, the local government system was introduced, and Uyo became the headquarters of Uyo Local Government Area, a status it held until 1987 when it was again upgraded to a state capital following the creation of Akwa

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Beulah Ofem, Usen Akpan and Victor Umoren, "Analysis of Urban Poverty and Its Implications on Development in Uyo Urban, Akwa Ibom State," *Global Journal of Social Sciences* 9, no. 1 (2010): 7–19. Accessed May 6, 2024 <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/gjss>.

¹⁵ Ibid., 19.

Ibom State out of the former Cross River State.¹⁶ According to Essien and Samimi, Uyo is situated in the southeastern part of Nigeria between longitudes 37°50' E to 37°51' E and latitudes 55°40' N to 54°59' N.¹⁷ It has a total area of 362 km² and a low-lying plain with no hills. He adds that Uyo is one of the largest commercial cities in south-southern Nigeria after Port Harcourt and Calabar.¹⁸ Since the colonial era, the city has been the head of administration.¹⁹ Also, according to the most recent census data, the population of Uyo in 2024 is 1,393,000. Moreover, Uyo has a diverse population characterized by various ethnic groups, Uyo belongs a predominant ethnic group in Akwa Ibom State the Ibibio people.²⁰

Uyo's demographic profile includes a mix of urban and rural residents, with urbanization steadily increasing due to its status as a growing commercial center. Culturally, Uyo reflects the broader Nigerian mosaic but is distinctively influenced by the dominant Ibibio culture, which manifests in traditional ceremonies, festivals, and social norms. Uyo is a predominantly Christian city with a notable presence of Islam in the city due to migration and settlement patterns of Hausa Muslims from northern Nigeria and other regions.²¹ Figure 1 below shows the Map of Akwa Ibom state that indicates the location of Uyo, which is the area of focus in this study.

¹⁶ Ofem, Akpan and Umoren, "Analysis of Urban Poverty and Its Implications on Development in Uyo Urban, Akwa Ibom State," 10.

¹⁷ Etido Essien, and Cyrus Samimi. Evaluation of Economic Linkage between Urban Built-Up Areas in a Mid-Sized City of Uyo (Nigeria). *Land10*, no.10 (2021):1094, accessed June 23,2024 <https://doi.org/10.3390/land10101094>

¹⁸ Ibid., 203.

¹⁹ Ibid., 125.

²⁰Nnamso Godwin Ekanem, "Influence of Religious Affiliation and Communication on The Electioneering of 2023 General Elections in Nigeria: A Study of Residents in Uyo Metropolis," *IMSU Journal* 7, no. 2, (2023) accessed June 23, 2024. https://www.imsujcs.com/Journals/2023_02/12.pdf.

²¹ Ibid., 12.

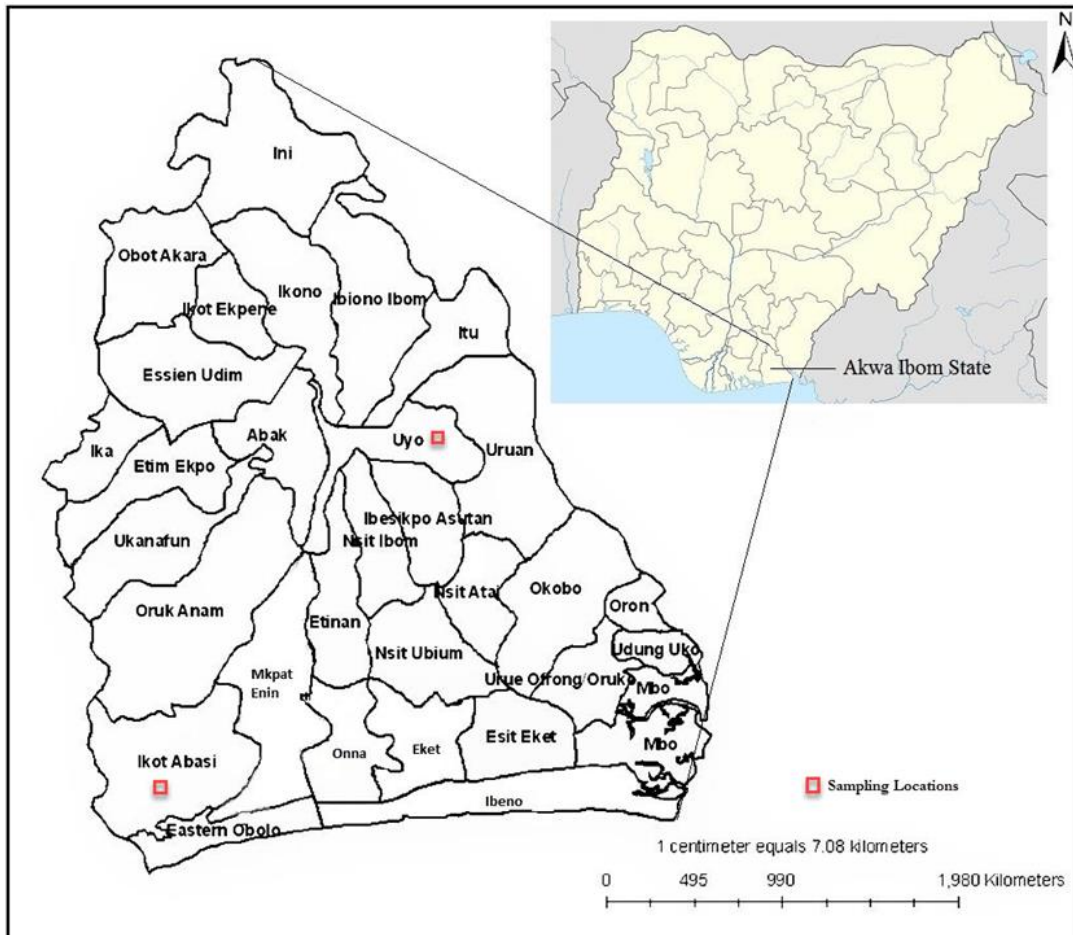


Figure 1. Map of Akwa Ibom State

A Brief Overview of Islam in Akwa Ibom

The Hausa Muslim community in Uyo, the capital of Akwa Ibom State in southern Nigeria, represents a notable minority religious group compared to Christianity, the predominant religion in southern Nigeria. Over the years, the Muslim population in Uyo has experienced considerable growth, primarily due to the influx of individuals migrating from northern Nigeria and other West African countries, in addition to local conversions to Islam.²² According to the Joshua Project (2023), the

²² Akintola, "Towards New Approaches in Missiological Encounters with Muslims in Northern Nigeria." 34

estimated population of Hausa Muslims in Uyo is approximately 11,305,²³ amidst a total of around 350,000 Muslims across Akwa Ibom State, which constitutes roughly 4.8% of the state's total population.²⁴

Settlement Areas within the Uyo Metropolis

Although not all the settlement areas are covered, the Muslim population in Uyo is organized into distinct residential areas, each characterized by its unique culture and ethnic identity. These areas serve not only as homes but also as a vibrant center for religious and social activities, here are some notable settlements: first, Hausa Quarters (Behind Itam Market), its locally called '*yan Arewa or Hausa community*' their major occupation is trade, particularly in cattle, grain, and textiles, their estimated population in this community about 3,000.²⁵

Second, Atiku Abubakar Avenue areas, this area hosts the Uyo Central Mosque, attracting Muslims from across the city for significant religious events, here there are Islamic shops and the Muslim council office, the estimated population is about 4,500.²⁶ Third, Esuene Street (off Oron Road), here is predominantly a residence for Muslim NYSC members and visiting Islamic scholars, there is a lodge and an office for the Muslim Corpers Association of Nigeria (MCAN), the estimated population is about 1,000 (mostly temporary residents) Jum'ah prayers, youth

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ World Population Review, "Uyo Population 2024," *World Population Review*, accessed April 18, 2025, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/cities/nigeria/uyo>.

²⁵ Malam Ibrahim Sani, local Islamic leader in Itam, interview by Aniefiok Joseph, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, April 15, 2025.

²⁶ Imam Usman Bala, Chief Imam of Atiku Abubakar Avenue Central Mosque, interview by Aniefiok Joseph, Atiku Abubakar Avenue, April 16, 2025.

gathering and training for da'wah are major activities here.²⁷ Fourth, Ikpa Road-University of Uyo town campus area, here is home to the Uniuyo Mosque, which serves both academic Muslims and the broader community. There is also an institution known as the Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN), Uniuyo chapter, the estimated population is 2,500 (students, staff, and local traders).²⁸ Fourth, North Bank Layout (Aka Road Axis) is another residential zone, with a mosque that accommodates over 2,000 worshippers, mainly for the Yoruba Muslims and converts.²⁹

As of 2024, Uyo is home to six major mosques, which serve as focal points for the Muslim community. Table 1 below provides an overview of these mosques.

Table 1. Major Mosques in Uyo State

S/N	Mosque name	Location	Estimated worshippers
1	Hausa community mosque	Behind Itam market	3000
2	Uyo central Mosque	Atiku Abubakar Avenu	4,500+
3	Muslims Corpers Association lodge Mosque	Esuene street	1,000+
4	Uniuyo Mosque Town campus	Ikpa Road	2,500
5	Uniuyo Jum'ah mosque (female hostel)	Uniuyo Town campus	800+
6	New community mosque	North bank layout	2,000

²⁷ Aisha Bello, youth coordinator of FOMWAN Uyo branch, phone interview by Aniefiok Joseph, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, April 10, 2025.

²⁸ Alhaji Musa Abdullahi, Hausa community representative, phone interview by Aniefiok Joseph, April 12, 2025.

²⁹ Haruna Saeed Abdullahi, North bank community representative, phone interview by Aniefiok Joseph, April 12, 2025.

The summary of the overview of Islam in Uyo, although Muslims are a minority in Uyo, their community is organized, vibrant, and steadily growing. Understanding their settlement patterns and their socio-religious life is important for missiological engagement. A contextual, respectful, and relational approach will go a long way in building bridges of understanding and witness.

Missiological Reflection

For Christian missions, especially Adventism in Uyo, the Muslim community presents a viable field for contextual outreach. An intentional friendship-based, hospitality-driven approach that respects culture and avoids a confrontational approach can foster spiritual conversations. Institutions like the Muslims Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN) and the Muslim Corpses Association of Nigeria (MCAN) may be open to dialogical engagement, and acts of kindness (such as health care, education, and youth engagement) can serve as mission entry points.

Research Approach and Design

The study employed the qualitative research approach. This approach uses variable methods that enable researchers to explore the social world to understand particular ways people behave and their experiences in life.³⁰ Qualitative research helps explain how people relate to one another and their experiences for a better understanding of their meaning. In this type of research, researchers can unravel how complex a situation is through a deep exploration of people's behaviors and experiences.³¹ Since this research seeks to explore the effectiveness of intentional

³⁰ John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SCM Press, 2016), 28.

³¹ Immy Holloway and Stephanie Wheeler, *Qualitative Research in Nursing* (New York: Wiley, 2002), 296.

friendship as a mission strategy to reach Hausa Muslims in Uyo, Nigeria, qualitative research is most appropriate for the study.

Also, the study adopted a phenomenological qualitative research approach. Phenomenological research entails how a researcher describes people's experiences and situations.³² Researchers undertaking phenomenological studies emphasize describing what is common among all the participants as they experience a phenomenon.³³ Reducing these individual experiences with a phenomenon to describing its universal essence is the fundamental purpose of phenomenology.³⁴

There are two types of phenomenology, namely hermeneutic phenomenology and empirical, transcendental, or psychological phenomenology. Hermeneutic phenomenology deals with interpreting the live situation of people on a phenomenon.³⁵ In this type, the researchers identify a phenomenon they are interested in and reflect on its important themes. Then, they describe it in writing while ensuring it relates to the topic under study. Not only is the phenomenon described, but the researcher interprets what the experience means.³⁶

However, in transcendental phenomenology, there is less focus on the researcher's interpretation but an extensive focus on the description of participants' experiences.³⁷ The researchers doing this will have to bracket by putting their

³² John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 13.

³³ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 57.

³⁴ Max Van Manen, *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990), 177.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 26.

³⁷ Clark Moustakas, *Phenomenological Research Methods* (London: SAGE, 1994), 34.

experiences aside to have a new understanding of the phenomenon they are studying.³⁸ The procedure for this research includes a researcher identifying a phenomenon of interest. Then, the researcher brackets his or her experiences and collects data from individuals who have experienced that phenomenon. Data is analyzed in this phenomenology by reducing the gathered data to important statements and combining them into themes.³⁹ As a result, this study seeks to explore the role of friendship as a transformative strategy in the Hausa Muslim context. It emphasizes the interaction between the researcher and participants therefore, hermeneutic phenomenology is chosen for the study.

Population and Sampling

A population is a whole set of people with definite characteristics.⁴⁰ Research has two types of populations: the target population and the accessible population. The target population refers to people with specified characteristics in a particular geographic location. On the other hand, the accessible population, a subset of the target population, refers to people within the target population the researcher can have his or her hands on to conduct the research. This study focuses on the Hausa Muslims in Uyo, Nigeria. The population of the Hausa Muslims in Uyo is approximately 11,305. This study aimed to interview a target group of twelve individuals, which included seven one-on-one interviews and five participants in a focus group discussion. The five focus group participants were selected from two additional

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 60.

⁴⁰ Leroy R. Thacker II., "What Is the Big Deal About Populations in Research?" *Progress in Transplantation* 30, no. 1 (2020). 10.1177/1526924819893795

settlement areas of Hausa Muslims in Uyo (HMUs), thus bringing the total number of settlement areas included in this study to seven.

Sampling is a method of obtaining information about an entire population through deduction from a small number of people from the population.⁴¹ The rationale behind the deduction is that everyone cannot be studied in a given research. Sampling involves the decision about the people to interview or the events to observe. Sampling should be able to link the study's purpose and research questions. There are two types of sampling methods used in research depending on its approach and design. They are purposeful or purposive and random sampling. Qualitative methodologies use purposeful sampling instead of random sampling, which is used in quantitative research.

Purposeful sampling consists of choosing a restricted number of participants with the capacity to help the researcher understand the research problem and the study's central phenomenon.⁴² Therefore, this study adopted purposeful sampling to select its participants. The selected participants of this study were properly informed of the problem statement and the reason for the study.⁴³ In this phenomenological study, two types of sampling were used—criterion-based and homogeneous sampling. In criterion-based sampling, participants are chosen when they meet a certain standard. The sample for this study consists of Hausa Muslims (HMs) in Uyo, Nigeria.

⁴¹ Shahid N. Khan, "Qualitative Research Method - Phenomenology," *Asian Social Science* 10, no. 21 (2014): 298, accessed September 2, 2024 <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n21p298>.

⁴² John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 125.

⁴³ Ibid.

Homogenous sampling involves selecting similar cases, which allows for a focused research approach. This method encourages individual participants to share their unique experiences and perspectives to help understand the studied phenomenon.⁴⁴ The study selected Hausa Muslims from seven different settlement areas in Uyo, the capital of Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria, the HMUs who have settled in Uyo within the past ten to fifteen years, to ensure homogeneity. Also, the Muslims were eighteen years old and above, including males and females. They include old immigrants, 15 years old, and recent migrants, 10 years old. The recommended range of sample sizes for a phenomenological study is 3 to 10 participants⁴⁵ and 5 to 25 participants⁴⁶. The sampling size of the Hausa Muslims was seven non-randomly selected interviewees, and also five Hausa Muslims in Uyo (HMU) for the focus group discussion. Also, this study chooses the Hausa Muslims within seven settlement areas in Uyo.

Data Collection Procedure

The assumption in this phenomenological study is that only when the researcher interacts with the participants can the perception of the Hausa Muslims be adequately gathered. As such, in-depth interviews were conducted with Muslims.⁴⁷ There are three types of in-depth interviews in qualitative phenomenological research. First, structured interviews are interviews where the researcher creates questions that

⁴⁴ Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 127.

⁴⁵ Shearing. Dukes, "Phenomenological methodology in the human sciences," *Journal of Religion and Health* 23, no. 3 (1984): 197-203. 10.1007/BF00990785

⁴⁶ D. E. Polkinghorne, "Phenomenological Research Methods," in *Existential-phenomenological Perspectives in Psychology*, eds. R. S. Valle and S. Halling (New York: Plenum Press, 1989), 4160.

⁴⁷ Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), 25.

he or she does not change throughout the interview process. Second, there is the semi-structured questions when the researcher starts with a set of questions which additional questions can be added to them or replaced during the interview process.

Thirdly, there is the unstructured interview in which a researcher starts with a general research focus and allows the development of questions during the interview process.⁴⁸ This study employs the semi-structured interview to collect data using a set of start-up questions in one sitting. The interview questions are in Appendix B. Depending on the availability of five Hausa Muslims in Uyo (HMUs) within the two settlement areas, the focus group discussion was conducted to collect data from the Muslims using different questions. The interviews lasted approximately 40 to 50 minutes;⁴⁹ however, in some cases particularly during the focus group discussions (FGDs) they extend beyond the 50 minutes. Prior to recording, informed consent was obtained from all participants to audio-record the sessions. The Interviews were conducted in two languages: English and pidgin English.

Data Analysis

The audio recordings were transcribed before data analysis commenced in this study. Transcription is in three types:⁵⁰ verbatim transcription, in which every word, pause, stutter, and filler word is transcribed; intelligent transcription, in which the researcher interprets the transcribed words by excluding pauses, stutter, and filler words and correcting grammar. There is also edited transcription in which the

⁴⁸ Corrine Glesne, *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: An Introduction*, 4th ed. (Boston, MA: Pearson, 2011), 102.

⁴⁹ Barbara DiCicco-Bloom and Benjamin F Crabtree, "The Qualitative Research Interview," *Medical Education* 40, no. 4 (2006): 315. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2929.2006.02418.x>.

⁵⁰ Jörg Hecker and Neringa Kalpokas, "Transcripts in Research | Overview, Types & Examples," accessed May 7, 2024, <https://atlasti.com/guides/qualitative-research-guide-part-2/research-transcripts>.

transcribed data is edited to ensure readability.⁵¹ The study employed intelligent transcription to transcribe the audio-recorded data of participants. Then, the transcripts were coded. Coding in qualitative research is systematically categorizing excerpts in qualitative data to find themes and patterns.

Coding serves as a switching interface for data collection and rigorous data analysis.⁵² When done well, coding leads to excellent qualitative research.⁵³ The first step in coding is a thorough reading of the interview transcripts. This is to get a general comprehension of the phenomenon before breaking down the information in the transcript into small units of data. These broken-down data are assigned codes. A code is a word or short phrase to identify portions of data.⁵⁴ The two coding categories, first-cycle coding and second-cycle coding, were employed in this study. The first cycle coding involves initial data coding, which was supplemented by the second-cycle coding to identify themes from the codes derived from the first cycle and to refine the initial codes.⁵⁵

Notes were written during the first cycle of coding as a reflection on the emerging themes from the coding process.⁵⁶ The taking of reflective notes is referred to as writing “interpretive summaries” and identifying “emerging themes” in

⁵¹ Hecker and Kalpokas, “Transcripts in Research | Overview, Types & Examples.”

⁵² Kate Caelli, “Engaging with phenomenology: Is it more of a challenge than it needs to be?” *Qualitative Health Research* 11, no. 2 (2001): 273-281.

⁵³ A. L. Strauss, *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 27.

⁵⁴ J. Saldana, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), 3.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

hermeneutic phenomenology.⁵⁷ The second coding helps us to understand the phenomenon through an interaction between the understanding of the researcher and the information generated from the participants.⁵⁸ The identified themes were grouped according to their similarities and used to answer the research questions. The analyzed and synthesized data were then used to develop a contextualized mission approach to engage the Hausa Muslims in Uyo.

Ethical Consideration

The researcher is solely responsible for ensuring that ethical issues are religiously considered during the research process.⁵⁹ Ethical issues are extremely significant in qualitative research because it is an approach that intrudes on participants' lives. The following guidelines were followed to ensure that ethical prohibitions are avoided in the research process.

First, the participants in this research were informed that their involvement in the research was optional. They were also educated on all aspects of the study. The study obtained ethical approval from the Adventist University of Africa Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (AUA-ISERC)⁶⁰ by submitting its consent form (Appendix A) and data collection instruments to them for review and approval. After the approval, the Hausa Muslims to be interviewed signed the consent form before they were interviewed. Secondly, the study ensured that participants' identities remain anonymous and that the data collected is kept confidential.

⁵⁷ D. M. Wojnar and K. M. Swanson, "Phenomenology: An exploration" *Journal of Holistic Nursing* 25, no. 3 (2007): 177.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Lawrence W. Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 7th ed. (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 2011), 143.

⁶⁰ Adventist University of Africa, "Ethics and Review Board."

During the transcription of the audio recordings, any names mentioned by participants were either omitted or replaced with pseudonyms. The audio recordings are securely stored in a locked filing cabinet to maintain confidentiality. Also, all collected data was deleted appropriately.

Issues of Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the data collection and analysis in this study ensured the use of primary validation criteria, secondary validation criteria, and triangulation. The primary criteria are crucial to all qualitative research as they help prevent researcher bias and ensure accurate representation of participants' experiences.⁶¹ Secondary criteria, which are adaptable to the specific research question and design, add further rigor to the study.⁶²

Credibility, the foremost primary criterion, ensures the accuracy of data interpretation.⁶³ Similarly, authenticity, the second criterion, focuses on maintaining the "authenticity of the person" or phenomenon in the interpretive context.⁶⁴ Criticality is the third primary criterion, emphasizing the need for researchers to adopt a self-critical approach during data analysis. Finally, integrity refers to the need for a researcher's interpretation to be grounded within the collected data while respecting the subjectivity inherent in the interpretive process. To address these primary criteria, which are credibility, authenticity, criticality, and integrity, the researcher conducts prolonged interactions with participants through in-depth interviews, verifies

⁶¹ R. Whitemore, S. K. Chase and C. L. Mandle, "Validity in Qualitative Research," *Qualitative Health Research* 11, no. 4 (2001): 529.

⁶² Ibid. 529

⁶³ Ibid., 530.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 530

interpretations against the data repeatedly, and finally, the study findings are presented with humility, acknowledging the subjective aspects of qualitative research.

The secondary criteria applied in this study include explicitness, vividness, and thoroughness was the secondary criteria used in this study. Explicitness requires a researcher to provide an audit trail. An audit trail refers to a detailed record of the research process, which allows the readers to trace the methodology and interpretations. Vividness requires the researcher to present data in a compelling manner that enables readers to grasp the essence of the phenomenon, achieved through rich and detailed data presentation. Thoroughness refers to a researcher having enough sampling and data collection, coupled with a comprehensive analysis that helps to have impeccable answers to the research questions.

Finally, triangulation was employed to ensure the validity of this study, by using multiple methods or data sources to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon is called triangulation.⁶⁵ Information is conveyed from varying sources as a qualitative research strategy in triangulation. Method, investigative, theory, and data-source triangulation are the four types of triangulations. Method triangulation is when different methods of collecting data about a particular phenomenon are employed in research.⁶⁶ Investigative triangulation is when multiple researchers participate in the same study to give diverse observations and interpretations.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ M. Q. Patton, "Enhancing the Quality and Credibility of Qualitative Analysis," *Health Sciences Research* 34 (1999): 1189-1208.

⁶⁶ D. F. Polit and C. T. Beck, *Nursing research: Generating and Assessing Evidence for Nursing Practice* (Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins, 2012), 15.

⁶⁷ N. K. Denzin, *Sociological methods: A Sourcebook* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1978), 20.

Theory triangulation refers to when a researcher applies various theoretical perspectives to analyze and interpret data.⁶⁸ Moreover, data source triangulation consists of a situation where a researcher collects data from different types of participants, such as individuals, groups, families, and communities, to gain diverse perspectives on a phenomenon.⁶⁹ This study specifically employed data source triangulation by collecting data from the seven Hausa Muslims in Uyo and a focus group.

Summary

This study uses phenomenological qualitative research to examine the involvement of seven Muslims interviewed through semi-structured interviews. The collected data was analyzed by coding and synthesizing emerging themes to address the research questions.

⁶⁸ Nancy Carter, Denise Bryant-Lukosius, Alba DiCenso, Jennifer Blythe, and Alan J. Neville, "The Use of Triangulation in Qualitative Research," *Oncology Nursing Forum* 41, no. 5 (2014): 545.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS, AND PRESENTATION

This chapter analyses the data and discusses the findings. The research focuses on a contextualized mission approach for engaging Hausa Muslims in Uyo, Nigeria, through intentional friendship. The study holds great significance as it adds to the increasing knowledge base initiated by the Adventist Muslim Relations Department on friendship as a contextualized mission approach to engage Hausa Muslims in Uyo. The manual method of data analysis was adopted in the interpretation of data. Additionally, the data established can help empower the church of Christ to improve and develop more sensitive missional approaches to reach this people group.

As indicated earlier, to establish a more focused way of gathering the data, question guides were developed in two languages, *English and pidgin English*, and used for interviews to gather data to help answer the research questions. A Female research assistant was engaged to conduct interviews among Muslim women on my behalf, and secondly, pidgin English to help those participants who couldn't understand standard English. (see Appendix B). There was a different question guide for the focus group discussion, which is in Appendix E. These interview questions were employed in the interviews and the focus group discussions. The chapter begins with a description of the participants. Then, it continues with the findings and discussions. The findings were based on the research questions to be answered. Finally, a summary of the chapter is provided at the end.

The Description of the Participants

The data was obtained through in-depth interviews and focus groups. As mentioned earlier, the developed interview questions were administered through semi-structured interviews to aid in ascertaining the correct data to be collected. Furthermore, purposive sampling of participants was employed to assist in engaging the most appropriate participants in the interviews. All the participants involved were Hausa Muslims who had settled in Uyo for about ten to fifteen years. They were a combination of different categories of participants based on gender, age, and settlement areas. A total of 12 participants were involved in this study, seven were interviewed one-on-one, while five were involved in focus group discussions, three females in all and nine males respectively. The pseudonyms I used for the participants were P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, and P8. Besides, I used FGD1-5 to represent data from the focus group discussion.

Findings and Discussions

The First Research Question

The first research question (RQ1) was, “What is the worldview of Hausa Muslims in Uyo?” To answer this question from the findings, these are the worldviews of the Hausa Muslims in Uyo:

Belief in Supernatural Beings. Hausa Muslims in Uyo (HMU) believe in the existence of supernatural beings, including God, angels, jinn, and Iblis (Satan). They maintain that God is one and has no associates. Jinn are regarded as demons that can possess individuals; it is believed some Malam’s use them for their spiritual activity. Additionally, their responses have assisted the researcher in understanding how their religion influences different aspects of their lives. As narrated by p1, FGD1, 2 and 3:

P1. "My faith affects everything I do; from the moment I wake up to the moment I sleep. I pray five times a day, and this keeps me connected to God. I also follow Islamic teachings in my dealings with others by being honest, respectful, and kind. In relationships, I try to maintain good character because Islam teaches us to treat others well, whether they are Muslim or not. I avoid things that Islam forbids, like drinking alcohol or engaging in dishonest activities."

FGD1: *Islam is central to my daily life. My day begins with Fajr prayer at dawn, and I pray five times a day. It helps me stay disciplined and spiritually connected. The way I interact with people is also guided by Islamic teachings—being honest, avoiding gossip, and treating others with kindness.*

FGD2: *For me, Islam shapes how I dress, how I speak, and even what I eat. I wear the hijab because it is part of my faith. I avoid food that is not halal. Islam also teaches me to respect others, even if they don't share my beliefs.*

FGD3: *Islam is not just about prayer, it's a way of life. It affects my work, my friendships, and my decisions. I try to be just and fair in all my dealings because the Prophet (PBUH) taught us that our actions should reflect our faith.*

Belief in Judgment after Death. According to P5, judgment begins after death when the person is buried. Snakes, tigers and other wild animals visit the dead person who did bad things when alive in the grave and torment him or her. P7 commented concerning judgment after death,

If you did what was good while alive and you die and go to the grave you will just see God. But if you did not do what was right while alive, the devil, who is Munkar, will come to you and beat you with sticks.

Therefore, apart from the wild animals tormenting a person who died after living a bad life, Munkar will also beat him or her with sticks.

Belief in Salvation by Works and Heaven. According to P2, she believed that salvation can be obtained by obeying the five pillars of Islam, namely Shahadah, Salat, Zakat, Ramadan, and Hajj. This was the same belief P1 had. P1 added that she believed killing a Christian in the name of Allah would make a Muslim obtain salvation and go to heaven. Moreover, a Muslim woman would get salvation by staying a virgin till marriage, obeying her parents, and not dressing anyhow.

However, data from FGD indicated that a Muslim woman who does not marry in her lifetime would not have salvation. If a Muslim allows himself or herself to be killed by a Christian, he or she would not go to heaven.

In answering what a Muslim is to do to obtain salvation, P1 explained her belief in salvation this way:

To pray every day during the salat, namely *fajr, dhuhr, asr, maghrib, and isha*. We also believed that if you allow yourself as a Muslim to be killed by a Christian, you will not go to heaven. If you allow a Christian to defeat you in any way, you will not go to heaven. However, if you kill a Christian in the name of Allah you will go to heaven. Why would you allow an unclean being to defeat a clean being? That is why you see today that some Muslims fight. Even in the mosque, you see them with knives and charms. These are things to protect themselves. So, when a Muslim and a Muslim are fighting you would not see anyone killing each other. But when a Muslim and a Christian are fighting, any Muslim around should help that Muslim to defeat the Christian. All these teachings are in the Qur'an and the Hadith.

The Hausa Muslims in Uyo (HMU), through the interview, believed that there is heaven, and those who practice Islam faithfully will go to heaven, especially the men. Furthermore, in the heaven that they believed, according to P4, Muslim men who go to heaven will marry many women—virgins, for that matter. This belief is also substantiated in Surah Al-Rahman 55:72).

Belief in the Quran's Revelation. Through the FGD, it became clear that HMU believed that the Quran was revealed by God to Muhammad verbatim through the angel Jibril. P2 narrated, in answer to his belief in the revelation of the Quran, that they were told Muhammad was in a cave praying. Then, an angel went to him and told him, to read, this is the book, the Quran, and Muhammad started reading the Quran. This supported his belief in the Quran as the verbatim word of God which was in heaven, but revealed to the prophet Muhammad within 23 years. His narration is supported by the Islamic tradition which holds that the Quran is a miraculous book, because of the nature in which it was revealed to Muhammad. Muhammad did not

know how to read and write, but it is claimed that he was miraculously enabled to recite the entire Quran bit by bit (Sura al-A'raf 7:106, 157-158).¹

This belief makes Muslims hold the Quran in high esteem. They do not hold it anyhow and perform a ritual before picking the Quran when it falls. P1 explained the high respect for the Quran:

The respect for the Qur'an is the priority of any Muslim. You keep the Qur'an in a holy way. You don't mishandle it. We were told it was the holy Quran. Whenever we eat, we wash our hands with soap before we touch the Qur'an. Where you keep the Qur'an should be a holy environment meaning the place should be neat. You don't allow a Christian to touch the Quran. You should not bring the Quran outside. If you bring it outside it means you are coming to learn it. You must wash your hands before holding the Quran. When you are holding the Quran and it falls, you are to recite Surah Al-Fatiha before you pick the Qur'an back.

Belief in Jesus as a Prophet and not God. Hausa Muslims in Uyo (HMUs)

believe in Jesus, but their understanding of him differs from that of Christians.

According to the focus group discussion (FGD), they maintain that Jesus did not create everything, but was merely a messenger. They believe that Muslims are the true followers of Jesus's teachings, while Christians do not adhere to these principles. For instance, they pointed out that Jesus performed ablution, a practice that Christians do not follow. Additionally, they noted that Jesus's style of dress is what Muslims emulate, while Christians stray from it. As a result, they viewed Christians as unbelievers and unclean.

Missiological Reflection of the Worldview. the fear of being labeled as *Kafirs*, meaning unbelievers in Islam, causes Muslims to block their minds and opportunities for being exposed to the Christian truth. This means that the mission to Muslims requires initial interactions through building a genuine relationship and

¹ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 4th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2011), 174.

avoiding being evangelistic, but maintaining a pure friendship, which will naturally lead to religious discussions, mostly initiated by the Muslims themselves. Finally, religious discussions that are borne out of intimate relationships and friendships with Muslims should lead to reaching Muslims with their hardcore beliefs. These discussions should lead Muslims to acknowledge how they are honestly mistaken and be willing to change their Islamic ways to the Christian ways, specifically Adventism.

The Second Research Question

The second research question (RQ2) is: What is the biblical foundation of Friendship evangelism? Chapter 2 of this study answers this question. From the discussion in Chapter 2, the following conclusions were made: Friendship evangelism can be defined as the intentional sharing of the gospel of Christ by the community of faith through establishing a caring relational approach with persons who are not part of the community so that they can be converted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament, friendships and relational missions flourished as individuals turned away from paganism to form bonds with the God of Israel, driven by deep personal connections and motivations. Abraham exemplified loyalty in his friendships by adhering to God's guidance, while Rahab sought refuge through the support of her allies during the fall of her homeland. David and Jonathan's bond of friendship was also highlighted, and Ruth chose to stay connected to her cherished family relationships.

Furthermore, in the New Testament, it was observed that friendships expanded through the shared belief in Jesus Christ. People were drawn together not only by the miracles they witnessed from Jesus but also through personal connections. The story of the Samaritan woman illustrates this beautifully; her encounter with Jesus led to a sense of community and understanding.

Paul, recognizing the essence of friendship, emphasized the importance of adaptability in his ministry, declaring that he became 'all things to all men.' This commitment highlights the transformative power of friendships, where understanding and acceptance become the foundation for deeper connections across diverse backgrounds. In this way, the biblical accounts of friendship and Paul's approach reflect a profound need for friendship to be adopted as a mission's approach.

Missiological Reflection. Biblical friendship mission is rooted in incarnational living, peace, and humility. Jesus modeled relational mission through table fellowship, dialogue, and consistent love. Mission flows from relationship, not from confrontation. Friendship is a channel for trust and gospel witness.

The Third Research Question

The third research question (RQ3) is: What factors influence the decision of Hausa Muslims in Uyo to abstain from participating in public evangelistic campaigns organized by the Seventh-day Adventist Church? The answer to this question is divided into these sub-questions: 1. What are your main concerns or reservations about attending Christian religious events? 2. What would make a religious event feel more welcoming and respectful? The answers to research question three (RQ3) and sub-question one (SQ1) were gathered from Ps and FGDs

P8 "One concern is that I might be pressured to participate in worship that goes against my beliefs. I also worry that people might try to convert me or that I might feel uncomfortable if the teachings strongly criticize Islam. Another issue is that some Christian events include music and activities that are not acceptable in my faith. If I feel that my beliefs are respected, then I might attend for social reasons, but I would be cautious."

Also, P3, by way of explaining, adds to the point raised by P8, using pidgin English;

Di first concern na say I no wan go where dem go dey pressure me to do things wey go against my belief. I no wan siddon for place wey I go feel uncomfortable or where dem go dey expect me to change my faith. Another concern be say, if my community see me for di event, dem fit misunderstand

wetin carry me go. But if di event dey open for learning and e dey respectful, I fit feel free to attend. The translated version P3 "My primary concern is that I do not want to attend a place where I might feel pressured to act against my beliefs. I wish to avoid situations where I feel uncomfortable or where I'm expected to alter my faith. Additionally, I am concerned that my community might misinterpret my presence at the event. However, if the event is designed for education and conducted with respect, I would consider attending."

The two responses from the participants indicate that they do not want a program that coerces them to compromise their beliefs, and also the fear of what other Muslims will think. In addition to the responses from p8 and p3, there were other responses from FGDs, although some of the responses agreed with each other;

***FGD6:** I would be concerned about being pressured to participate in prayers or songs that go against my beliefs.*

***FGD3:** Also, some events include food or drinks that are not halal (unclean food). That can make us feel excluded.*

***FGD1:** Sometimes, Christian events involve messages that criticize Islam. If I feel like my faith is being attacked, I wouldn't feel comfortable attending.*

From the above responses from p8, p3, and FGDs, it was gathered that the Hausa Muslims in Uyo had the following reservations about attending public evangelistic meetings organized by the Seventh-day Adventist church and other Christian church, as their fears and concern as follows, first, serving them food or drinks that are not "halal" (unclean food).

Secondly, the fear of criticism. FGD1 explains that some Christians always include messages that criticize Islam. Thirdly, there is the fear of what other Muslims who see them will say or think, and lastly, there is the issue of prayer, as they would not want to pray like the Christians. In summary, the responses above inform why they do not like to attend public evangelistic meetings.

The second aspect of the research question three (RQ3), sub-question two (SQ2). That has to do with what would make a religious event feel more welcoming and respectful to Hausa Muslims in Uyo? These responses were gathered from p2, p4, and p7.

First, allowing me to attend without pressure to participate in religious activities would make me feel respected. If the event includes food, having halal options would also be considerate. Also, avoiding negative comments about Islam or other religions would help. If there is a prayer or worship time, it would be good to let me observe without forcing me to join. A friendly and open environment, rather than one focused on conversion, would make the event more welcoming.

The other responses were from the FGD2, 5, and 6, as narrated in Pidgin English, which provided the answer to the second aspect of research question three.

FGD2: If dem invite me as guest without expecting me to join worship, I go feel okay. FGD5: If dem provide space for us to pray and give halal food, e go make sense. FGD6: Most important thing na say make dem no talk bad about Islam. If we focus on wetin we get in common, everybody go feel comfortable.

Translation: If they invite me as a guest without expecting me to participate in worship, I would feel comfortable. If they provide a space for us to pray and offer halal food, that would be great. Most importantly, they should not speak negatively about Islam. If we focus on our commonalities, everyone will feel at ease.

Given the above responses, the investigation revealed several factors that influenced the decisions of Hausa Muslims in Uyo regarding their engagement in public evangelism by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Lack of Cultural Sensitivity: The public evangelism approaches, such as crusades or open-air campaigns, were perceived as confrontational and disrespectful to the beliefs of Hausa Muslims in Uyo. Mischaracterization of Islam: Instances of misrepresentation during evangelistic efforts created barriers to participation, as individuals felt their beliefs were under attack. Relational Dynamics: There was a clear preference for relational and culturally appropriate engagement, favouring dialogue and friendship over confrontational methods. The settings of evangelistic campaigns, including the types of food served, need to respect and accommodate the cultural practices of Hausa Muslims.

Missiological Reflection. Firstly, the above-mentioned factors are what Muslims, particularly HMUs, face when attending Christian, particularly Adventist, evangelism. Hence, the mission to Muslims must be done in such a way as to prevent

unnecessary discomfort to them. It should be done as quietly and unsuspectingly as possible. This implies that Muslim missions are different from the traditional way of winning souls through public evangelistic campaigns in which flyers, banners, and, sometimes, announcements are made on Television and radio stations. Avoiding verbal attacks on Islam, showing respect, and also, minding the kind of food being served during the programs that involves (HMUs), and being sensitive are necessary for a more friendly environment.

Finally, relating with the Hausa Muslims by creating a genuine and intentional friendship can serve as an alternative approach to the general traditional way of evangelism. Upon their conversion, they must be incorporated into their communities as silent witnesses about Jesus. This will make the ministry to Muslims more possible and easier.

The Fourth Research Question

The fourth research question (RQ4) is, “What contextualized strategy can be developed to reach the Hausa Muslims in Uyo?” To answer this question, it is necessary to first divide this question into two segments firstly (SQ1), the composition of the proposed strategy will focus on the data from the interview and focus group discussion. The second (SQ2) segment focuses on the proposed contextualized strategy.

Christian friendship with HMUs. From the FGDs, it was gathered that few Hausa Muslims got converted to Christianity in Uyo due to their friendship with Christians. Some became Christians because they stayed with Christian relatives who migrated from Nasarawa State to Uyo as business partners. As they mingled with their Muslim relatives and friends through birthdays, marriage, and burial ceremonies, they

became acquainted with Christianity through this relationship and eventually became converted to Christianity.

According to p1, why will they not convert, all their businesses and interactions are with Christians, and many of their people from the north have joined a church here for the Marina junction (one HMUs settlement area), as he pointed at one church across the road, that some of their people worship there every Sundays. In summary, the above responses underscore the importance of friendship as a contextualized mission approach for Adventists to effectively engage with Hausa Muslims in Uyo.

Prayer and Deliverance ministry. According to the FGDs, some Muslims were left with no options but to seek spiritual deliverance for their relatives from Christian churches when they could not have such deliverance in Islam. These relatives suffered badly from demon possession, which *Mallams* in Islam could do nothing about. These Muslims were counselled to seek Christian help. They, therefore, visited the prayer ministries of Christian churches where they were exposed to Christianity.

Furthermore, the mission to Muslims must be saturated with prayers. This is because Muslims pray five times a day in their religious practices. To minister to such people, therefore, the missionary must be prayerful by committing the Muslims into the hands of God. committing himself or herself also into God's hands for wisdom needed for successful and fruitful Muslim missions. It does appear that Islam is a religion in which demonic powers are working mightily to keep the Muslims captives in delusion. Regular and effective prayers by pastors, elders, and members will free Muslims from such bondages and entanglement. Jesus will reveal Himself to them through dreams and visions.

Exposure to Christian songs. From FGD1, FGD6, and P6 respondents, it was gathered that two HMUs were attracted to the Christian church because they listened to Christian songs. P6 got exposed to Christian music after accompanying relatives to a Thanksgiving service at one church where songs were sung, which sparked or ignited their interest in the church.

Hospitality and acts of kindness: From the respondents, P4, and FGD4

P4 "In my community, we value respect for elders, hospitality, and strong family ties. We also respect religious obligations such as daily prayers, fasting during Ramadan, and giving charity to those in need. Another important tradition is communal support—when someone is in trouble, the community comes together to help. We also celebrate Islamic festivals like Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha with great joy."

FGD5: *One of the biggest values in our community is hospitality. We welcome guests warmly, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims. When someone visits our home, we offer them food and make them feel at home.*

FGD4: *Hospitality na big thing for us. If you waka come our house, we must give you food and make you feel at home.* The translated version of FGD4 Hospitality is a fundamental principle within our culture; when one visits our home, it is imperative to offer nourishment and ensure a sense of comfort and belonging.

From the above responses, it is evident that the principle of hospitality is deeply embedded within the culture of the community in question. Participants in both one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions consistently emphasized the importance of hospitality, portraying it as a cherished tradition that fosters a sense of comfort and belonging. During Ramadan, this cultural value becomes particularly significant, as many families who may struggle to afford meals during the period could easily overcome such struggles through the hospitality and generosity of others. It is recommended that the church adopt this tradition to extend support to the community, especially by organizing gift items and meals for those in need. Such initiatives not only embody the spirit of hospitality but also strengthen community bonds through acts of kindness.

Missiological Reflection. First, the missionaries and church members in Uyo must be educated on the worldview, traditions, and theology of Islam so that they can understand Muslims in their communities and relate accordingly. The above findings have demonstrated that Muslims have different worldviews and cultural practices to which many missionaries and members have not been exposed. For missions to Muslims to be more effective in Uyo, there must be an intentional education of all evangelists, elders, and church members on the sensitivity of the mission to Muslims in Uyo, because of their understanding of God, salvation, and the revelation of the Quran etc.

Second, in engaging with Muslim audiences regarding doctrinal teachings, it is imperative to use the Quran as the foundational text for reference, due to the prevailing belief among Muslims that the Bible has been corrupted, rendering it an unsuitable source for theological discourse.

In summary, the Hausa Muslims in Uyo are not closed to the gospel, but they are only resistant to certain styles of gospel communication. Their worldview calls for a mission approach that prioritizes relationship over rhetoric, respect over confrontation, and service over superiority. Friendship is not merely a method; it is the medium through which the message of Christ becomes credible. Therefore, a contextualized mission to this group must reflect Jesus' relational model of loving, listening, and living alongside before verbally communicating the gospel with them. This is not a compromise but an incarnational mission!

Proposed Contextualized Strategy to Reach Hausa Muslims in Uyo, Nigeria

From the above findings and discussions, the study proposes the following contextualized strategies for missions to the Hausa Muslims in the city of Uyo, Nigeria. After providing the composition of this proposed strategy, the study suggests a strategic plan for achieving it. The proposed strategy is a six-point strategy that includes the following steps:

First, the interest of pastors, evangelists, and members of the church for mission to Muslims must be awakened and encouraged. From the one-on-one interview, P2 narrated that he has not heard of any church denomination that does not eat unclean food like them and does not consume alcohol. This means there have been little or no conscious efforts by the church to engage in missions to Muslims. Some do not even see the need. Therefore, in this first step of the proposed contextualized strategy, seminars and revivals should be organized for pastors and the laity on the why and how of mission to Muslims.

Secondly, opportunities must be created for evangelists, pastors, elders and members of the church to make friends with Muslims in their communities. During the FGD, a participating HMU testified that relationships with Muslims that are cordial and respectful are paramount to winning their hearts and leading them eventually to Christ. Having Christian friends and acquaintances was one of the factors through which his sister, a Muslim, became a Christian. Therefore, there should be intentionality in creating conducive atmospheres in which missionaries, church workers and members of the church in Uyo can interact freely with Muslims and befriend them.

These atmospheres can be created when pastors and members are involved in distributing foods and offering helping hands to Muslims during Ramadan, and

organizing literacy classes for men and women in Muslim communities. As the Adventists are made to mingle with the Muslims and with proper training on how to relate with them, good friendships that may eventually lead to religious discussion can be created with them.

Thirdly, hospitality committees should be formed in all our churches mainly for the purpose of rendering this special service to our Muslim brethren on Friday after their Jummat service and particularly during the month of Ramadan.

Fourth, prayer ministry should be established in our churches in Uyo for regular and intentional prayers to be made for Muslims on Fridays. These prayers may lead to miracles among the Hausa Muslims in Uyo. Considering the colossal task of missions to Muslims, only intentional, regular and fervent prayers from pastors and church members can lead the Muslims to Christ.

Fifthly, there should be a healthy collaboration among all other departments of the churches in Uyo with the Adventist Muslim Relation (AMR) department for effective missions to the Muslims. AMR department left to itself, may not be able to accomplish the task of missions to Muslims. Muslim ministry is for every member and department.

Leaders and members of departments in the churches in Uyo should be trained on how to use their various ministries to reach Muslims. For example, annual cooking competitions can be organized with Muslim women by the Women's Ministries under the auspices of the AMR department. Besides, there can be a collaboration of the AMR department with the health department to organize free medical screening and health expos in Muslim communities

Finally, the plan for house church model should be put in place and subsequently implemented to accommodate Muslims converts. House church biblical

model was practiced in the early church. This is important due to the challenges that accompany Muslims when they openly get converted to the Church, in New Testament era when the followers of Christ could not meet in the synagogues they had to meet in their houses (1 Cor 16:19; Col 4:15). Pastors and church leaders should be given orientation on the need for the house church model in nurturing and discipling, and house churches should be created when Muslims are won secretly to faith in Christ. Figure 1 below is the pictorial model of the strategy discussed above.

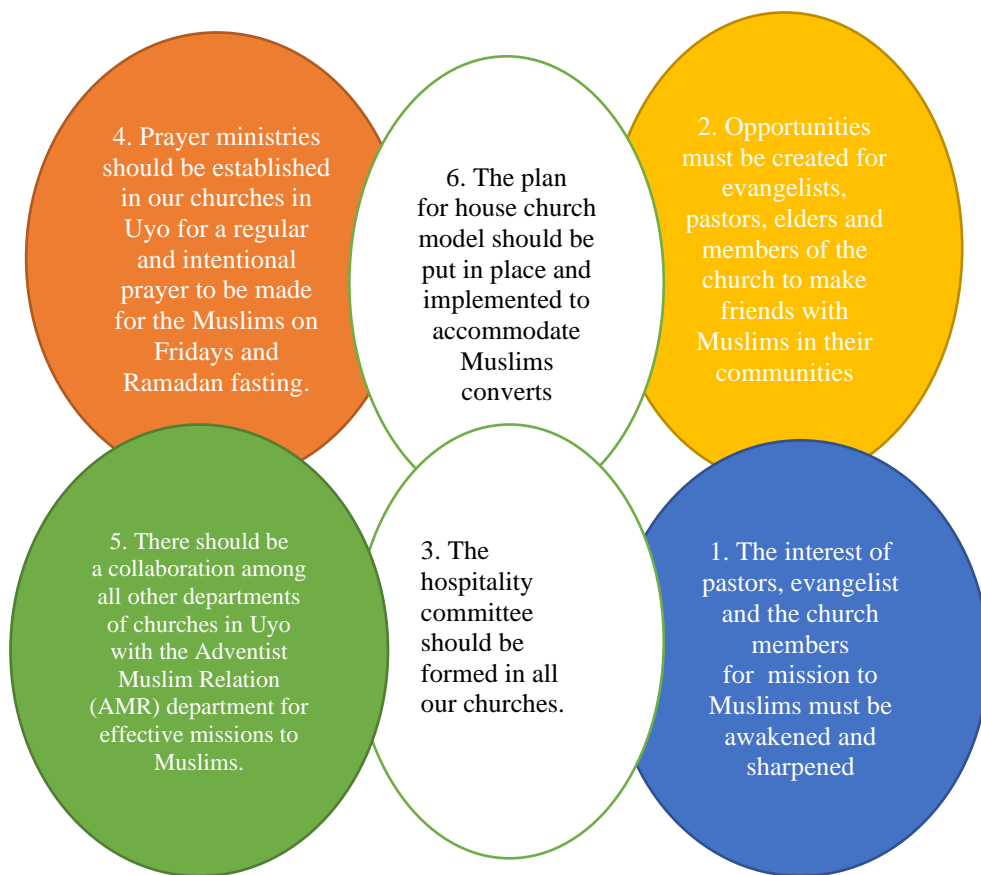


Figure 1. Pictorial Model Strategy

The Strategic Plan for Proposed Strategy

Tables 2-6 give the strategic plan for achieving the proposed strategy for the Hausa Muslim mission in Uyo.

Table 2. Waking the Interest of Pastors, Evangelists, and Members to the Mission to Muslims

S/N	Activities	Resources needed	Responsibility	Location
1	Seminars to be organized and revivals for pastors and gospel workers on the why and how of Mission to Muslims.	Training Materials and Handouts, to be provided	AMR Director	In the Conference Headquarter
2	Mobilize and Train the Laity for Muslim Ministry	There will be provision for Training Materials for all the participants	AMR Director And all Pastors	In all Churches

Table 3. Conference Weekly Prayers for Muslims on Fridays and during Ramadan

	Activities/ Action Steps	Resources /materials	Facilitators/ the lead persons	location
1	Praying for Muslims on Fridays	Hymn books Bibles	AMR Director/Pastors, Elders And the Members	All Churches/ Houses of Members and Workplaces of Members
2	Praying for Muslims during Ramadan	Hymn books Bibles	AMR Director all Pastors/ Elders and Members	In all our churches and members houses within Uyo

Table 4. Creating Opportunities for Members, Elders, and Pastors to have Muslim Friends

No,	Activities/Action Steps	Resources/materials	Facilitators/ the lead persons	location
1	Distribute Foods and offer helping hands for Muslims during Ramadan	Food items, cutlasses, wheelbarrows	AMR Director/ Pastors/Elders And Members within Uyo	In all our churches within Uyo
2	Organize literacy classes for men and women in Muslim communities	Literacy class materials, Markers Boards, English Teachers	AMR Director/Pastors English teachers	In a selected HMU communities

Table 5. Ensuring Collaboration between other Departments and the AMR Department.

Numbers of activities	Activities/Action Steps	Resources/materials	Facilitators/ the lead persons	Location
1	Collaborate with the health department to organize free medical screening and health expos in Muslim communities	Thermometers, Health books, First aid boxes and medicines	AMR Director Health Director, Nurses and Doctors in the church	In a selected community of HMU

Table 6. Planning for House Churches Models for New Converts

	Activities/ Action Steps	Resources/ materials	Facilitators/ the lead persons	location
1	To enlighten the conference administrators, pastors on the need for implementation of house churches model for new converts.	House Church development and implementation resource material from GC AMR And small group fellowship	AMR Director Trained Bible workers and Pastors	Conference Headquarter Designated venues in the community outside of the church
2	The Creation House Churches model for new converts.	Bibles Hymns, study materials	AMR Director/ Pastors And Elders, trained lay workers	In selected locations outside of the church environment

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the whole discussion on A Contextualized Mission Approach for Engaging Hausa Muslims in Uyo, Nigeria, through intentional Friendship. Each chapter will be briefly summarized. Then, the findings of the research were submitted in Chapter 5. The Missiological implications and the proposed strategies will be proposed in this chapter. Besides, the chapter also provides conclusions and recommendations.

Summary

The study started with an introduction in Chapter 1, giving, among others, background and a statement of the problem, which identifies the problem it aims to address. It highlights how intentional friendship should be utilized as a mission strategy to reach the Hausa Muslims in Uyo and share the gospel of Christ with them. This research was necessary, because the church has not successfully reached these Muslims through its traditional public campaigns, which have effectively brought thousands of souls from the non-Muslims population and other Christian denominations to the Seventh-day Adventist church over the years. This conventional approach does not appeal to the Hausa Muslims; hence, there is a need for a new context-based mission approach.

Chapter 2 lays a solid biblical groundwork for friendship evangelism examining some key terms and stories from both the Old and New Testaments, along with some perspectives from Ellen G. White on this topic. Chapter 3 reviews

important literature in consultation with the major authors in Islamic studies, focusing on Christian-Muslim dialogues, Adventist-Muslim relations, approaches to Muslim evangelism, and principles of friendship evangelism. The above literature[s] indicates that intentional friendship can lead Hausa Muslims to Christ in a non-confrontational way, which avoiding being accused of proselyting.

The Islamic worldview and theology were reviewed and analyzed through its five pillars and six articles of faith. The five pillars are Iman, Salat, Zakat, Sawm, and hajj, The six articles of Iman encompass belief in Allah alone, angels, Holy Books, the day of judgment, prophets, and the concepts of predestination and free will. It was also discovered that the fundamental teaching in the Islamic worldview is the belief in the oneness of Allah, with human beings serving as His representatives.

Chapter 4 presents a thorough discussion of the research methodology employed in this study. The investigation adopted a phenomenological approach, a qualitative research method that examines individuals' experiences in life. A non-random sample of seven Hausa Muslims from Uyo HMUs was selected for in-depth interviews, that allowed for a meaningful conversation.

Furthermore, to ensure the credibility and accuracy of the data, a focus group discussion was also conducted with six additional Hausa Muslims from Uyo HMU. Data collection involved audio recordings, which were carefully transcribed and coded to identify emerging themes. These themes served as the foundation for data analysis and informed the findings presented in Chapter 5.

Missiological Reflection

1. The Muslims believe that the Quran was verbally dictated to Muhammad the prophet of Islam and so must be used as the initial book of reference

for engaging Muslims in doctrinal teachings since they do not accept to be taught from the Bible.

2. The Bible is also accepted to be a revelation from God but it is corrupted.
3. There is the need for a thorough education of the Islamic worldview and theology for those who are involved in the mission work to Muslims in Uyo. These including the pastors, the evangelists, the elders, and the church members in Uyo. This will assist them to be better equipped in their mission to Muslims, particularly the Hausa Muslims.
4. The mission to Muslims must be as silent or covert as possible.
5. The mission to Muslims must be saturated with prayers.

The Proposed Strategies

1. There should be a revived interest among pastors, evangelists, church elders and church members in Uyo regarding the mission to Muslims.
2. There is the need for an ongoing training for church leaders and lay members, in preparation to effectively engage with Hausa Muslims in Uyo with the gospel.
3. There must be an intentional and regular prayers for Muslims in all our churches in Uyo on Fridays and during the Ramadan.
4. Evangelists, Pastors, church elders, and church members in Uyo must be encouraged to build friendships with the Hausa Muslims in their communities.
5. All church departments in Uyo should collaborate with the Adventist-Muslim Relations (AMR) department for resources to enhance missions to Muslims.

6. To facilitate the integration of new Muslim converts, it would be beneficial to adopt the house church model, as it provides a supportive environment tailored to their needs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the development of alternative strategies to the traditional public campaigns that have proven ineffective in reaching Hausa Muslims in Uyo, is essential. The need for a thoughtful and context-sensitive approach is underscored. It emphasizes the importance of fostering intentional friendships as a way to engage Hausa Muslims in Uyo, Nigeria, and ultimately to lead them to Christ. The study reveals that relational dynamics can serve as a powerful means to share the gospel.

Additionally, it identifies various factors that contribute to the rejection of the gospel, particularly a lack of sensitivity towards Islamic traditions, theology, and worldview. Therefore, pastors, evangelists, missionaries, elders, and church members need to adjust and become more sensitive in their attitude and relationship with them after receiving a thorough education on the Muslim mission. By doing so, many Muslims can be guided towards a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Recommendations

The study comes up with the following recommendations:

1. The following strategies (a) awakening and sharpening of pastors and church members interests on Muslims Mission (b) Setting up an hospitality committee in all our churches for Muslims mission, (c) Prayer ministry in all our churches for Muslim mission, (d) Creating opportunities for friendship, (e) Regular training of church workers on the Muslims evangelism and mission, and (f) Implementation of house church model,

proposed by this study for engaging Hausa Muslims in Uyo can be adopted in all the districts, and conferences under the Eastern Nigeria Union Conference ENUC and other sister unions in Nigeria.

2. The Hausa Muslims who will be converted as a result of this contextualized friendship mission approach can be trained on how to effectively reach out to other Muslims within their community.
3. There should be further study on how hospitality could be used as a barrier breaker and a door opener to reach Muslims from other tribes in Nigeria.
4. There should be a budget in place for the Adventist mission to Muslims at all levels of the church administrative structure, if there is no such a budget yet.
5. Further work could be done on how a new convert from Hausa Muslims can be better protected from Islamic extremists like Boko haram and others, particularly in northern Nigeria.
6. Finally, I strongly recommend that this work should be protected and secured for the researcher's safety because of some sensitive information on Islam and their practices contained in this work.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

You are being asked to participate in a research study entitled: **A contextual mission approach of engaging Hausa Muslims in Uyo, Nigeria, through intentional Friendship.**

The information below tells you about what is involved in the research, what you will be asked to do, and the potential risks and benefits of participating in this study. You are encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification about the nature of the study. Please note that choosing whether to participate in this research is voluntary and entirely your choice. You may refuse to participate or discontinue your participation at any time during the study.

The purpose of this study is to develop a respectful approach to dialogue with the Hausa Muslims in Uyo.

Your participation: You will be asked to participate in an interview. This means you will be asked to share your perception of the Christian faith, particularly the Seventh-day Adventist church. The interview will take about forty-five (45) minutes to complete. You will be asked to answer questions on how you, being a Muslim, relate to someone from other faiths.

Benefits and Risks: If you participate, you will contribute to knowledge about interfaith dialogue and the salvation of other Muslims. Also, the greatest reward is eternal life from God. There are no identifiable risks in participation.

Confidentiality: Your personal information will be kept confidential. Your interview responses will be anonymous so they will not be identified in any report or publication of this study.

Please carefully read and sign this Form if you are willing to participate in the study.

1. My participation in this research project is voluntary. There is no explicit or implicit coercion whatsoever to participate.

2. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

3. I understand that if I feel uncomfortable during the interview, I have the right to decline to answer any question or end the interview or discussion.

4. I understand that the interview will be audio-recorded to accurately capture my own words and a transcript will be produced for data analysis.

5. I understand the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information from this interview or discussion.

If you have any ethical concerns about your participation in this research, contact the Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee, Adventist University of Africa: ethics@aua.ac.ke

I have read and fully understood the statements on this Form. All my questions were answered satisfactorily. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

Contact the supervisor of the research if you need more information or have questions: Obed Olaotse Gabasiane, PhD (gabasiano@ua.ac.ke)

Thank you.

Aniefiok Joseph Oyuhontem

(MA Missiology Programme, oyuhontemj@ua.ac.ke +2348117391151)

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDES

1. Can you share with me how your religion (Islam) shapes your daily life and relationships?
2. What are the most important values and traditions in your community?
3. How does your community view interactions or relationships with people of other religions (Christianity)?
4. What challenges does your community face in maintaining its cultural and religious identity in Uyo?
5. What qualities do you value most in a friendship, especially with someone of a different religion (Christianity)?
6. How do you feel when people from other religions show kindness or hospitality toward you?
7. How open are you to sharing or discussing your religion in a trusted friendship?
8. What are your main concerns or reservations about attending Christian public religious events?
9. What would make a religious event feel more welcoming or respectful to your beliefs?
10. How do you think Christians can better engage with your community without causing misunderstanding?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FGD

(Interview guide for focus group discussion)

1. How does your faith shape your everyday life, decisions, and relationships?
2. What are the most important values that hold your community together?
3. Can you share any personal experiences of friendships or interactions with people from other religions?
4. What are the challenges your community faces in maintaining its religious and cultural identity in Uyo?
5. Have you ever had a deep friendship with someone from another religion?
What made it work?
6. How do you feel when people from other religions show acts of kindness or hospitality toward you?
7. What makes religious discussions meaningful in friendships?
8. What are your thoughts on attending Christian religious events?
9. Can you share examples of interfaith events or gatherings that felt respectful and inclusive?
10. What are some ways Christians can engage with your community without causing misunderstandings?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW GUIDES FOR PIDGIN

(For Hausa Muslims who could not speak standard English)

1. How your faith dey shape your everyday life and relationship?
2. Wetin be di most important values and traditions for your community?
3. How una dey see relationship with people wey get different faith?
4. Wetin be di challenge wey your community dey face to hold culture and religion strong for Uyo?
5. Wetin be di qualities wey you value pass for friendship, especially with person wey no get di same faith?
6. How you dey feel when people from different religion show una kindness or hospitality?
7. How open you be to talk about your faith with your friend wey you trust?
8. Wetin be your fear or concern about attending Christian religious events?
9. Wetin go make religious event feel more welcoming and respectful?
10. How Christians fit connect better with una community without causing misunderstanding?

APPENDIX E

ETHICAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



Adventist University of Africa

Developing Leaders for Service

A Private Chartered University Accredited by Commission for University Education, Kenya



9th April 2025

Aniefiok Joseph Oyuhontem
Theological Seminary
Adventist University of Africa
Kenya

Reference: AUA/ISERC/01/04/2025

Dear Aniefiok Joseph Oyuhontem

RE: A Contextualized Mission Approach of Engaging the Hausa Muslim in Uyo, Nigeria, through Intentional Friendship

This is to inform you that the Adventist University of Africa Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee (AUA-ISERC) has reviewed and approved your research proposal titled above. Your application approval number is AUA/ISERC/2025/0026. The approval period is 9th April 2025 – 10th April 2026.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. Only approved documents (including informed consent and study instruments) will be used.
- ii. All changes, including amendments, deviations, and violations, are submitted for review and approval by AUA-ISERC.
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to AUA-ISERC within 72 hours of notification.
- iv. Any changes anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to AUA-ISERC within 72 hours.
- v. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to the expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- vi. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to AUA-ISERC.

Prior to commencing your study, you are expected to obtain permissions or any other clearances needed.

Yours Sincerely

Josephine Ganu, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Scientific Ethics Review C'ttee
ethics@aua.ac.ke



APPENDIX F

AKWA IBOM CONFERENCE APPROVAL

Seventh-day
Adventist Church
Akwa Ibom Conference

December 12, 2024

Oyuhontem Aniefiok Josesph
Adventist University of Africa
Ongata Rongai, Nairobi,
Kenya

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR
TERRITORY**

Greetings in the name of Jesus.

With reference to your later dated December 9, 2024 on the above subject, I have been directed by the Administration of Akwa Ibom Conference to convey approval to you to conduct your research within Uyo territory.

We wish you the best.



Pastor Akpan Moses
Executive Secretary,
Akwa Ibom Conference

N0. 1 Seventh-day Adventist Church, Avenue, Akon Itam, Itu L.G.A e-mail: akisda@gmail.com



APPENDIX G

TRIANGULATION MATRIX

Table G 1. Triangulation Matrix

Data Collection Instrument	Description	Data Sources	Implementation Technique	Data Analysis Method
Qualitative Interviews	Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 7 HMUs	HMUs	Using one-to-one, face-to-face Zoom interviews. Using a Semi-structured Interview Guide to interview the HMUs	Qualitative Methods.
	5 Male HMUs were interviewed.		The interviews were recorded with permission.	
	2 Female HMUs were interviewed			
Documents	Accessing relevant Documents to answer research question 2 on the biblical foundation of friendship evangelism	Peer-reviewed journal articles, books, Bible and writings of Ellen G. White	The peer-reviewed articles, books, Bible and writings of Ellen G. White were read and themes relevant to the study were gleaned and synthesized for the literature review and the biblical foundation of friendship evangelism	Qualitative methods
Focus Group Discussion	A Focus Group Discussion was conducted with 5 HMUs	HMUs	Using a Zoom face-to-face Group Discussion Using a semi-structured interview guide for the focus group discussion	Qualitative methods
	4 Male HMUs 1Female HMUs		The focus group discussions were recorded with permission.	

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