

**CONSTRUCTING MISSION PRAXIS FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AMONGST THE RURAL POOR OF OLUYOLE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT (OYO STATE), NIGERIA.**

by

AKINYEMI OLUWAFEMI ALAWODE

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Supervisor: Professor Willem A. Saayman

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DECLARATION

Student Number: **46602151**

I declare that “**CONSTRUCTING MISSION PRAXIS FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AMONGST THE RURAL POOR OF OLUYOLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (OYO STATE), NIGERIA**” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....

SIGNATURE

ALAWODE AKINYEMI O.

.....

DATE

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the LORD, GOD ALMIGHTY- The author and the finisher of my faith.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABCD	Asset based community development
NDE	National directorate of employment
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crime Commission
ICPC	Independent Corrupt Practices and related offences Commission
NBC	Nigerian Baptist Convention.
OYSG	Oyo State Government
OLG	Oluyole local government
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NBCD	Need based community development
FRN	Federal Republic of Nigeria.
FCT	Federal Capital Territory (Abuja)
JPOI	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (World Summit on Sustainable Development)

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CHAPTER ONE

1. Abstract

Extreme poverty is the most devastating problem facing the human race, because it condemns nearly half of the world's population to hunger, disease and oppression-often with little or no hope for the future. The human beings made in the image of God are tragically prevented from realizing their God given potentials because of poverty. The reality of poverty can be overwhelming, but we must understand that this age old adversary can be defeated. According to the famous maxim "If you give a man a fish, he will eat for a day, but if you teach a man how to fish, he will eat for a lifetime".

Therefore, the best way to fight poverty is to empower the people to shape their own future-to treat the causes of poverty and not just the symptoms (Stearns: 2010, 300)

Key terms: MISSION, POVERTY, TRANSFORMATIONAL-DEVELOPMENT, CHURCH, COMMUNITY, PEOPLE ORIENTED MINISTRY, EVANGELISATION- SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT.

1.1 Introduction

Poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today (JPOI: 2004), therefore, this thesis would research fully into the problem of poverty among the people and how this menace can be dealt with. After preaching to the poor, how can the church improve their standard of living through development strategies?

Government is doing all she could to raise peoples standard of living, the religious body as well should try as much as possible to contribute her own quota towards the welfare of the poor, because, if religion in this modern society would not lose its relevance as one of the oldest institutions, it must work on the physical well-being of the people not just on their spiritual needs. If we take a critical consideration of what happened in Matthew 14:14-21, we would see that Jesus after preaching to the people would ask the disciple to give them something to eat that is, He helped them with their physical needs. As I said earlier, the church of today must go beyond preaching the good news of salvation to the people but must also attempt the provision of welfare packages for the poor in our society.

Moreover, it is good to provide for the poor in our society, but this is not good enough, because giving the poor fish to eat, will always create dependency syndrome, but by teaching them how to fish, we shall have sustainable development in our nation because individual development will amount to national development. This research will work carefully on how to open the understanding of the poor to see the resources in their immediate environment and how to annex it, and through which they will be able to use their God-given resources to provide for themselves and their livelihood will be enhanced thereby. This work is majorly on how the poor can be empowered for them to be able to help themselves. If the poor were not empowered to the point of being able to provide for themselves, the problem is that we are creating a dependency syndrome that confirms the belief that the poor already have-that they would never be able to stand on their own. And that is the reason why this topic “Constructing Mission praxis for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development Amongst the Rural Poor” is very important, if the church mean serious business in empowering the poor. As the government is working on this, the church must not relent on her effort too. The church must always bear it in mind that Christ became poor so that we might be rich (1 Corinthians 8:9).

Also, in poverty eradication, individual development plays a vital role. According to Corbett (2009:104) development is a more permanent approach which is an on-going process in which

both the helper and the one being helped are engaged in a transforming relationship in which both parties glorify God. In this developmental programme, the poor would have a change of orientation which would change their worldview. A kind of revolution that would better the lot of the poor, this is not a revolution with guns and cutlasses but revolution of the mind, through which the poor will be able to see things with every sense of clarity from their mind, because the most terrible type of poverty is that of the mind.

Several charity organizations, for example World Vision, in the past and even at present are doing their best in making life comfortable for the poor both in rural areas and urban centres, through provision of schools, health centres, sinking of boreholes and roads construction, all these are good but how can a common man be able to feed himself and his family, so that he would not continue to suffer in the midst of plenty. Nelson Mandela says, "overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity but an act of justice"

Missiology helps to think creatively and critically about ways in which Christians work for development/transformation/empowerment in their society. Using missiology to empower the poor comes from the theological reflection on "Making Disciples of all Nations."

By doing this there would be improvement in the standard of living of the poor believers because Christianity is not synonymous to poverty, so that people would not have erroneous thought that "being poor would give them direct access to heaven"(the case of Lazarus and the rich man[Luke16:19-23]).

1.2. Purpose and aim of this study

The purpose of this study is to develop a relevant and adequate model of building sustainable socio-economic development amongst the rural poor community through the missions' activities of the church. This study will assist in identifying the major needs of the poor and how they could be empowered. It will also evaluate the effects of these helping hands being giving by the Christian missionary organizations and what impact could these have on their Christian life.

The result of this study will also identify the criteria that should be considered in choosing a particular community for specific developmental programme.

1.3. Relevance of this study

In Nigeria as with other developing countries, the poor are usually neglected. More resources are allocated to the executive and legislative arms of government regardless of the hardships the common people are passing through.

Due to the fact that this hardships result in inequality, injustice and poverty, therefore, the church will have to change its ways of thinking in order to challenge the government and motivate the people, for them to have a change of worldview which will enable them to conduct their lives ethically and to maximize the opportunities that will change their livelihood for better.

It is against this background that this study strives to illustrate the paradox between the wealth of the country and the extreme poverty of the people living in it.

This study should lead to the establishment of viable strategies to assist churches in developing good governance and promoting justice and equity. It will also provide the church and policy-makers with valuable insights into the interaction between poverty and related issues. By studying the underlying patterns of poverty in Nigeria, this study could provide an entry point for understanding the Church's role in this issue.

This study should also lead to a more holistic understanding of sustainable socio-economic development among the rural poor, and will also reveal important factors that restrict the Church from participating effectively in policy and decision-making processes. Through this study, and based on local knowledge and past achievements with a view to empowering vulnerable communities to develop models of sustainable community development in the future, the researcher hopes to contribute towards enhancing the processes, means, structures and relationships between the government and the Church in order to alleviate poverty among the rural poor.

1.4. Statement of the problem

The research topic "Constructing mission praxis for sustainable socio-economic development amongst the rural poor" was born out of my passion for the poor people based on situation at hand in Nigeria, where rural poverty appears to be endemic and this has attracted much attention

because the condition is getting worse on a daily basis. One of the serious effects of rural poverty, of course, is food and nutrition insecurity, and its attendant socio-economic and political costs (<http://www.tropentag.de/2006/abstracts/full/614.pdf> Accessed on 13/12/2011). Nigeria has a population of over 160 million people and about 70% of these people live below the poverty line that is, less than \$1 per day (<http://www.indexmundi.com/map/?v=69> Accessed on 13/12/2011). Moreover, poverty contributes to poor agricultural productivity, as many farmers in Nigeria cannot afford to purchase necessary farm inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides and improved seeds, which would bring about increased productivity. Also, the ability of poor consumers to purchase food necessary for maintenance of health and productive life is reduced. The fact that food security in Nigeria has greatly worsened since 1970 has resulted in decline in per capita consumption of food in different parts of the country in recent time (<http://www.tropentag.de/2006/abstracts/full/614> Accessed on 13/12/2011).

Then I asked myself how poverty can be eradicated in Nigeria, being the major menace to our country and that is the reason why I would like to contribute my own view using my area of specialization-Missiology, to confront the major problem of our society. Therefore, this study will examine the problem of rural poverty in Nigeria and the role the Church can play in alleviating this all important socio-economic problem. I believe Missiology will be a “current” subject until Christ comes, and for Missiology to do this, it must address current issues. And the current issue in Nigeria now is POVERTY. Therefore, Missiology should rise up and make its own contribution towards poverty eradication in Nigeria for the church to maintain her relevance throughout the ages, because the gospel must be preached in words and deeds.

Another reason for this study is the disparities between the rich and the poor all over the world, which is increasing on daily basis; even in the wealthiest of nations it is rising sharply. Fewer people are becoming increasingly “successful” and wealthy while a disproportionately larger population is also becoming even poorer. Stearns discussing with the former President of America, Jimmy Carter, on the question, “What is the greatest challenge facing human kind in the 21st century?” Jimmy Carter said the answer to this question is “the growing gap between the richest and the poorest people on earth” They gave the analysis of the ratio between the rich and the poor countries over the years as follow:

	RATIO	POPULATION	INCOME
1.In 1820 the ration was	4.1	1,067,894	\$694,772
2.In 1913 the ration was	11.1	1,771,864	\$2,726,065
3.In 1950 the ratio was	35.1	2,512,211	\$5,372,330
4. In 1992 we had about	75:1	5,441,353	\$27,994,920

Table 1.4

(Stearns 2010: 97 & 122 and www.ggdc.net/maddison-13/12/2011).

This shows that there is a very serious problem in our society today. The reality of poverty in our world is obvious and it must be handled properly.

1.5. Research objective and thesis questions

With regard to my intention of forging a new understanding of mission, Mason (1993:14-16) suggests, “One of the main virtues of expressing whatever it is that you want to research and explain as a puzzle is that it focuses your mind on research questions...and therefore their importance cannot be overemphasized...those questions to which you as a researcher really want to know the answers and in that sense they are the formal expression of your intellectual puzzle”. In order to formulate my research questions, I first have to formulate my research objective in the form of a thesis statement:

1.6. Thesis statement

Mission practice that aimed at the empowerment of the rural poor for sustainable socio-economic development will be described in this thesis. I am convinced that Christian mission should be fully involved in socio-economic development in Nigeria as it is in many areas the closest institution to the people. As such it will assist in identifying the major needs of the poor and how they could be empowered. Mission organizations will also be able to evaluate the effects of these

helping hands and what impact could these have on the poor people's lives, and also identify the criteria that should be considered in choosing a particular community for a specific developmental programme.

In my attempt to propose a missiological way of constructing sustainable mission-based socio-economic development amongst the rural poor, I put forward the following thesis questions:

1. How can the missions of the church in communities of the poor lead towards transformational development?
2. What is the relationship between mission, the poor and economic development?
3. What attitude should the church adopt towards poverty and the poor?
4. What are the likely challenges the Christian missionary organizations can face in the process of empowering the poor?
5. What are the strategies and methods that Christians' missionary organisations need to adopt to alleviate poverty amongst the rural poor?

1.7 Definitions

1.7.1 Mission

According to Kritzinger (1989:5) Mission can be defined as the work of the church in the world as commanded by God, Harding (1987:8) also defines mission as the proclamation and immediate inauguration of salvation seen as the divine gift of liberation both spiritual and temporal. David Bosch (1991: xv) in his own view says mission affects reality in terms of the church's participation in God's work-the church's participation in bringing about salvation in the world. It does not leave people and their context unaltered. Mission is understood, in other words, as an enterprise that transforms reality.

It liberates people not only spiritually but even temporally, by addressing their physical needs. It enables people to realize that the Kingdom of God is in their midst, and Gutierrez (1986:15) says through the gospel that it preaches, mission brings liberation from sin and reconciles people to

God. This reconciliation with God is freedom from sin (Galatians 5:1). Such liberation is also freedom from oppressive structures and from exploitation by other human beings. David Bosch (1991:393) says “however we understand salvation determines the scope of our missionary enterprise”, that is our understanding of salvation determines the way we carry out our mission work.

In this study mission is understood as an enterprise that brings about the kingdom of God by liberating and saving people from the power of sin and oppression. It is with this understanding and in this sense that the concept will be used.

1.7.2 Poverty

Schenk (1996: 16) defines poverty as the powerlessness and alienation of people from the key institution of society that makes it possible for them to access resources they need for their lives to be whole, thus being in a state of deficiency materially, spiritually and culturally. Poverty is a complex and multifaceted concept. It not only relates to economic factors such as insufficient income, lack of assets, etc., but it is also related to social, political and cultural factors, such as lack of access to education and training, poor health, lack of representation, and lack of empowerment. All these factors are interrelated, and that is why poverty is so complex.

The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in its statement on poverty, defines poverty as a “human condition characterized by the sustained or chronic deprivation of resources, capabilities, choices, security, and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights” (UN: Poverty, 2007).

In this study the poor are perceived in a material but not a metaphorical sense. They are those who suffer basic necessities of daily living such as food, clothing, and shelter, Poverty, in this sense, can be defined as deprivation or lack of the essential goods and services needed for a minimum standard of well-being and life, those who are deprived of the material and spiritual goods necessary to conduct their lives with any dignity. It is in this sense that the term will be used in this work.

Although poverty has a lot of dimensions to it, such as the spiritual, cultural and communal dimensions, in this study we shall be concentrating on economic poverty. This stems from the assumption that material poverty can give rise to other kinds of poverty, and Schenk (1996:16) in his own view says if we address it we may be able to work towards addressing other types of poverty.

1.7.3. Empowerment

Empowerment can be defined according to Cronje (1996: 37) as the process whereby individuals and groups attain personal or collective power, which enables them to actively improve their living conditions.

This definition emphasizes that empowerment involves the development of knowledge and the learning of skills in order to acquire the necessary power. In this work the term will mean the expansion of the abilities, knowledge and skills of individuals and communities in order to mobilize economic resources to meet their needs and improve their standard of living.

This kind of empowerment is achieved through capacity building, which is the process aimed at empowering individuals and organizations by expanding capabilities to plan, organize and implement decisions through knowledge building and development of self-confidence (Ibid).

1.7.4. Church

According to Nurnberger (1993: 8), the church is a living community of believers who come into being when the message concerning God's self-giving, redeeming act in Christ calls people into the fellowship of God through the Spirit. Andriatsimalomanarivo (2001: 18-19) in his own definition says the church is the fellowship of the redeemed people, professing Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and aiming to proclaim His resurrection until He returns. The church is

universal, but is locally represented by individual congregations. The term community in Nurnberger's definition refers to the community of believers.

The Church is not merely a juridical or religious society founded by Jesus as an institutional means for salvation. Rather, it is the continuing historical presence in the world of God's promise of salvation, permanently established in the eschatological victorious death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Ackley, 1993:157).

Adair (1977: 7-9) in his book entitled "The Becoming Church," argues that the concept of the church should be defined and used in senses ranging from the concrete and local to the abstract and universal in order to describe the following:

(a) A building for worship

Adair points out that the word 'church' stems from an old German derivate of the Greek word *kyriakon*, meaning 'The Lord's house'. A Northern European variant, '*kirk*,' also entered this language from the Old Norse and Scottish. Originally, the 'Lord' in question meant God rather than Jesus, although, of course early Christians would not press that distinction. He adds that the archetypal church in this sense was the temple in Jerusalem.

(b) The clergy

As the common phrase 'going to Church' reveals, in some sense many people associate the clergy with being the Church. This meaning is closely related to (a) above, in the sense that the clergyperson these days is visually associated with the Lord's house; he is seen to lead worship in it and to be largely responsible for maintaining the building. Moreover, the clergy are tangible because they can be seen and touched; they wear distinctive clothes, both in and out of the Lord's house, which makes such recognition possible.

(c) A congregation of Christians locally organised

A congregation, as viewed by Adair, is literally a body of persons assembled for religious worship. In this context, 'church' is a translation of a different Greek word, namely *ecclesia*, which referred to an assembly; it is derived from the Greek verb for 'calling out' or 'summoning people together.' Behind its use in the Christian context lies in the Old Testament image of the assembly of Israelite tribes in the wilderness.

In this work the term “church” will signify a specific local community which meets regularly for worship and also to discern God’s will. Theron (1996: 1-2) says the church exists in the world and amongst other communities and its members come from other communities, therefore, the church is in direct relationship with the society. So the term will refer to local Baptist churches in Oluyole local government and sometimes it will refer to the church as an institution. Therefore, I shall be using it interchangeably.

1.7.5 Community

Community may be defined as follows:

People in a geographical area with shared interests and a sense of mutual commitments and solidarity usually associated with certain common values and needs and who have a network of social interaction and regular contact or the possibility of such contact, which enables them to act collectively (Schenk 1996: 20).

In this study “community” will refer to members of the local neighbourhood in Oluyole rural community. Some of the people in this community formed the nucleus of my congregation and are involved in the development forum. They started as Baptist church training programme where a lot of new innovations are being taught from time to time. I shall be using the term “community” to refer to this nucleus, but the term will also refer to the larger body of people in Oluyole community. So, the church congregation as well as the entire Oluyole rural community will all be termed “community” in this study.

1.7.6 Development

Development is the process by which members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations (Mpumlwana 1997: 18). The reason for development must clearly be to bring about the

economic improvement as well as the social and political transformation of a community. Development is about the people, not projects or programmes; it has to be about improving the quality of life of ordinary people in their local communities.

I do understand that development is not only an ambiguous concept but also one that has become discredited and unpopular amongst communities on the receiving end of the so-called development work. This has happened because the history of the concept is closely associated with Western ideas of modernization, technological advancement and liberal and free-market economic ideologies.

Later it proved that this understanding of development is not good enough. It propagated colonization and the disempowerment of the Third World countries by those of the First World. It failed to improve the economic, social and political lives of the poor in Third World countries. To some people development aid became a tool for extending the dominance of Western culture. To solve this problem we need progress understanding of development as a comprehensive social process that includes the interdependence of economic, social, political and cultural factors, both nationally and internationally (Van Schakwyk1996:48). This understanding of development implies a challenge to the status quo and breaking down of oppressive structures, thus changing the perspective of development to that of liberation.

According to Van Schalkwyk (1996: 48), she said the breaking down of negative structures is not enough for development. Once oppressive structures have been broken down by the liberating process of development, there is a need to build up a new society, and this process is called “social transformation”. Anne Hope in her own view says “social transformation implies building up a new society with an entirely different set of values as well as alternative economic, political, legal and educational structures which will create a just and equitable order” (Ibid).

When it comes to the relationship between the church and development, Koegelenberg et al (1992: 3) say that the church should not take the issue of development with levity because development is ultimately about a new vision for the society. It is about transformation of society from oppression to liberation, from poverty to well-being. Since God does not toy with people’s pain, poverty and suffering, also the church should see people or human development as a serious matter.

1.7.7 Liberation

Gustavo Gutierrez (1986: 15) in his own view says liberation is a gift of our Lord Jesus Christ because He has set us free (Galatians 5: 1). Which means we have freedom from sin, injustice, and several other situations in which we need deliverance, and the purpose of this freedom is love and communion, and this is the final phase of liberation. This freedom in Christ is life-giving and signifies communion with God and others, since human beings are relational that is God wants us to relate well with one another in order to enjoy those resources God has deposited in the world maximally. So, being in communion with God means that the Spirit overcome sin, which consists in the denial of love and hence all the consequences of sin. When sin is overcome, it signifies the coming of the Kingdom of God in our lives. Therefore, the first step when talking about spiritual and physical human liberation is freedom from sin.

This means that the Kingdom of God is a historical process that takes place through liberation and without the liberating events of history, the kingdom of God does not grow; but the process of liberation only destroys the roots of oppression and of the exploitation of one person by someone else. This does not represent complete salvation. Gutierrez (1986: 16) says liberation is the total historical embodiment of the Kingdom pointing towards the fullness of the Kingdom.

Therefore, liberation can be understood in terms of two levels of freedom, number one is the freedom from sin and the second one is freedom from exploitation and poverty. In this research work liberation will mean these two freedoms and their relationship to the mission of the church. This implies understanding the mission of the church as liberating events that is, liberation from both sin and exploitation.

1.7.8 Transformation

Anne Hope (in Van Schalkwyk 1996: 34) says transformation can be understood as a process of change in people's attitudes and situations leading to a change in their reality.

With my little experience in the ministry, I view transformation as an integral part of mission, because wherever mission is done, situations are transformed, people's lives changed and their

social conditions improved. To buttress that statement David Bosch (1991:1) says mission is an enterprise that transforms reality. My belief is that mission makes difference; it brings about lasting change wherever it is practiced. In this study mission focuses on transformation, and transformation can be the outcome of mission. Seen in this perspective, mission is that dimension of our faith that refuses to accept reality as it is but seeks to transform it. It is with this understanding that the word will be used in this study.

1.8 Delimitations and limitations of the study

According to Creswell et al (Creswell, 1994: 110), delimitation and limitation represent another parameter of a research study that helps to establish the boundaries, exceptions, reservations, and qualifications inherent in every study.

Therefore, this study will confine itself to interviewing and analysing the situation of poverty in Oluyole local government area of Oyo State of Nigeria, mission activities of the church and the common people.

The researcher has conducted research in and around Oluyole local government community as a case study. So, all the field research will be limited to the same area.

The study will not be generalised to all areas of poverty. The focus of this research work will be on method of empowerment that will enable rural poor people to benefit from the resources of the country and to fight against poverty by themselves.

MAP OF NIGERIA

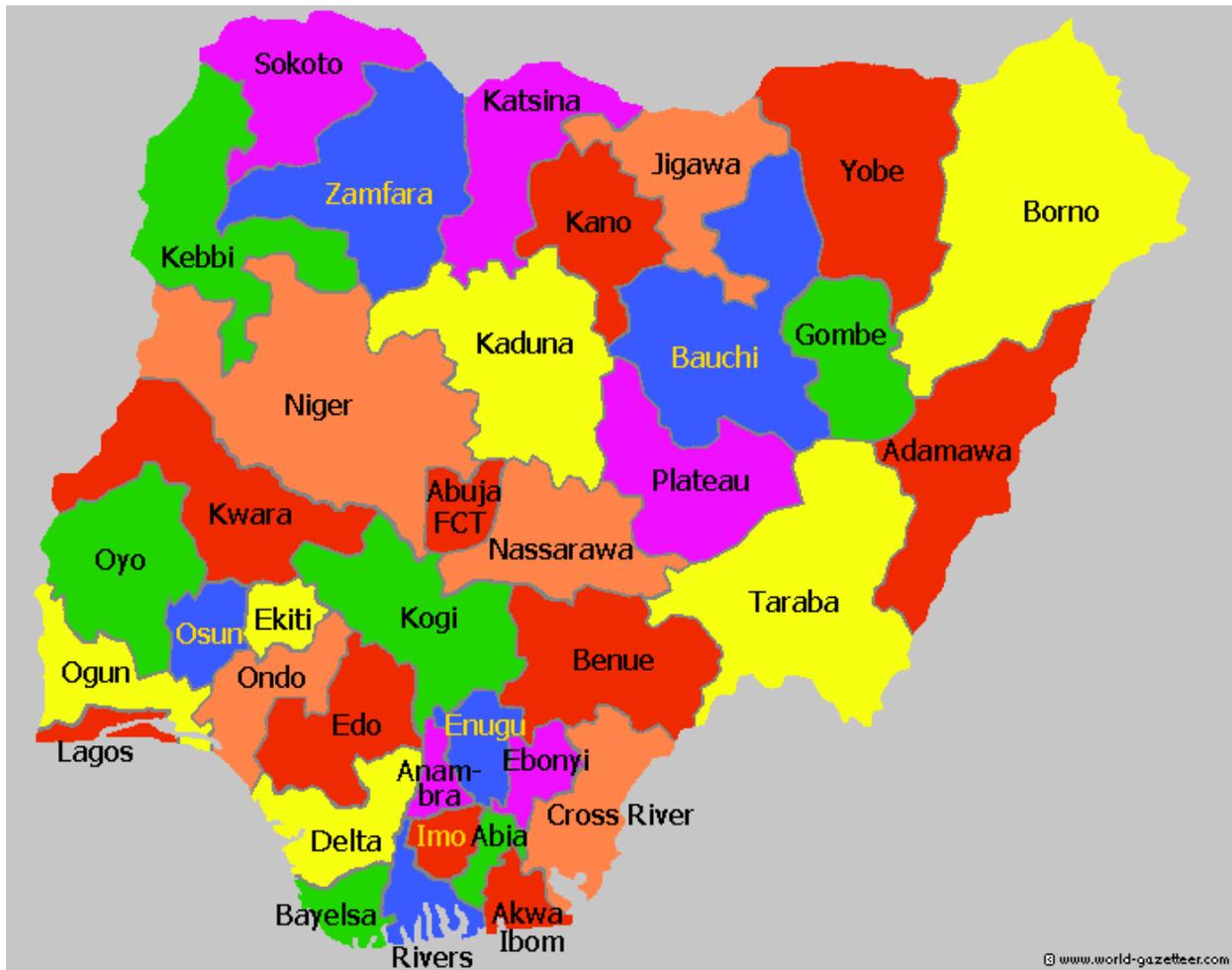


FIGURE 1.8a

<http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Africa/Nigeria-RELIGIONS.html> (Accessed on 19/03/2013)

MAP OF FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA SHOWING OYO STATE



FIGURE 1.8b

<http://www.google.co.za/images?q=nigeria+map> (Accessed on 03/06/2013)

MAP OF OYO STATE SHOWING OLUYOLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT



FIGURE1.8c

<http://www.google.co.za/imgres> (accessed on 03/06/2013)

Oluyole is a Local Government Area in Oyo State, Nigeria. Oyo state is one of the 36 states we have in Nigeria and it has 33 local government areas within its boundary. Oluyole local government is one of these 33 local government areas. Its headquarters are in the town of Idi Ayunre. To its north it shares border with Ibadan south west local government, while at its eastern side it has Ona-Ara local government and to its south and west it shares border with Ogun state (another state in Nigeria). It has an area of 629 km² and a population of 202,725 at the 2006 census. The postal code of the area is 200. Oluyole local government is subdivided into two main blocks: Block A and Block B. Block A comprises– Odo –ona elewe, Kolomi village, Ajinde village, Idi-Isin village, Panu village, and Bota village, while block B consists of Arapaja, Odo ona nla, Adebayo, Abanla, Oleyo, and Adebomi.

The people living in these areas are the Yorubas and they are predominantly farmers, they grow crops like Yam, Cassava, Maize, Millet, Groundnut, Cocoyam, Pepper (Atarodo, Tatase, Sombo and Tomatoes), Fruits like-Mango, Orange, Cashew, Guava, Pawpaw, Bananas and Vegetables while some of them are livestock farmers. They are peace loving people and they are highly accommodating. Majority of them are Christians and Muslims with a few African Traditional Religion worshippers. The people are Yorubas and their language is Yoruba. Their **food stuffs** are- Amala (prepare from yam), Eba (from cassava), Iyan (from yam) and Ogi (from maize like pap) etc.

Exposure- Due to lack of financial capability these people are not well exposed as it ought to be, to the extent that their children hardly go beyond senior secondary school level (Matric certificate). E:\Oluyole, Nigeria - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (Access on 07/02/2012).

1.9 Outline of the proposed study

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Each chapter builds on the previous one and develops into the next. Chapter one will serve as an introduction to the research to be undertaken. It is basically a proposal that entails the nature of the study, the research approaches, the delimitations of the study, a background to Oluyole local government area. This chapter will mainly deal with the step identified as Insertion in my methodology and it will close with an outline of the proposed study.

Chapter two broadly dealt with the step indicated as social analysis in the pastoral circle. Certain conceptual problems will be analysed and discussed to comprehend how the concept will fit to the Nigerian case and in this chapter as well I shall be discussing all the methods used in the study.

Chapter three deals with the step indicated as theological reflection in the pastoral circle. It has its focus on the developmental and missiological framework on which this study is based, with

special reference to the poor. The historical relationship between the church and development will be considered first after which I will consider the basic concepts used in the study.

Chapter four will deal with the step of theological analysis in more detail, that is, this chapter will put together all the theological assessment on mission as development, through which a framework for transformation will emerge.

Chapter five will deal with the step of pastoral planning in the cycle, also in this chapter, the concept in both the New and Old Testaments will be examined, in the light of the challenge for the Church. The emphasis will be placed on the role of the Church in the eradication of poverty.

Chapter six will deal further with the step of pastoral planning. My discussion here will be to develop theological ethics that can be applied by the Church in its fight against poverty. The main findings of this thesis will be summarised, and recommendations will be presented with regards to poverty eradication.

1.10 Ethical Considerations

Several issues related to ethics in the process of research and writing a thesis were considered. In the first place, the researcher does not impinge on the rights of the persons interviewed, nor on the rights of the community as a whole. In other words, the researcher adhered strictly to general principles and practices of human rights, the right to dignity, confidentiality, etc. These generally accepted ethical principles were applied to my research. The main purpose of ethics in research, as it is in the practice of medicine, for example, is in the first place to do no harm.

As I was saying, ethical matters were not ignored in this study, in order to protect the participants throughout the study because the concept of 'ethics' is closely linked to the notion of morality. The word 'ethics' is derived from the Greek word *ethos*, meaning a person's character or disposition. Ethics concerns the system of moral principles by which individuals may judge their actions as right or wrong, good or bad (Denscombe, 2002:174). According to Polit et al (2006:499), the duo supported this view of ethics in terms of research as a system of moral

values that apprehends the degree to which research procedures adhere to professional, legal and social obligations as a result of participation in a research study. Moreover, Singleton (2010:47) maintains that ethics helps human beings to act in moral and responsible ways. Pera et al (2005:4), in their own view point out that ethics is a code of behaviour that is considered to be correct. This code of behaviour that is considered to be correct must be known and taken seriously by all researchers. These codes were established in order to guide the moral choices in terms of the researcher's behaviour in relationship to others and, especially, in relation to my research project.

1.10.1 Informed consent

A fundamental ethical principle of social research is that of willing participation. It is therefore necessary that the purpose of the research should be made very clear to the participants, so that they do not participate based on a misunderstanding. This requires that I explain the purpose of my research in both written and verbal form as and when it is required. I was completely honest in my conviction that the interviewees indeed understand what I want to do. According to Polit and Beck (2006:328), they stress that a fundamental ethical principle of social research involves never coercing anyone into participation. In other words, participant must be willing without any intimidation or victimisation. Based on this principle, the purpose of the study, the data collection method and participation were made clear to the participants, right from the outset.

1.10.2 Permission to conduct the study

Permission was taking from the Oyo state ministry of local government affairs and chieftaincy matters after this, the Oluyole local government authority gave me their own letter of permission to conduct the research. Also, the Research and Ethics Committee of the College of Theology at

UNISA approved my research design. The ethical principles of beneficence and respect for participants were adhered to.

1.10.3 Confidentiality

I affirm that I adhered to general precepts of confidentiality in academic research. This implies that personal and private information was not published wider without the express permission of the informant(s). Furthermore I treated the contents of interviews in an anonymous and confidential fashion, so that no personal connections can be made to any information. The names of persons interviewed were therefore not made available. Burns and Grove (2003:201) suggest that it is essential that private information shared by an informant must not be shared with others without the authorisation of the said informant. Anonymity is said to exist if it is not possible for the informant to be linked to his/her individual responses. In other words, the respondent has the right to anonymity and to the assurance that the data collected will be kept confidential and that the information provided will be used purely for research and findings made available only if they are needed with the respondents permission.

1.10.4 Benefits for the researched community

The researcher makes sure that any possible benefits which may flow from the research were channeled to the community. I am a Baptist pastor in Oluyole community, and I undertook this research because it is my wish to improve the lot of the many poor people there, they are my people and I attempted constructing mission praxis to deal with poverty in my locality, in order to influence the other pastors in the community to work together ecumenically to fight against poverty. This also implies convincing local government authorities of our goodwill so that they can help us where possible. Polit and Beck (2006:87) support this view by stating that research related to human beings should be intended to produce benefits for the research subjects themselves and either for other individuals or society as a whole.

1.11 Conclusion

In this chapter I introduced and motivated my research topic. I then demonstrated its relevance and formulated the problem at the centre of this study. Next, I defined terms which I propose to use- all of them are important terms for this study. The aim of this first chapter was, therefore, to introduce the study.

CHAPTER TWO

INSERTION: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall be discussing the methodology used in the study. I start with the research design (which is participatory research) and proceed to methods of involvement in the community. In order to accomplish this, I deal first of all with my research design. Then I “paint a picture” of my community to be researched, and finally I deal with specific research methods. These are: Paulo Freire’s action-reflection method, the pastoral cycle, and Croatto’s method of interpreting the Bible. The end result will be the comprehensive method produced by combining the above three methods.

2.2 Research design

I view the relationship between research design and research methodology as similar to the relationship between a building plan, and the specific methods to construct the planned building. This implies that research design establishes the overarching concept, while methodology establishes the specific methods used. For this research I have chosen to use Participatory Research as my research design.

2.2.1 Participatory research

Participatory research is the paradigm that has largely shaped the development of this research project, therefore, it is essential to clarify the nature of this model and the implications it has had for the research process. It can be defined as follows:

A form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in a social situation in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or

educational practice, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out (Lawson 1999:285).

Wilson (2000:12) in his own view says, participatory research developed out of the adult education tradition as a reaction to the research paradigm of positivism and empiricism that dominated the 1950's and 1960's.

The traditional positivist model is based on the idea of controlled and objective measurement, classification and interpretation of data in relation to hypotheses and theories. The research is required to be value-free; and the results are regarded as objectively true facts concerning the reality which has been studied. I rather choose for the different approach presented by participatory research, because of the following reasons:

2.2.2 Characteristics of participatory research

1. Wilson (2000:11) says participants are part of the research by choice, because of the action they take in being involved.
2. The research method is by nature participatory; (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:56).
3. It provides an opportunity for people in a local community to study (a) their own practices, (b) their own understanding of their practices, and (c) the situations in which they practice (Ibid: 6)
4. The researcher's focus is on learning from practice, then improving it- not simply in order to describe practice or validate a theory through its implementation but to transform reality (Ibid).
5. According to Nightingale and O'Neil (1994: 101- 102), they said this process of learning from practice includes (a) Concrete experience, (b) observation and reflection, (c) the formation of abstract concepts and generalizations, and (d) hypothetical implications of concepts tested in new situations, leading to a repetition of the cycle.

6. Participatory research requires that participants seek to understand social reality, as well as their own role in creating it, in order to change it. Here we discern a key difference from interpretive research (Ibid).

7. The problem originates inside the community, not outside, and the ultimate goal is the fundamental structural transformation in a community or wider society (Bless and Higson- Smith 1995:6).

8. It involves people from the community in the control of the process and also its focus is on working with the oppressed, not for them (Ibid).

9. A central role of participatory research consists in strengthening people's awareness of their own abilities and resources, and supporting the mobilization and organisation of the oppressed (Ibid).

10. Those with special knowledge or training (researchers) often come from outside the community, but they are committed participants and learners in a process that leads to involvement rather than detachment and there is a greater use of qualitative than quantitative methods of research (Ibid).

11. Researcher and researched work as equal partners who, together, plan and implement a project to investigate a problem and its underlying causes in order to take collective action with the purpose of bringing about long-term solutions (Bless and Higson- Smith 1995:6).

12. In this relationship between researcher and researched work, the question of power is an important consideration. Such a participatory research approach implies that the researcher should move away from a top-down to a horizontal power relationship. For this shift in power relationships to take place, the researcher needs to be immersed in the community and humbled by the knowledge that the community has something to teach him or her. (Kumalo 2001: 23).

13. During participatory research, the variables are not controlled but described (Ibid).

14. The researcher does not take an objective stance but is subjectively involved in the research process. This makes it difficult not to be vulnerable to experimental and subjective effects (Wilson 2000:14).

15. Elliot (in Kemmis and Mc Taggart 1990:122) says participatory research is a dynamic process that takes place between researcher and research participants, which leads to the empowerment of all participants (including researcher). This brings about that the researcher's initiative or leadership is sometimes pre-empted by the community. All the participants in the process (both researchers and participants) cooperate in extracting meaning from the data and contribute to the selection of intervention strategies. There is usually a good deal of communication between the participants, and research is often validated by unconstrained dialogue. This means that in doing my research in Oluyole community as participant observer, I have to give special attention to complete openness while talking with this people because this will make both the researcher and the participants to be free with one another in disclosing the whole truth which will help us bring about the appropriate solution to the problem of abject poverty amongst these rural poor people.

2.2.3 Benefits of this design

2.2.3.1 Accountability

Accountability for the research process is due both to the 'scientific' academic and to the 'grass root' communities (Philpott 1993:22). To me and my community, accountability is being answerable, blameworthiness, liability, and the expectation of account-giving, because it has been central to discussions related to problems in mine poor rural community. Accountability is the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, decisions, and policies and implementation within the scope of the role and encompassing the obligation to report, explain and be answerable for resulting consequences.

2.2.3.2 Benefits from the process

According to Maluleke (1994:84), the researcher must be accountable to the community, in this instance the Oluyole local government area. The community has been afforded an opportunity to reflect on their situation of poverty and to seek solutions from a biblical perspective. Has the research been done in such a way that it helped the community to form a clear picture of their situation and encouraged them to do something about it? The scientific community must also benefit, because in this study they will hear the voices of the poor communicating about their predicament. It will also give them access to knowledge from grassroots level. They will be able to engage with the poor in knowledge production rather than engaging purely with themselves in the person of the researcher (Maluleke 1994:45).

2.2.4 Motivation for choosing this model

There are good reasons to motivate my choice of this design. One is the continued, ever-increasing exploitation and oppression of a large majority of people. It is recognised that knowledge has been and will continue to be a source of power (Kumalo 2001: 26). Participatory research is an attempt to shift the balance of power in favour of those among the oppressed that can be drawn into a research project of this kind.

Through participatory research, ordinary people such as those in Oluyole community have opportunity to generate knowledge that will be recognised and used, by them and by others in similar situations, to improve the quality of their lives. Others in the mainstream of knowledge production can make use of the same knowledge. In this way the poor are given an opportunity to generate knowledge instead of always being at the receiving end of knowledge generated by academics.

It is important that this method should assist the poor in working for themselves to transform their situation of poverty. They must use it to improve that situation. The key to this type of research is that it is done with the people, and that its objective is to transform the participants' situations. It is not an occupation for armchair academics: the poor themselves can use it to take

part in the production of knowledge. It also clarifies the position of the researcher as one who is there to assist people, to reflect critically on their situation and to act as an interlocutor or mouth-piece for the local community in order to improve their understanding of their own problems and needs.

This method enables the poor to see their situation and allows them to contribute to the solution of the problems they face, so that they are not mere recipients of knowledge. They also participate in the production of solutions. This method therefore becomes a tool of empowerment. According to Hammond (in Philpott 1993:22), Participatory Research is an educational tool used to help oppressed people gain awareness of their situations through collective investigation and collective analysis, and to plan to change their situations through collective action.

The position of the researcher in this instance is not to do the analysis for the people but to assist them in their own attempt to analyse and understand their situation. The important thing for me- the researcher, in this process is that it gives the poor an opportunity to share with me the knowledge that they have, so that knowledge from that level becomes recognised as scientifically valid knowledge. At the end of the day, they are not passive recipients of knowledge from above, and during the processes of participatory research they take part in creating knowledge for the purpose of transforming their own community.

Secondly, the process of reflection is not just talk without results. The whole point of it is to transform the people's situation. People are helped to reflect critically on their situation so that they can clearly see the obstacles that need to be removed in order that their lives may be improved.

Philpott (1993:24) says participatory research also attempts to integrate the three components of this approach- social investigation, education and action- thereby strengthening all three aspects through their interaction. Consequently it is an empowering process in itself, because people are involved in it by interactively teaching and learning from one another.

The traditional scientific method was intent on what a scientific expert could scientifically prove to be the truth (Grove 1997:8). It does not take account of knowledge based on personal experience, faith or intuition, or knowledge acquired through a learning and transformation

process in a community (Lawson 1999: 6). Consequently it marginalizes the contribution of people's experiences and life stories to the production of knowledge. Knowledge therefore becomes impersonal and alien to the reality of ordinary people, especially the poor who cannot write and do not have access to a variety of tools used to produce knowledge in traditional science. Postmodern narrative theology takes seriously the need to listen to the poor (Rossouw 1993:49). It is important, because they share both their individual and their communal knowledge and experience of God as well as their stories (Healey & Sybertz 1995:4). Their experience can be used to further the production of knowledge. In this study, I shall therefore refer to people's experiences of poverty and their experience of the church in their community.

2.2.4.1 The purpose of knowledge

Participatory research is done with the aim of transforming the community. In this process the generated knowledge should not just be fitted into the mainline doctrines: it must at the same time be allowed to inform the development initiatives taking place in the community. Knowledge is for social transformation. This was well put by Frank Chikane, (1991:58): he says 'Authentic knowledge is.... Concerned with the transformation of things... authentic knowledge presents itself to us as social criticism and the transformation of the old order to the new.....'

In this way knowledge is generated not for its own sake but for the purpose of social transformation; and so Cook and Fonow (in Nielson 1988:89) say that '... The most comprehensive type of knowledge results from attempts to change what one is investigating'. Driver (1971:94) similarly contends that '... As long as it is authentic, truth is inseparable from its liberating function... Every institution and every belief is to be judged by its liberating result'. Millman and Kanter (in Harding 1987:34) concur: 'Social science should explore needed social transformation and encourage a more just, humane society...'. In the context of participatory research knowledge should also come from the poor themselves (the epistemological priority of the poor). The local knowledge that they have must be allowed to develop and be used in the process of transforming their society. They must not depend on knowledge that has been developed from outside their communities in places such as universities and other institutions,

but their knowledge is very important in the development of their communities. In this way the poor are not just recipients but they also contribute to the creation of knowledge.

2.2.5 Major objections to this model

There are, of course, objections to this model. The next step is to discuss the objections put forward by critics of participatory research.

2.2.5.1 Objectivity of the researcher

Philpott (1993:21) says while it is not possible to be totally objective in any inquiry that one undertakes, it is possible to some extent. One gets involved simply by being in the world which one is investigating. The objection with regard to objectivity is not a valid one. The mere fact of embarking on any particular study means that one has some biases, whether positive or negative; the researcher is already affected and influenced by the field of research. I do not consider it possible, therefore, for researchers to be totally objective: they will influence the study one way or the other. This is emphasised by Susan Groves (1997:8):

The very choice of one's field of research reflects a certain inclination to the subject.

There is no such thing as impartial research. Thus from the outset, there is a large element of subjectivity in the journey towards knowledge.

2.2.5.2 The interdependence of social reality

Secondly, the nature of the reality under examination also raises questions for the traditional model. The traditional model assumed that small selections of social reality could be isolated and experimented with or without the interference of outside conditions. This view is rejected by the exponents of participatory research because it does not take into consideration the complex

interdependent nature of social reality- for instance, the fact that conditions within a community are influenced by decisions and strategies carried out at regional level (Philpott 1993:22). Participatory research is an attempt to respond to these problems, consciously countering the dominant norms in traditional social research.

I therefore conclude that the objections are not serious enough for me to abandon my choice of method.

2.3 A Picture of the Community

2.3.1 Research design:

In broad terms my research design is participatory research which takes into account the involvement of and in the community by broadly following the pastoral circle (which has been amended and developed in various ways through the years).

Participatory research can be defined as a form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in a social situation in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practice, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out (Lawson 1999: 285).

I prefer this method because it allows all believers to participate in changing the ministry of the church and the way in which the church is involved in the development processes. It is in line with the great doctrine of the priesthood of all believers (understood here as participation of all believers in finding a solution) - which is one of the five major beliefs of my Baptist denomination. The first item on my research agenda therefore was establishing a clear and trustworthy “picture” of the community and their expectations about church and development.

2.3.2 Instrument for Data collection

The method I chose was that of a structured interview schedule for the collection of data from the individuals, who were picked randomly from the community. The main question I used to guide the process of data collection was: “Do you believe and expect that your church should be involved in the process of alleviating poverty? If so, what do you suggest as possible ways in which the church can become involved?” This was used with the aim of collecting data to help answer the thesis questions I set out about the subject of my study.

2.3.3 Data Analysis:

There are several statistical techniques to analyze research findings, but to ensure accuracy, consistency and for easy understanding, the researcher used descriptive statistics in data analysis. The descriptive statistics used include frequency distribution, percentages, bar chart and pie chart. These were used in order to know the resources available in the poor community and the ones they lack. As I have said earlier, structured questionnaire was used to collect information necessary in order to answer the following research questions-

1. How can the mission of the church in communities of the poor lead towards transformational development?
2. What is the relationship between Christian mission, the poor and economic development?
3. What attitude should the church adopt towards poverty and the poor?
4. What are the likely challenges the Christian missionary organizations can face in the process of empowering the poor?
5. What are the strategies and methods that Christians’ missionary organisations need to adopt to alleviate poverty amongst the rural poor?

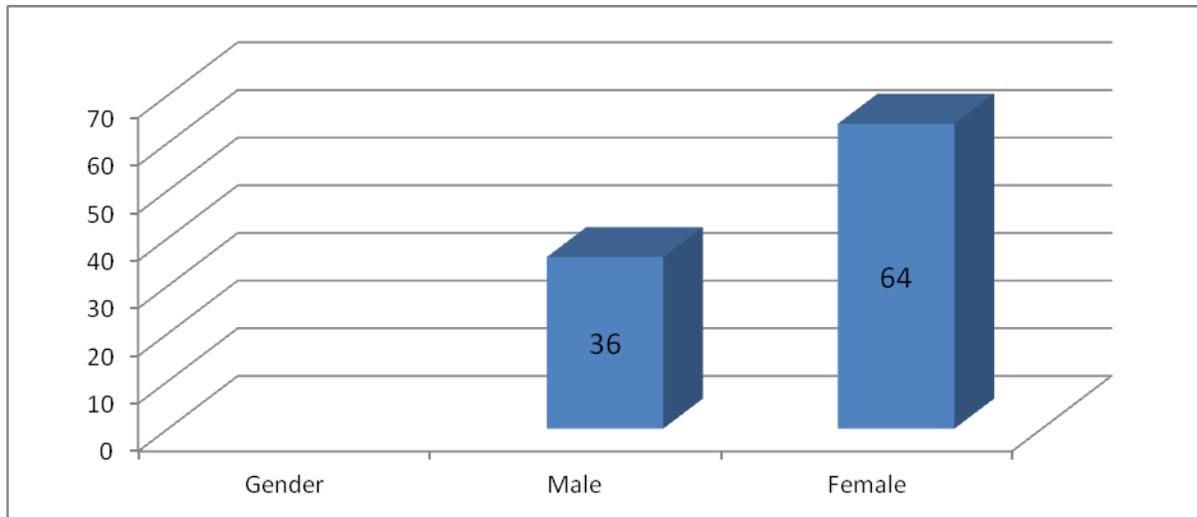
2.4 Results of data collection

2.4.1 Gender distribution

In the group randomly chosen for my field work experience, in the overall I have one hundred respondents and sixty-four (64%) of them are women while only thirty-six (36%) are men, which means we have more women than men (typical of the situation in rural areas in Nigeria). The reason being that it's either most of the men had gone to the city looking for greener pasture/better life or they are dead already, so this makes those women to suffer greatly with their children due to the fact that the women are unable to provide adequately for themselves and the children left with them due to lack of financial capability. In order to answer question one of the research question on "How can the mission of the church in communities of the poor lead towards transformational development?" With the situation of these women and in order not to become wayward, the church being the closest institution to the people should come to their aid in order for them not to lose focus on eternity because of poverty. The church can assist them with little loans with which they can start petty trade.

Below is the graphical representation of the above information:

Gender	Male	Female
	36	64



Gender distribution of the respondents (N=100)

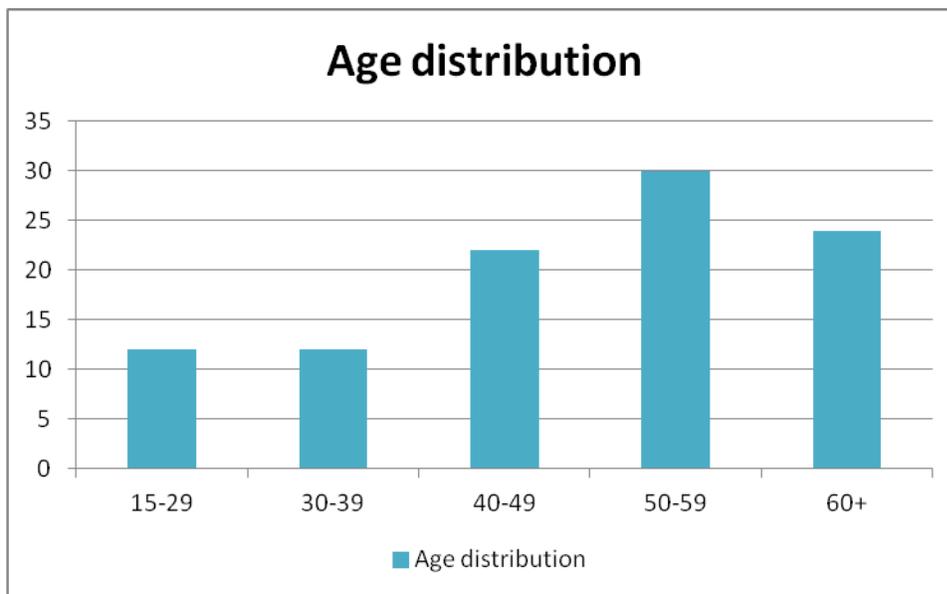
2.4.2 Age distribution

The respondents were asked to indicate their age in order to know the particular age that is most vulnerable and the adequate way of empowering them. Twelve (12) people are between the ages of fifteen and twenty-nine, another twelve are between thirty and thirty-nine, twenty-two people are between forty and forty-nine while thirty people are between fifty and fifty-nine and lastly twenty-four people are sixty and above.

From the information gathered, we can see that fifty-four per cent of these people are above fifty, and that makes them most vulnerable, due to lack of strength because of old age they cannot fend for themselves and their family members properly. This situation should help us to answer question three of my research questions that says “what attitude should the church adopt towards poverty and the poor?” Since these people are now poor because of old age and if nothing is done to address the situation, poverty will spread to their younger generation, so the church should adopt a positive attitude towards them, see them the way God sees them and embraces them.

Graphical representation of age distribution:

	15-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Age distribution	12	12	22	30	24



Age distribution of the respondents (N=100)

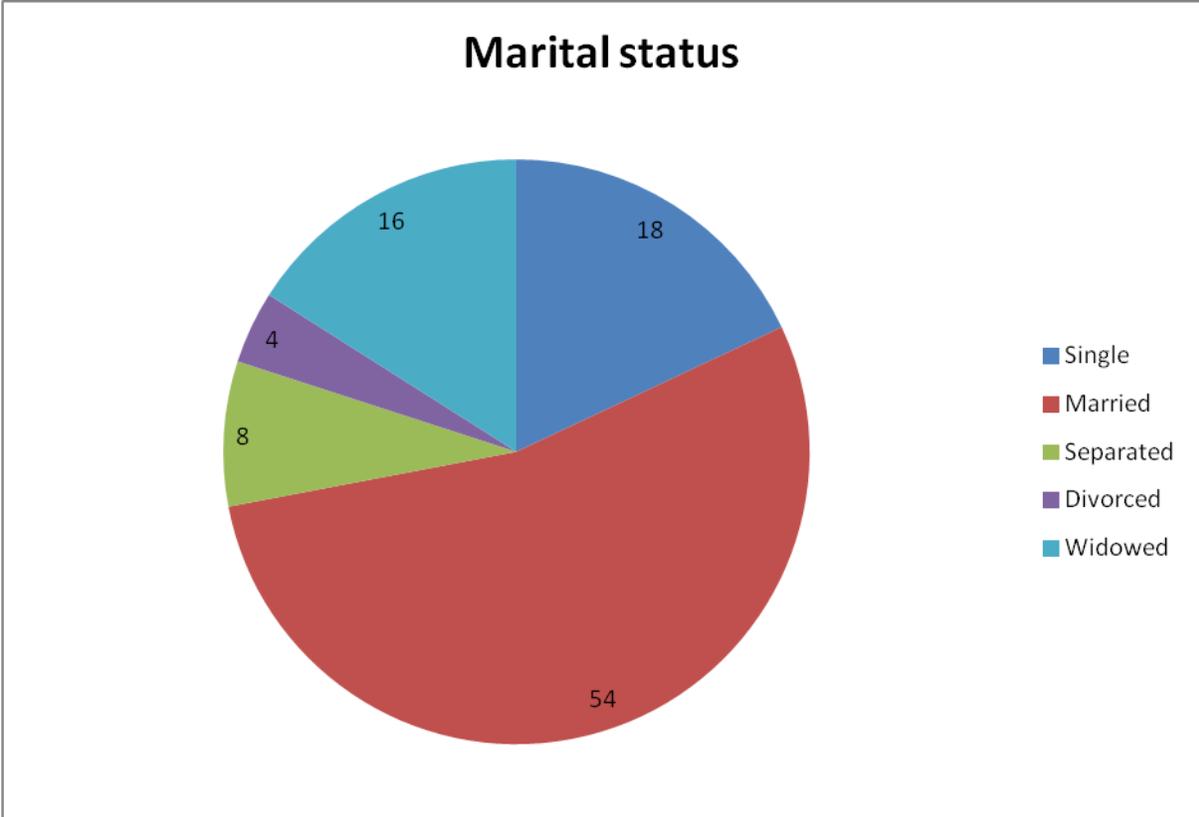
2.4.3 Marital Status

The respondents were asked to indicate their marital status, eighteen of them are single, fifty- four are married, eight are separated from their spouses, and four had divorced their spouses while sixteen are widowed. Since only eighteen per cent are single that means the remaining eighty-two per cent are married at one time or the other and with that they have greater responsibility compare

to those who are single, and greater responsibility without corresponding income will lead to poverty. Here comes in question number two of my research question that says “what is the relationship between Christian mission, the poor and economic development?” As the church is evangelising these people, that is winning their souls for Christ, taking good care of their souls, their economic situation should be considered as well, so that after giving their lives to Christ Jesus they won’t backslide because of poverty.

Below is the graphical representation of the respondents marital status

	Single	Married	Separated	Divorced	Widowed
Marital status	18	54	8	4	16



Marital Status of the respondents (N=100)

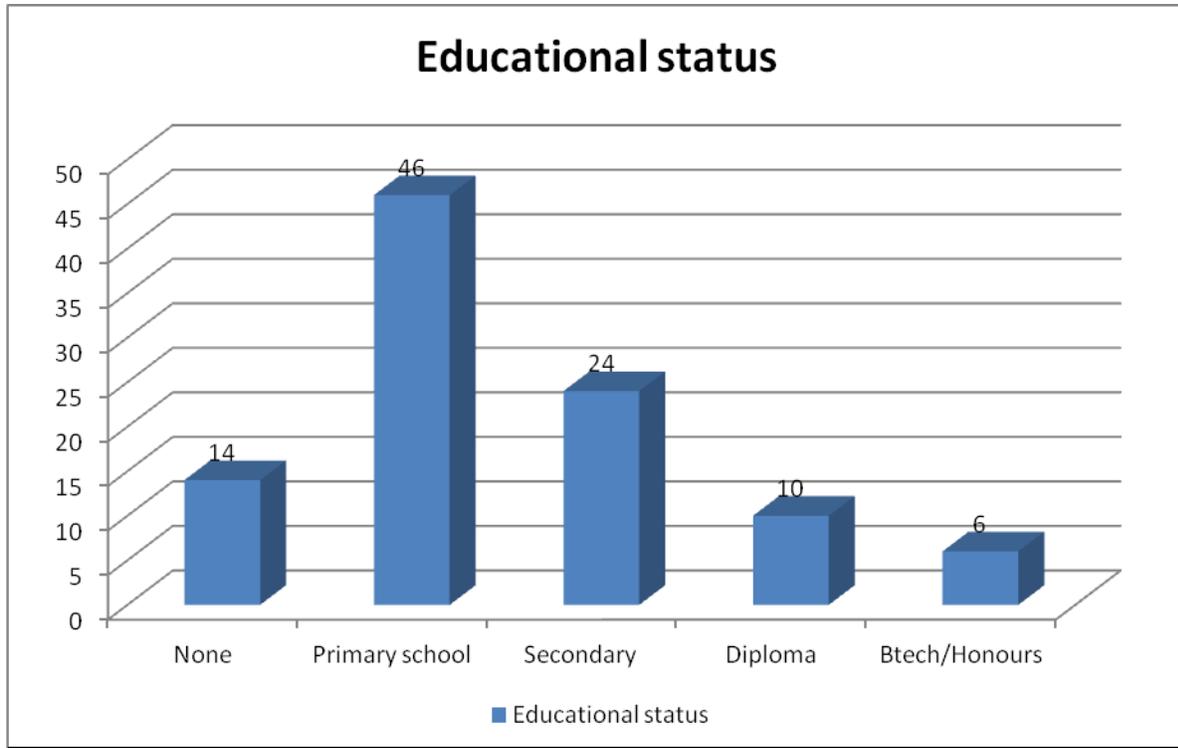
2.4.4 Educational status

Fourteen per cent of the respondents are not educated at all, while forty-six per cent had only gone to basic/primary school, twenty-four per cent had senior secondary school certificate-matric, ten had national diploma and six of the respondents had BTech/Honours. The implication of this is that sixty per cent of the respondent did not have secondary school/matric certificate while only sixteen per cent had additional qualification apart from matric, which is secondary school education. Since larger per cent are not well educated I believe this contribute greatly to their high poverty level because education goes a long way in poverty alleviation. Because education would help the people to have the right worldview concerning their situation and it would help them as well to take the right step in that direction. This is already an indication that in order to empower the

people of Oluyole village in the area of education the church should establish more schools in this village for their young ones and also to organise adult education programme to assist the elderly as well. If the church can do this and carry out proper follow up on it, it will help the church to overcome some of the challenges that the church can encounter according to number four of the research questions that says, “what are the likely challenges the Christian missionary organizations can face in the process of empowering the poor?” According to our late sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo “education makes people easy to rule but difficult to enslave”. So the church must be ready to persuade those elderly in order to attend the adult classes, because many of them did not see the possibility of being educated again.

Graphical representation of educational status

	None	Primary school	Secondary	Diploma	BTech/Honours
Educational status	14	46	24	10	6



Educational Status of the respondents (N=100)

2.4.5 Employment status

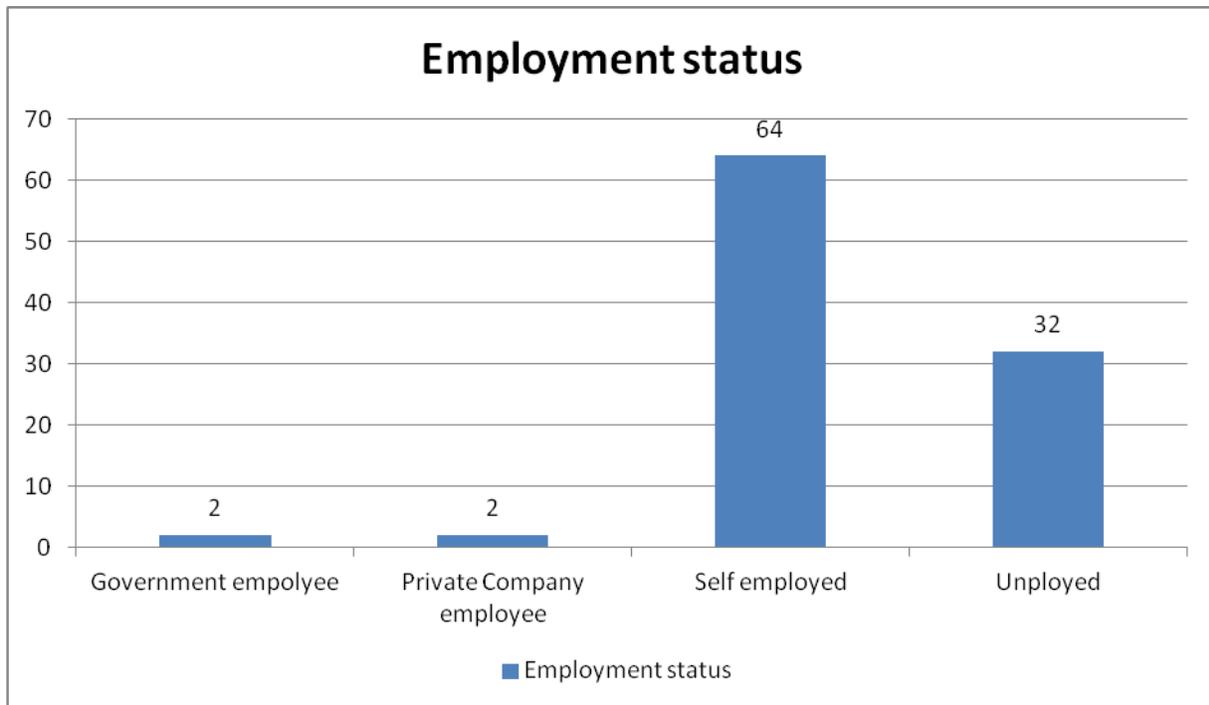
Two per cent of the total respondents are working with the government while another two per cent are working with the private company, sixty-four per cent are self-employed and the last thirty-two per cent are jobless. In the real sense of it, based on what I saw on the research field, majority of these people are not unemployed, because apart from the thirty-two per cent who are bold enough to say that they not employed, the sixty-four per cent who said they are self-employed are actually not employed as well, many of them are peasant farmers (males and females alike) and their farm produce are not even enough to feed themselves and their family members. And I think according to research question five that says “What are the strategies and methods that Christians’ missionary organisations need to adopt to alleviate poverty amongst the rural poor?”

Bases on what I saw on ground, one of the strategies that Christian missionary organizations need to adopt is that as they are preaching to this people they should expose them to vocational training,

for example, something like small scale businesses- soap making, beads making, candle production, production of bricks for building houses, soft drinks production and others. With this the people would have source of income through which they would be able to fend for themselves and their family members, and with this there would be reduction in poverty level among them.

Graphical representation of employment status

	Government employee	Private Company employee	Self employed	Unemployed
Employment status	2	2	64	32



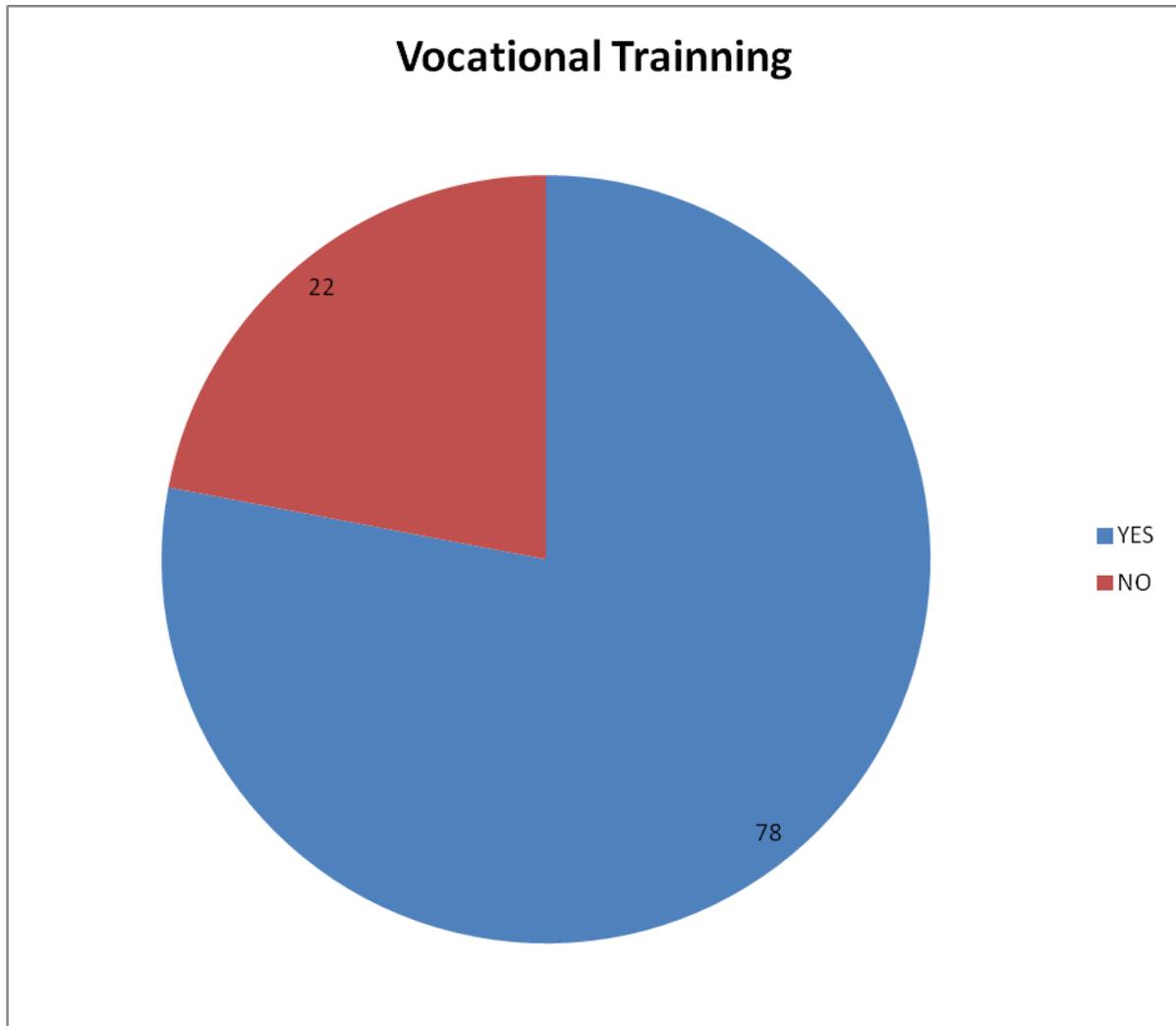
Employment Status of the respondents (N=100)

2.4.6 Interest in Vocational Training:

The respondents were also asked whether they are interested in attending vocational training through which they would be able to earn income and about seventy-eight per cent responded in the affirmative, they even said they are readily available for the training any time because they are tired of their poverty stricken situation. But only twenty-two per cent said they are not interested for the following reasons- some said because of old age they might not be able to withstand the rigour associated with the vocational training, while some other people said since they are a little bit educated they would wait until they get a white collar job, that is government or private company employment. The mission of the Church in communities of the poor can lead to transformational development (research question one) in the sense that if the church try as much as possible and make these people undergo this vocational training, their lives would never remain the same. It would definitely change for better and God's name will be glorified.

Graphical representation

	YES	NO
Vocational Trainings	78	22



2.4.7 Social group membership:

A social group has been defined as two or more humans who interact with one another, share similar characteristics and collectively have a sense of unity. (<http://global.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/551247/social-group> accessed on 24/05/2013). Renowned social psychologist Muzafer Sherif formulated a technical definition of social group with the following elements:

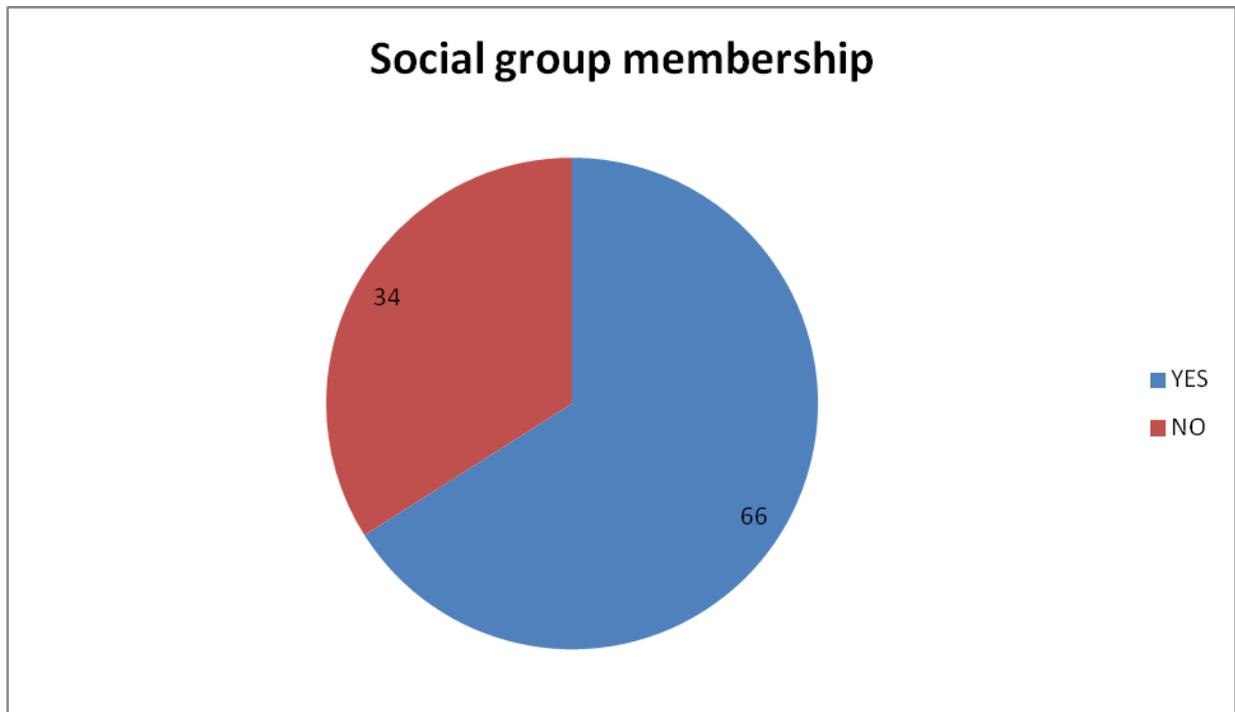
It is a social unit consisting of a number of individuals interacting with each other with respect to:

1. Common motives and goals
2. An accepted division of labour, i.e. roles
3. Established status relationships
4. Accepted norms and values with reference to matters relevant to the group
5. Development of accepted sanctions (praise and punishment) if and when norms were respected or violated (Ibid).

In this study sixty-six per cent of the total respondents said they are members of different social groups and with help of these groups they are able to achieve a lot of things- like payment of their children school fees, completing their building projects, being able to improve in their farming enterprise etc. Members of these social groups were able to do all these through their little daily, weekly or monthly contributions they make among themselves, while thirty- four per cent said they do not belong to any social group due to lack of income to make their own contributions. What I discovered was that some people in the community organised themselves into small groups of about ten or fifteen people each, at times they make monthly contribution among themselves and every month one of them would take what they contribute until it goes round all the members of that group. I think the church as well can organise something like this among the church members through which they would be able to derive both spiritual and physical benefits from within the church and this will enhance the missionary activities of the church. This method also helps us in tackling number three of the research question.

Graphical representation of social group membership

	YES	NO
Social group membership	66	34

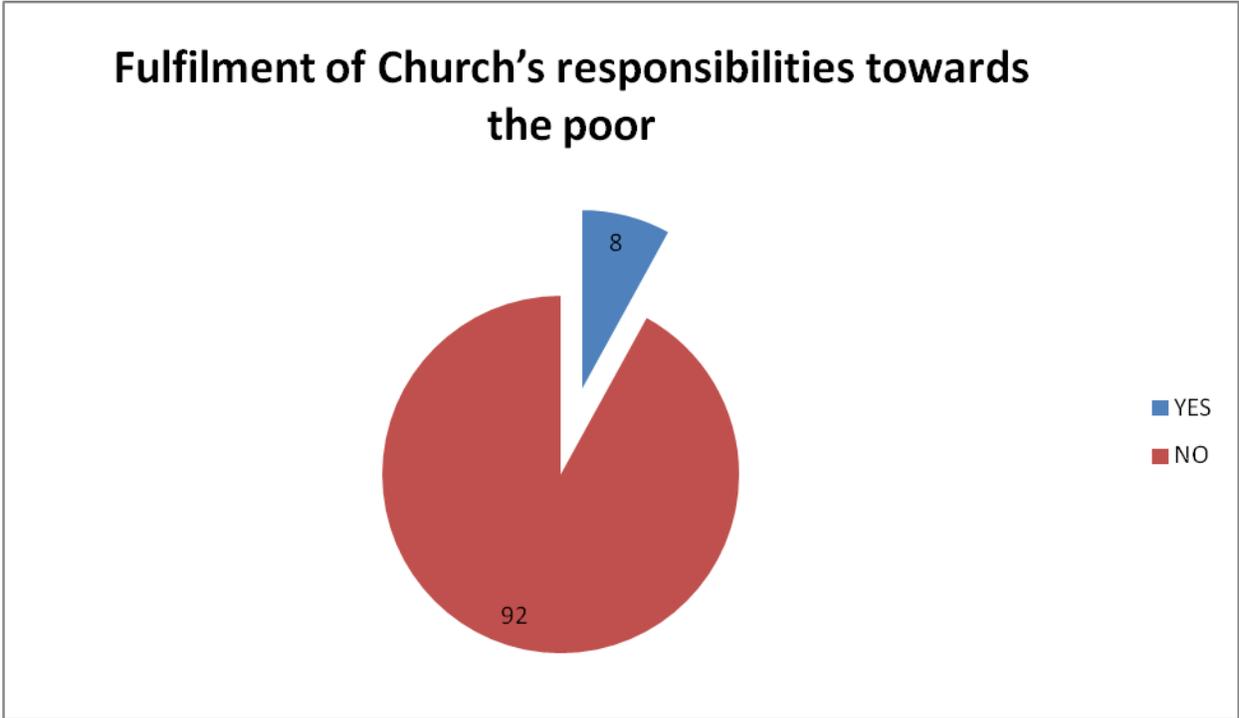


2.4.8 Fulfillment of Church’s responsibilities towards the poor

Only eight per cent agreed that the church is fulfilling her responsibilities towards the poor but larger percentage, precisely ninety-two per cent said “NO”. To buttress their argument they said the church is now acting contrary to what our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ told Simon Peter in the book of John 21: 15-17, where He was telling Peter and invariably talking to the Church to feed His lamb/sheep, but instead of the church feeding the sheep, they church leaders are now feeding themselves on the sheep. This could be one of the challenges that the Christian missionary organizations can face in the process of empowering the poor? (Research question number four). So in order to conquer this problem, the leadership of the church must forget about themselves and do sacrificial, selfless service as Christ did in order to achieve God’s aim of liberating the poor from shackles of poverty (2 Cor.8:9).

Graphical representation

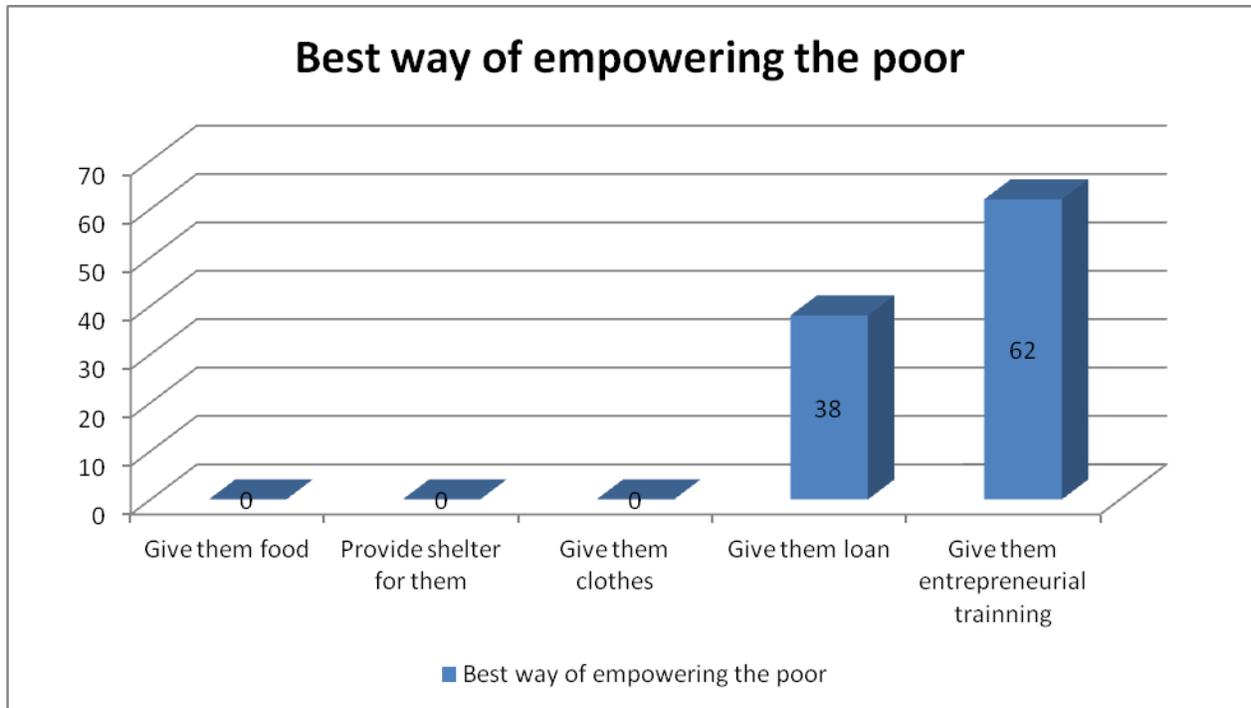
	YES	NO
Fulfilment of Church's responsibilities towards the poor	8	92



2.4.9 Best way of empowering the poor:

To answer the question on how best to empower the poor, none of them agree to daily giving of food, provision of shelter or clothes but thirty-eight per cent said if the government or the church can make loan available to them, they would appreciate it while sixty-two per cent said putting them through entrepreneurial training would be the best for them, and this is where the church comes in since the government cannot provide everything to all citizenry, therefore, the church must supplement the effort of the government for the betterment of their members. This is one of the strategies and methods that Christians' missionary organisations can adopt to alleviate poverty amongst the rural poor? (Research question number five).

	Give them food	Provide shelter for them	Give them clothes	Give them loan	Give them entrepreneurial training
Best way of empowering the poor	0	0	0	38	62



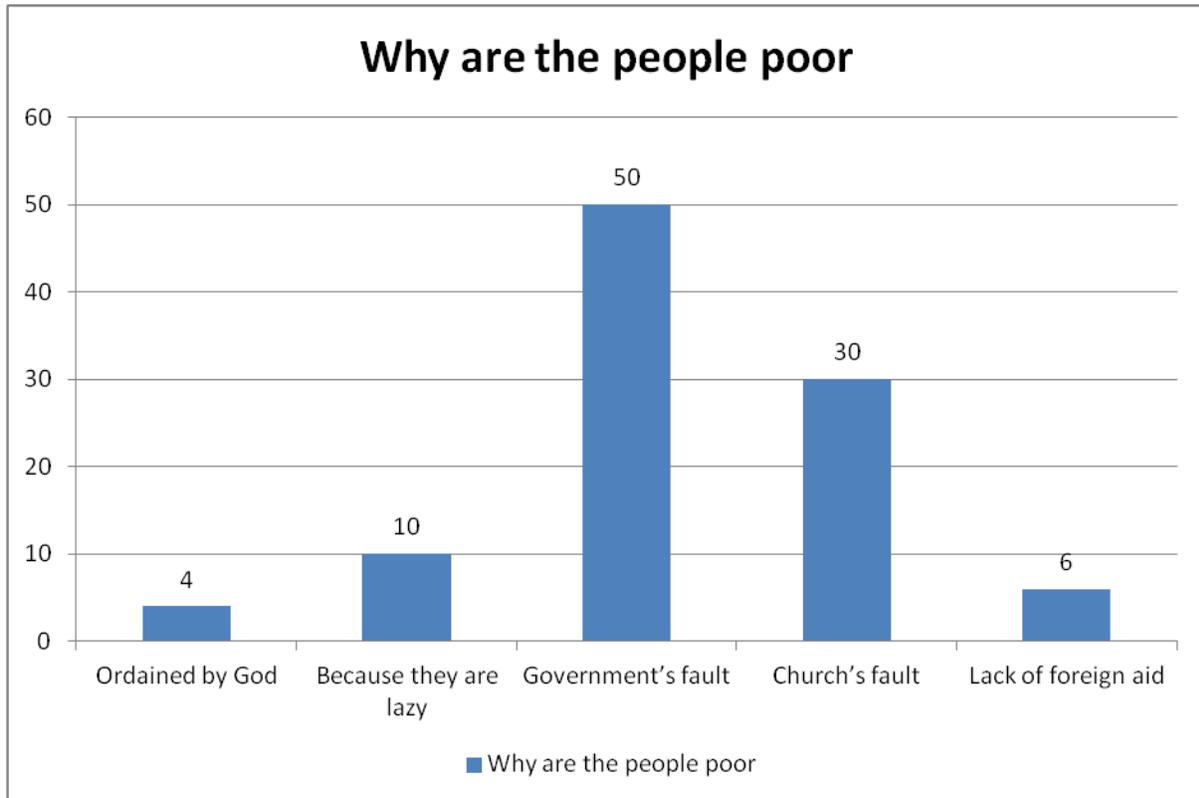
2.4.10 Why are the people poor?

Concerning this question, four per cent said it has been ordained by God, for the Bible says “For the poor shall never cease out of the land...”(Deuteronomy 15: 11). while ten per cent said it is because people are lazy, but about fifty per cent agreed that it is all government’s fault, they said we all know that Almighty God deposited almost all natural resources including Petroleum in Nigeria but despite that more than seventy per cent of the populace are in poverty, and according to one of our former education minister and former World Bank Vice President for African Region, Dr Mrs Oby Ezekwesili, said that the leadership of Nigeria has failed the children of the poor in the country, because countless number of them are now out of school, she said this during her 50th birthday ceremony on the 28 of April, 2013 (Nigeria Punch Newspaper 29/04/2013). With this we actually know that Nigerian government is not doing her best towards empowering the poor.

On the other hand about thirty per cent said the problem is with the church, they said instead of the church empowering the poor, the church leaders are just interested in what they would get

from their members, while only six per cent said lack of foreign aid is their own personal problem. The church can enhance its missionary activities among these people by organising a kind of orientation programme through which the rural people would have better understanding about their situation.

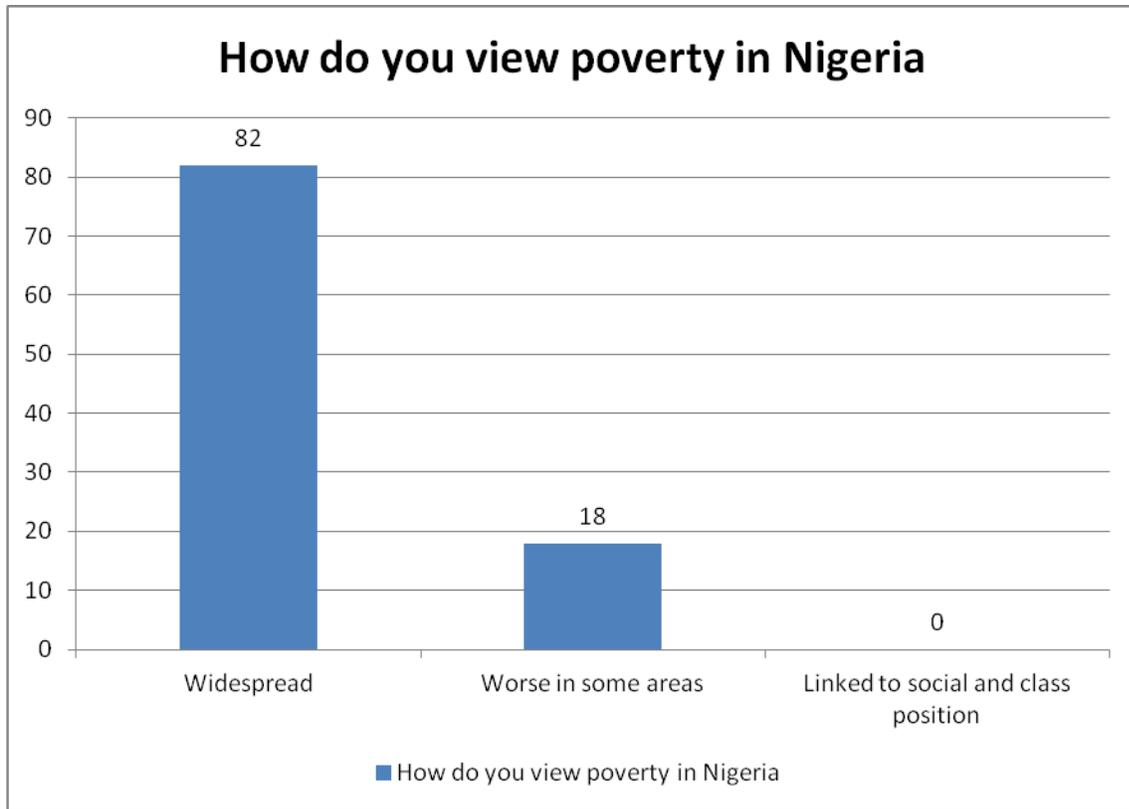
	Ordained by God	Because they are lazy	Government's fault	Church's fault	Lack of foreign aid
Why are the people poor	4	10	50	30	6



2.4.11 How do you view poverty in Nigeria?

Eighty-two per cent of the respondents see poverty in Nigeria as widespread, because in a situation whereby over seventy-one per cent of the total population are in poverty (Nigeria Tribune of February 14, 2012), there is no other word to describe the situation apart from widespread, while only eighteen per cent believe that it is worse in some areas like the Northern part of the country.

	Widespread	Worse in some areas	Linked to social and class position
How do you view poverty in Nigeria	82	18	0

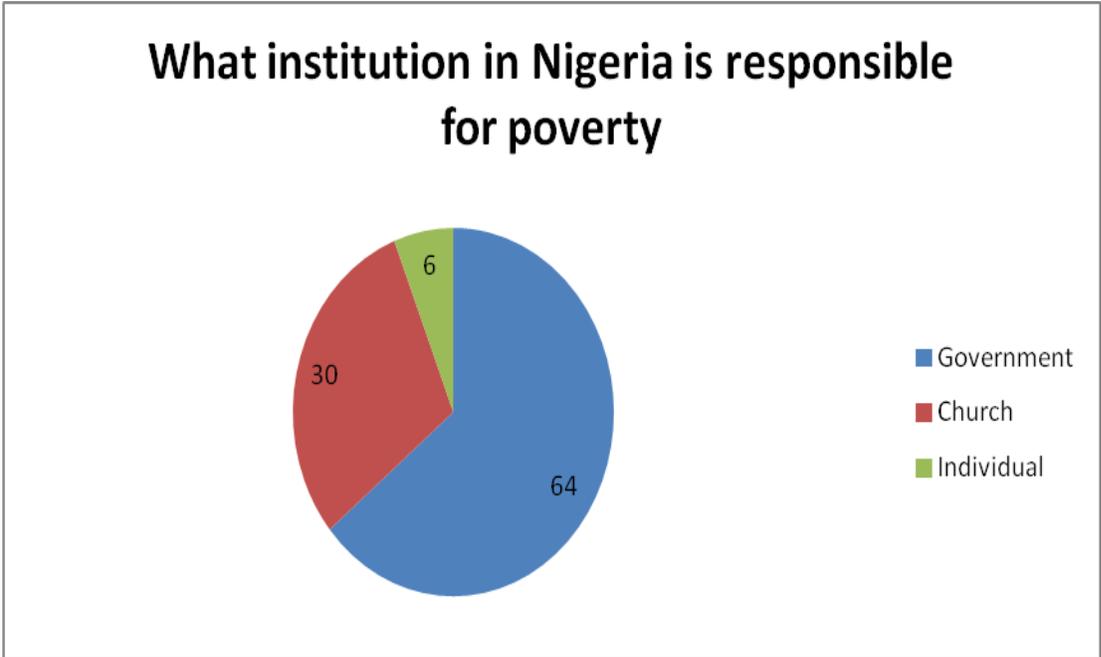


2.4.12 What institution in Nigeria is responsible for poverty?

Concerning this question larger percentage of the total respondents, precisely 64% believe strongly that poverty in Nigeria is the handiwork of the government, because with growth in country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) between 2004 and 2010 (*Nigeria Tribune*, February 14, 2012), how on earth will this had little or no impact on the poverty situation in the country?, thirty per cent of the respondent said that the church is responsible for poverty in the land, because instead for the church to support the poor, it always take whatever the poor have, hidden under the canopy of taking it for God's work, while only six per cent believe that individuals are the architect of their fortune or their misfortune.

Graphical representation:

	Government	Church	Individual
What institution in Nigeria is responsible for poverty	64	30	6



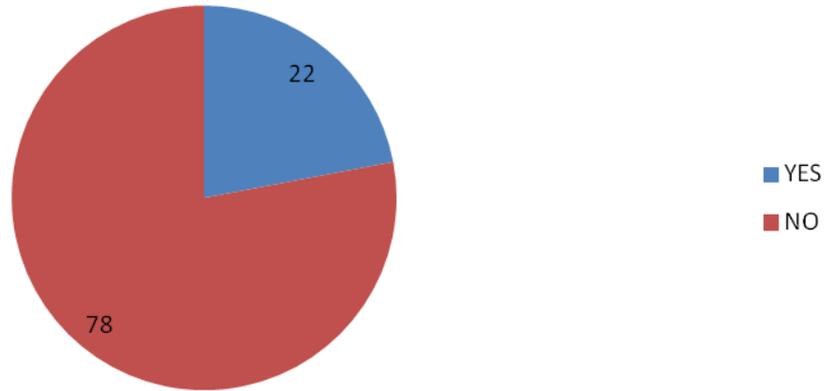
2.4.13 Does the Church play her role in poverty alleviation?

Seven-eight per cent said the church does not play her part well at all when it comes to poverty alleviation among the poor people in the rural area, they said instead of the church leaders supporting the poor, some of them would always speak in support of the politicians (those in government), may be because of gifts or favour they want from them, while twenty- two per cent agreed that the church is trying is best in the area of giving valuable advice to the poor on how their standard of living can improve.

Graphical representation

	Y E S	N O
Does the Church play role in poverty alleviation	22	78

Does the Church play role in poverty alleviation



2.5 Methods used in practice

Having established an empirical “picture” of the community and their expectations about the church and development, I now have to move to the research data I have found in the literature, in order to establish how the challenges should be confronted. In this process I am going to use three converging methodological trends. Since the study falls under the heading of development, I shall use Paulo Freire’s action-reflection model, because it has proved a credible and helpful model in the conscientisation of communities for development (in Kumalo 2001: 35). This model evaluates the minister as facilitator. According to Ignatius Swart (2010: 249-250), Conscientisation is the mode of involvement that belongs to the authentic task of the churches, not the execution of projects- which naturally presumes a movement from the rich to the poor, something to be executed amongst the poor and underprivileged. Conscientisation for development involves a double entry point in which the poor as well as the rich and powerful are to be brought to an alternative consciousness determined by the interests and point of view of the poor. For churches this means that development has to start with the empowerment and critical conscientisation of the poor. It comprises a process in which poor people take charge of their own empowerment; conscientisation of the poor should ultimately be seen as meaningless without attending to the wider relationships and structures of power- economic and political.

The second method is that of Croatto- the hermeneutic cycle (in Kumalo 2001: 35). It is used to interpret texts in a context that needs to be transformed.

The third model I shall use is that of Holland and Henriot, also known as the pastoral cycle (Holland et al 1983: 8). This theological method combines the other two models (action-reflection, and reading a text in a context). It is a method that is used to critically analyse the social dynamics of a context in order to get a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the situation. It has four steps being social analysis, theological reflection, planning and action and spirituality at the centre.

In discussing the method of involvement I will start with Paulo Freire’s action-reflection method simply because it is the parent of the pastoral cycle (in Kumalo 2001: 35). I then proceed to describe the pastoral cycle and finally I introduce Croatto’s hermeneutics approach. I then summarize the three models with the help of some diagrams.

First of all let define what we meant by theological method. ‘It is a process by which we bring to bear various sources (resources) on the practical decisions of ministry and on the intentional reflection on our praxis’ (De Beer 1998: 49).

2.5.1 Paulo Freire’s action-reflection method

Introduction

The action-reflection model may be defined as follows: Pedagogy, a very pivotal teaching method which frees people from the control of old ways of thinking and of acting, and enables them to take charge of their own future (Linthicum 1991:61).

The action-reflection method was devised by Paulo Freire, a native of Brazil (in Kumalo 2001: 36). He developed this method in the context of oppression of the poor. His aim was to liberate the poor from the dependency syndrome enforced by their oppressors (Nurnberger 1999: 232). Freire understood that the oppressed normally internalize oppression and even resist potential liberators, especially if help comes from outside the oppressed group. Then he developed his educational method against the backdrop of this risk. His aim, as Nurnberger (1999:234) puts it, is that the people should consider the revolution to be necessary; revolution in the sense of renewing peoples’ mind and they must be committed to it, they must take responsibility for its implementation. The people must think for themselves and act for themselves. They must analyse their situation by themselves. The facilitators must refrain from imparting the contents of their consciousness, but together with the people they must bring into the open and reflect upon ideas that are already present in the consciousness of the people.

The first stage in Freire’s method is to gather “generative themes” (Freire, 1970: 56). These themes cause discomfort and immediately result in discussion, and when explaining the nature of such theme, Nurnberger (1999:235) says: ‘Generative themes always call up ‘borderline situations’, that is, situations that limit one’s sphere of action. They pose a challenge of borderline actions’.

The themes are then coded, conceptualized or presented in a way that the people understand and subsequently decode by finding them in their own world of experience. This develops interest in the people, which in turn leads to discussions and action.

Underlying this method is the belief that when people act, their action affects the way they think about that action. Likewise, reflecting in a new way creates receptivity for further and more adventurous action. Linthicum (1991:61) stated further that:

Thus, action reflection feed upon each other, with each action leading to deeper and more insightful reflection which in turn leads to more courageous action.

Thus, a spiral is created, with action pushing towards reflection which results in a more decisive action which in turn causes deeper and more analytical reflection which leads to further action, and thus to reflection. So the spiral goes deeper and deeper.

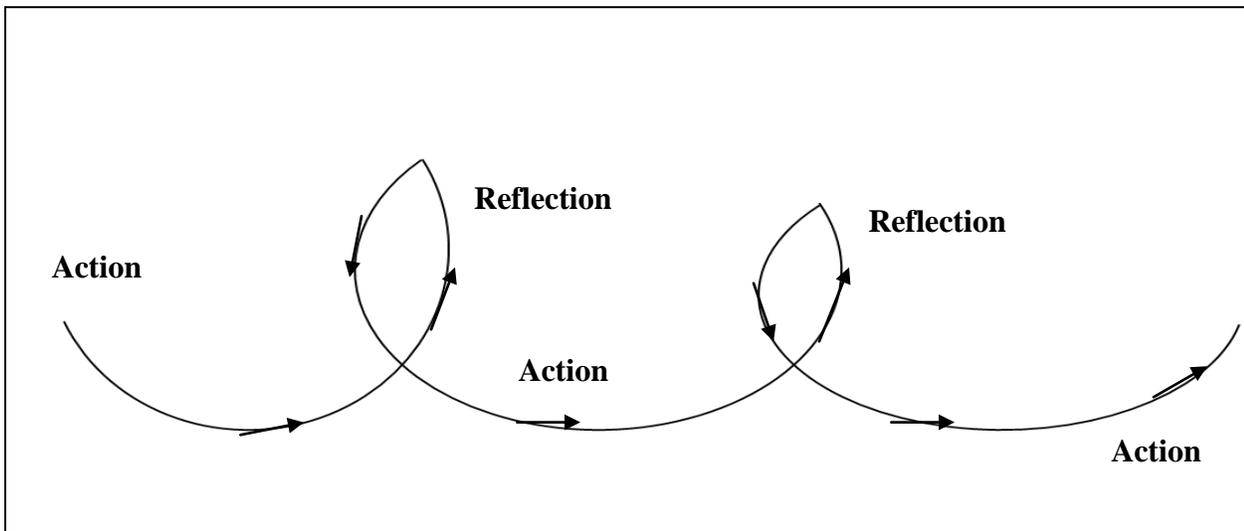


FIGURE 2.5.1: Action –reflection cycle (Van Schalkwyk 1996: 50)

2.5.2 THE PASTORAL CYCLE

I shall now discuss the pastoral cycle as the method I am using in this study. It was developed by two Catholic theologians named Holland and Henriot was first published in 1980 by Orbis

books. The title of the book is, *Social Analysis: linking faith and justice*. In Oluyole community it can be used for ministry there together with Paulo Freire's action-reflection method and Croatto's hermeneutic cycle, which can be used for the interpretation of Scriptures. The pastoral cycle falls into four stages: insertion, social analysis, theological reflection and pastoral planning with spirituality at the centre.

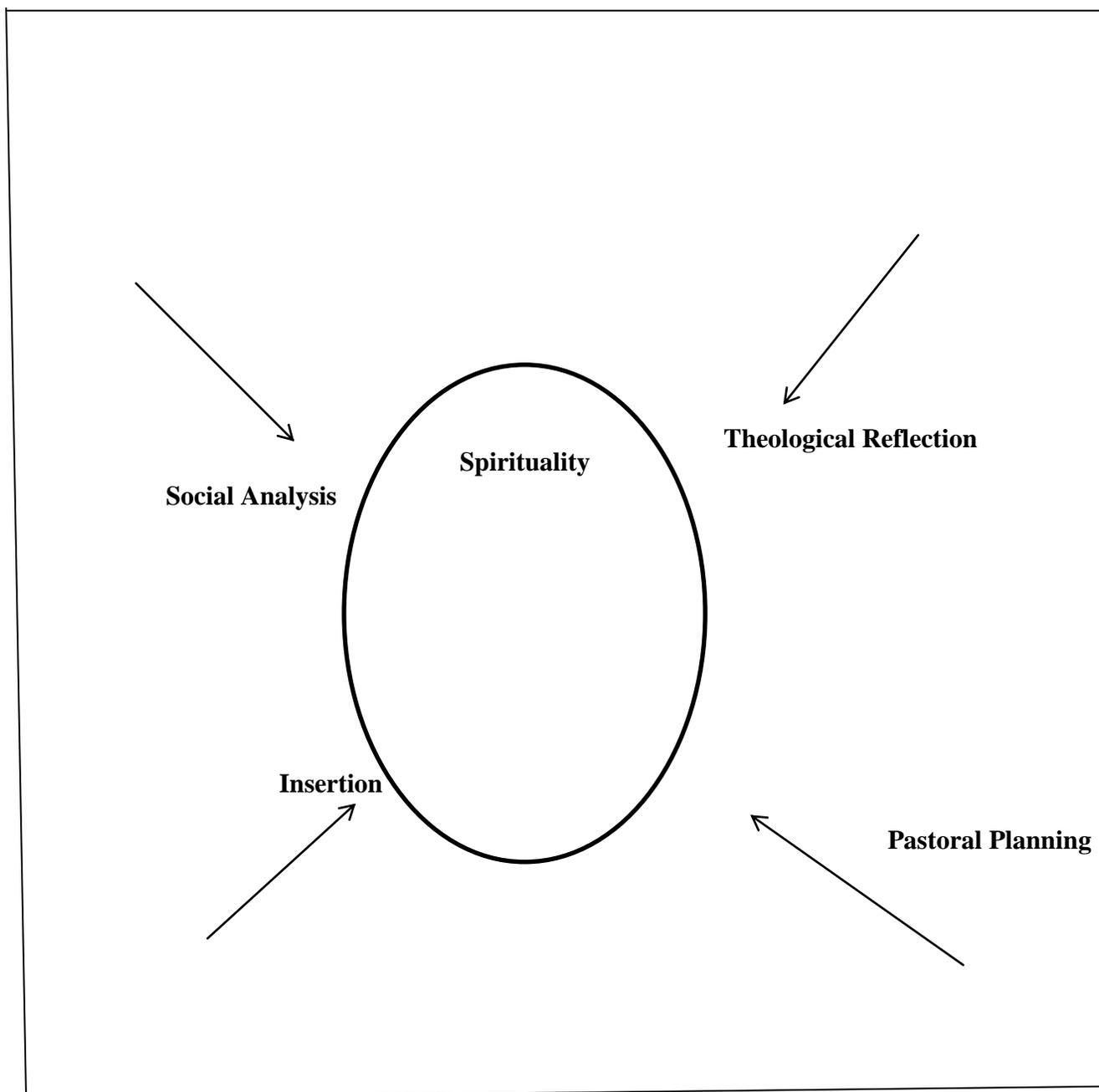


FIGURE 2.5.2: The Pastoral Cycle: Diagram from Holland, J. et al (1983: 8)

This circle shows the progressive relationship between reflection, analysis, planning and action. The centre point of the circle is formed by spirituality, in this case a form of Christian spirituality, articulated by De Santa Ana (2002:334) as an affirmation of the spirit of the Christian community she/he works in by living in God's Spirit. One can enter into the pastoral circle at any point, but in my case I have chosen to enter at the point of insertion. The steps follow each other in this order:

2.5.2.1 Insertion

Insertion is the crucial moment in the pastoral circle and also the starting point for any pastoral action, because it helps in locating the characteristics of our pastoral responses in the life experience of individuals and communities. This can only be done if we *listen* very well to the questions asked by the community members among themselves (De Santa Ana 2002:331-332). It tells us what people are feeling, what they are undergoing, and how they are responding; from these experiences the primary data is being interpreted (Holland et al 1983:7-9). So some of the questions I asked in this instance are: Who are the main actors at work in the community? What are important aspects of the social, political, economic and cultural systems defining what is happening in the community? What "signs of the times" may be at work here? (Kritzinger & Saayman 2011:3). Moreover, insertion describes the present action and faith experiences of theological practitioners. It locates pastoral responses in the lived experience of individual and communities (Cochrane 1991:17). This entails being in the self-same context and experiencing the feelings, fears, perceptions and responses of the people with regard to their predicaments. For us as Christians this moment is preceded by faith. Sometimes it is our faith that leads us to insert into communities. We enter communities and their cultures, engage with them, observe and experience their life. It is during insertion that we encounter a great deal of suffering such as hunger, malnutrition, homelessness, violence and so on.

2.5.2.2 Social Analysis

Social Analysis helps us to understand the richness of all the community interrelationships. It also examines the causes of events in the community, identifies the actors, probes consequences of these events, and delineates linkages between various actors in the community. It helps the researcher to make sense of experiences by putting them into a broader picture and drawing the connections between them. Social Analysis concerns the social, cultural, ecclesiastical and political dynamics of the community. It means interpreting events in the community in order to understand them clearly. Holland and Henriot (1983:15) express this in simple terms, as follows: “Social analysis is the extension of the principle of seeing clearly, moving from the personal realm to the social”.

In other words, social analysis is an attempt to understand one’s social context. It includes asking questions, such as why things happen the way they do. Cochrane et al (1991) include ecclesial analysis in social analysis. They do this because of the key importance to the church of understanding its role within society or the immediate context. The church needs to analyze its role in order to be relevant to its context and to shape itself for mission. This will help it to minister in a way that responds to the needs of the community. As Cochrane (1991:19) says, ‘social-ecclesial analysis includes analysis of the structure and dynamics of the Church and determines the life and witness of the church’. Cochrane (1991:18) goes on to suggest that there is a need for those engaged in this process to go further in order to understand their particular social-ecclesiastic location and interests.

2.5.2.3 Theological reflection

Theological reflection helps us to understand more broadly and deeply the analyzed experience in the light of living faith, scripture, church social teaching, and the resources of tradition. How do the members in the community understand and utilize Scripture and Christian tradition in their community life? Are they in the process of constructing a “local theology of mission?”(Kritzinger & Saayman 2011:3).

In the same vein, this is the stage when the analysis looks at the position of the church with regards to the context. According to De Beer (1998:49), it has various sources- Bible, church

tradition, spirituality, and personal journey to a process of reflection and interaction. The purpose of the analysis is to understand the church's calling and its mission in this particular context. It is concerned not only with the spiritual practices of the church but covers all other spheres affecting human life. Gutierrez (1986:9) in his own view says 'Theological reflection offers a critical look at current economic, cultural and socio-political issues especially as they manifest themselves within the Christian community'.

Some important points need to be touched on in the course of this critical reflection.

Firstly, it is shared reflection, which means that a number of participants are drawn together around the same table to share their experiences, insights, failures and observation and to learn from one another.

Secondly, the act of doing theology focuses on Christian praxis (lived faith, present action, practical theology etc.). It is the point where considerable interaction occurs between different sources, thus bringing new insights to those involved. De Beer and Venter (1998:50) notes three steps that need to be taken when doing theological reflection, namely attending, asserting and decision making.

As we have seen, reflection takes place by listening carefully to people's problems and collecting relevant data. Assertion is the process of engaging the pieces of information that one has collected in order to deepen religious insights. Decision-making is the stage when one starts taking concrete decision for ministry, based on the insights gained from insertion. One takes a decision to do what needs to be done for ministry in this situation. Effective ministry happens, therefore, not when the minister does what he thinks necessary but when the minister, having reflected on the situation with the people, does what the situation requires.

2.5.2.4 Pastoral planning

Pastoral planning shows how the response should be designed in order to be most effective not only in the short term but also in the long term, since the purpose of pastoral circle is decision and action and this makes the pastoral planning very important. Who are important leaders in

decision taking in the community? How do they generally plan and execute joint actions? Do they co-operate with members of other faith groups, NGO's, and government institutions? To buttress this De Beer (1998:74) says, pastoral planning is the stage when 'very specific decisions and plans are made with regard to the praxis of ministry in the context'. This involves pastoral planning for action, decision making, plans for new action, and evaluation. Pastoral planning for action includes answering questions such as: What are we going to do? How do will do it? Who will do what? When will they do it? And when will they report?

A. Decision-making

This is the stage when the church or community decide what they discern to be God's will for them. What, in other words, are they called to do as a church and to be as the people of God in this community? The minister becomes the facilitator and enabler of the process. This phase consists of various steps. The first is to understand our situation through analysis and reflection. Then one has to establish what the church in that specific community was meant to be. Then one can begin to discern what God is calling the church do in order to help the people, by serving them, to realize the Christ who was present in the community. The next question is how to do that. And that question leads to strategic planning.

B. Planning

This is the stage where one does strategic planning which will include goals, objectives, action plans, deadlines, accountability, structure, funding, marketing strategy, recruitment and budget (De Beer 1998:77).

To put it simply, this is where the church decides on what her long-term and short-term goals will be and how they will be achieved. What needs to be done? Who will do what, when will they do it? Where will they do it? When and where will they report?

C. Action

At this stage the insights and strategic plans are implemented and translated into action as De Beer and Venter (1998:76) stated: “Only when newly gained insights are adequately translated into praxis can we really speak of theology”.

Action is then taken so as to transform the situation. The situation is addressed with a well-planned mission strategy so that insights are translated into praxis. As a result, the situation is transform for the better.

D. Evaluation

For us to learn from our praxis there is always a need to evaluate what we have done. That is the stage when we look critically at our actions, suggesting adjustments where needed. Evaluation must occur not only at the end of the process but even at other stages; it needs to be done so that the church can constantly determine whether it is still doing God’s will.

2.5.2.5 Spirituality:

Spirituality talks about what type(s) of spirituality is/are practiced by the change agents? What is the dominant spirituality among them? Is this a source of inspiration and encouragement to the group - as Kritzinger and Saayman put it (2011:3-4), do they allow the inspiration, inbreathing and empowering of the Spirit to work in and through them? How do these factors of spirituality shape their approach? (Ibid).

2.5.3 Croatto's hermeneutic approach

Croatto's hermeneutic approach had a widespread influence on the interpretation of texts in churches, theological seminaries, etc. I am also using it in interpreting texts for this research. For these reasons it is important to discuss it here.

According to Speckman (1997:48), Croatto is a native of Latin America and an Old Testament scholar. His main concern is with contextual theory and exegesis, and he believes that the text is a product of historical circumstances which no longer prevail.

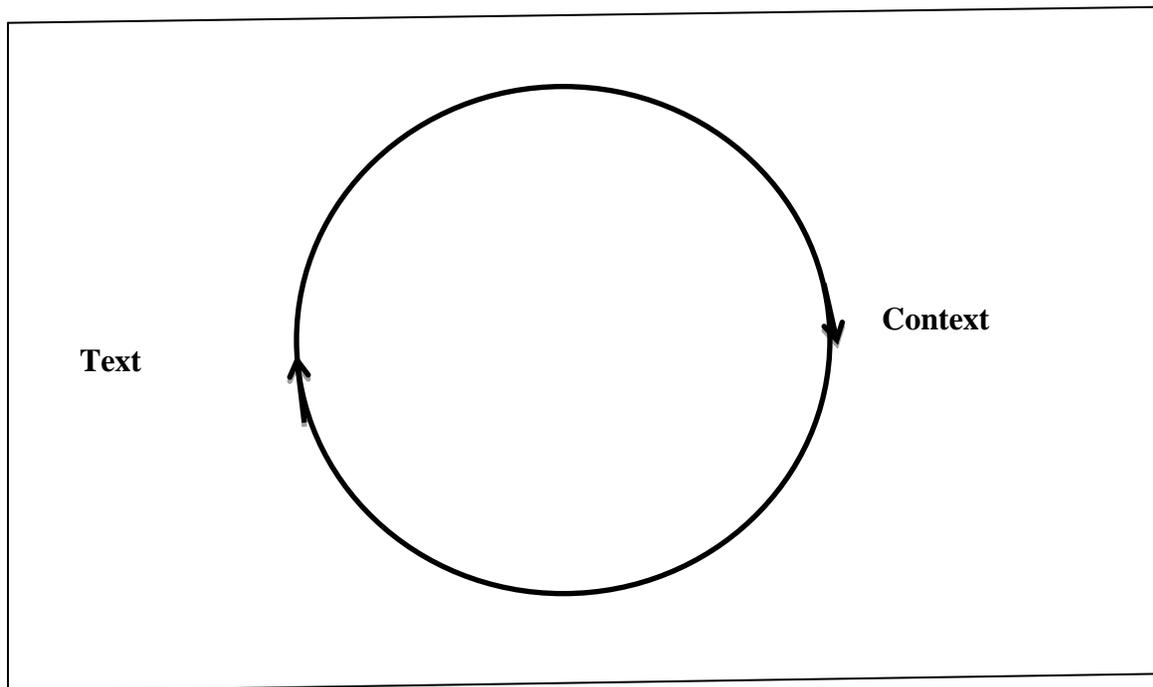


FIGURE 2.5.3: Croatto's Hermeneutic Method

In this method the biblical text presents issues that are discussed by the people as they seek to understand their context in the light of Scripture. Again the people reflect on their situation for themselves, as they do in Paulo Freire's method and in the pastoral cycle. The people are given an opportunity to reflect on their situation and to produce a clear understanding of their context. It is then that they feel motivated by the discussion process to do something about their situation. They move on to action. In this way the method relates to the other two methods.

2.5.4 A comprehensive model and its characteristics

Integrating these three methods, I come up with the following comprehensive model:

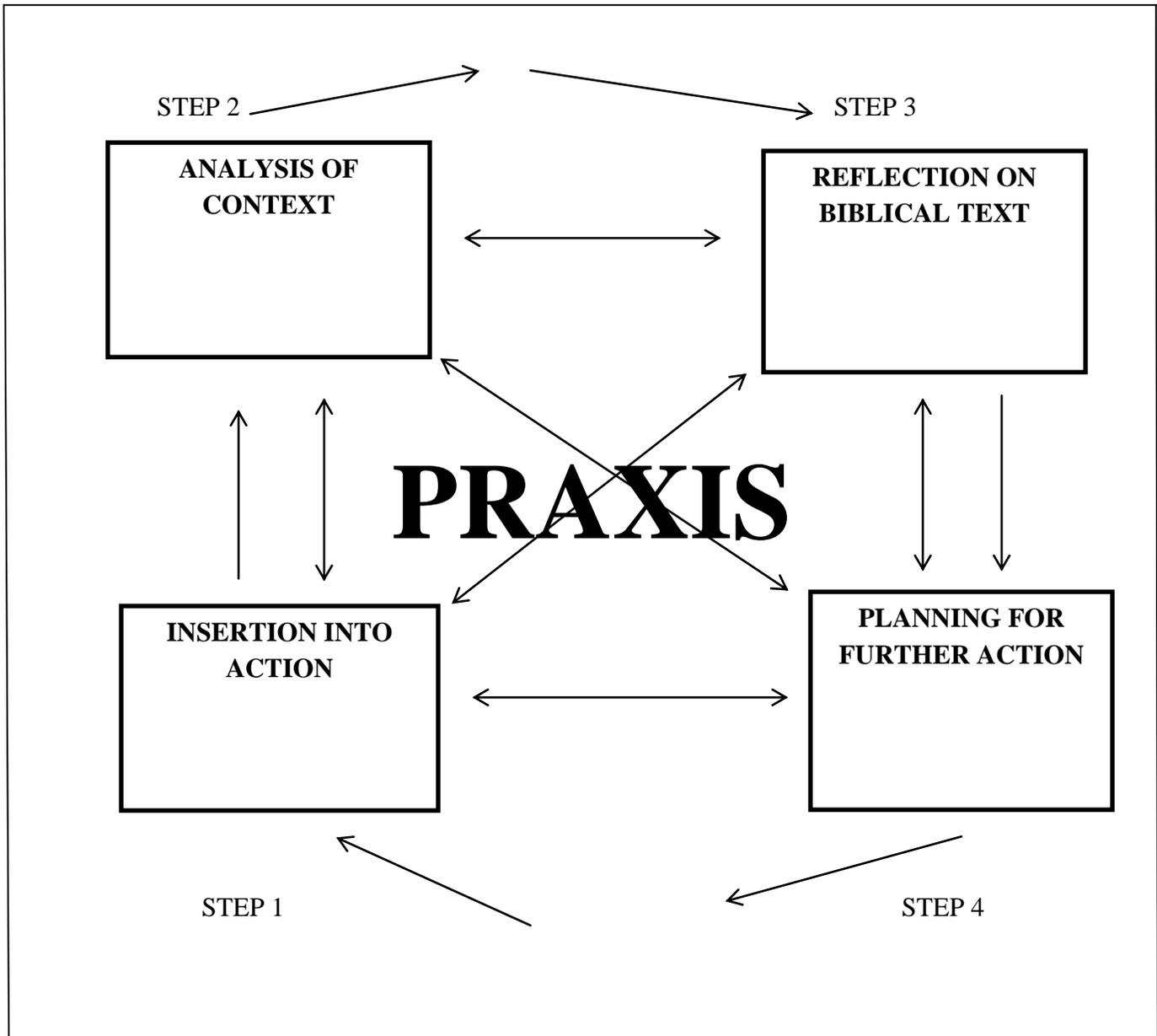


FIGURE 2.5.4: A comprehensive model: (UNISA Tutorial letter [MSG422E/101] 5:2010).

The reason for me to use these three methods is because I need to do three very important things. Firstly, I must analyse my context so as to understand it clearly. Secondly I need to reflect critically on my ministry and this again need skills of action-reflection. Lastly as a church we

base our mission on the scriptures which form the foundational motivation for our involvement in mission and theologically based development. This means that I need a method of interpreting the message of the Bible so that it is contextually relevant. The comprehensive model has got all the above mentioned requirements so that is the reason why I regard it as comprehensive and want to use it.

First, we need to understand that Paulo Freire's method of action-reflection is the father of the other two models. Consequently the pastoral cycle has both models in it – both Paulo Freire's model and Croatto's hermeneutic approach. One can use the pastoral cycle on its own, but I think there is great benefit to include the other two. They demonstrate the richness and inner dynamics of the pastoral cycle which is of great relevance for the context in which the study project was undertaken.

The most important thing here is the interaction of the three models. They all emphasised the importance of the context in which ministry is done. The context has to be analysed and understood if ministry is to be effective; it cannot be ignored. Secondly, the text is very important. Theological reflection is done in order to read and interpret the text so that it yields a contextually relevant message. Croatto gives us the skills to interpret the text properly. After combining the three models, one is left with "a model of convergence" which becomes a model of ministry in a community of the poor; a community that is in need of both spiritual satisfaction and transformational development.

This model has three vitally important components. First there is the pastoral cycle, which becomes the basis of ministry. Then there is the action-reflection model, which is a model of development and can also be used in a church environment. It is extremely useful for the analysis of contexts and for reflection. It is also most helpful in motivating the poor to see their plight and act upon it. Lastly, Croatto's hermeneutic approach forms a good resource for the interpretation of the text, so that the congregation's interpretation of the Bible becomes the centre of the ministry.

The pastoral cycle locates the practitioner in the context during insertion. Then the practitioner reads the Bible in the context in which He or she finds himself or herself. The interpretation of the text is informed by the context as experienced by the practitioner. This is explained by

Croatto (in Speckman 1997:50): ‘The interpreter is located in his or her present context, not in an ancient context. His or her capacity to comprehend is determined by the framework provided by the context.

My comprehensive approach has different dimensions and now I am going to discuss them briefly.

2.5.4.1 Theological

First of all, it is important to understand that the three component methods- Croatto’s hermeneutic cycle, the action-reflection model and the pastoral cycle- are all theological. They can be used in secular contexts and can, I believe, be very helpful there; but in the context of Oluyole community and this research they have been used theologically. This has been possible because of Croatto’s model, which enabled us to use and interpret the Bible in all the steps of discussion and ministry.

2.5.4.2 Contextual

This model is also contextual because it considers the contexts where ministry is happening. The context of insertion is very important and informs the other stages of the model. The other stages therefore respond to the specific dynamics of the context of insertion, so that the context of insertion informs practice. Croatto’s model helps to interpret the text in order to confer meaning on the experienced reality. Then it casts light for the church in mission on the people’s understanding of the Missio Die, which has to be implemented as a response to the demands of the context. As a result, the involvement of the church in community development is backed by a contextually relevant textual message.

2.5.4.3 Transformational

Being transformational, this model never leaves the community unchanged, it challenges and changes reality. Mission that is done according to this method leads to significant change in the

relevant community. It does not leave the community as it was, and for me that is what the gospel means. The gospel never leaves the status quo as it is but changes it. That is why this model is appropriate for ministry, especially in poor communities that are seeking to transform their situation. And that is why I decided to use this model when I started my ministry in Oluyole rural community. The method is transformational in a way which affords a new way of interpreting Scripture and relating its message to one's context, and which encourages constant analysis and reflection during the course of mission.

2.5.4.4 Participation

This method allows other people to take part in ministry of the church and in the development processes in which the church is involved. It is in line with the great doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. In any Church training programme group, for instance, all people from all groups in the church should be welcomed as members and their voices heard in the shaping of that church's ministry. Even when it comes to running the services and implementing the mission statement and strategies, space has to be created for more people to participate. As a result, this method empowers more people by allowing them to use their potential and by developing them. All three methods require and allow the involvement of more people at all stages. They are not just the domain of the educated and ordained but can be done with others. This is very important for transformational development because it encourages the participation of all stakeholders. It is people-centred.

2.5.4.5 Process

The other advantage of this method is that it is a process. By a process I mean that it gives those involved an opportunity to learn from the experience and to grow as a result of the process of development and ministry in the church. Development is by nature a process, it cannot be rushed. This method is therefore very appropriate.

2.5.4.6 Measurable

Perhaps the most important aspect of these methods, in my view, is that their results can be measured. Generally speaking, the ministry of the church is not measurable. It is always postponed as something that only God can see and measure. This method, however, presents a ministry that is measurable. For instance, in Oluyole community, the ministry of the church can be seen in the number of projects that have been started and are helping the community. This makes the method the best to be used so far. The effects are measurable when you see the people involved in initiatives to develop their community.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the design and method of research used in this study. From the research field I discovered that majority of these rural people are poor, the reasons being that larger percentage of these people belong to the older generation, also many of them are females without husbands and most of them are not well educated. But with the level of their enthusiasm with this research project when I was with them, I noticed that they do not want to beg for alms but they are ready to receive proper training and necessary financial support through which they would be able to care for themselves. The next step is context/social analysis.

CHAPTER 3

SOCIAL ANALYSIS: MISSION, THE POOR AND DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I indicated the preponderance of poverty in my community, as well as the lack of developmental initiatives, also in the church. For this reason I continue in this chapter with social analysis, focusing on the developmental and missiological framework on which this study is based, with special reference to the poor. First of all let me start by discussing the historical relationship between the church and development, after that I go into the basic concepts used in this study, and that will be followed immediately by some missiological themes that are relevant to the church's mission activities in relation to development among the poor.

3.2 A brief historical overview of recent trends in relationships between development and mission

It is obvious that I cannot provide an overview of the totality of the relationships between development and mission throughout the entire history of the Christian church.¹ Three phases through which the church had passed over the years in relation to community development will be looked into under this topic. There is a critical approach to the modernist paradigm and a consequent move towards transformational development as a new approach.

3.2.1 Development as modernization:

The 1960s were characterized by the dominant understanding of development as modernization. This meant that the technological development of the west was considered to be the answer to

¹ For a more extensive overview, see Alawode & Saayman 2013.

development in the third world. In her own view, Van Schalkwyk (1996:48) states that “It meant that the technical and economic development within the capitalist framework was considered to be the universal remedy or magic potion for all socio-economic problems”.

Development was also understood as a inherent to the process of colonization. Even the church fell into the trap of facilitating this kind of development. At this stage there was a clear identification between development, mission and political power in colonies and previous colonies all over the world.

For the church this stage meant missionaries working to bring about Western civilization, which they thought would solve the problems of poor Third World countries and this was a form of colonization by the First World. This harks back to sentiments expressed by earlier missionaries. These sentiments were clearly expressed by John Phillip, who was the Superintendent of London Missionary Society in the Cape in 1819 (in De beer 1997:26), stated that “while our missionaries are everywhere scattering the seeds of civilization, social order, happiness, they are by the most unexceptional means extending British interest, British influence and the British Empire”.

Moreover, he also wrote that

Missionary stations are the most efficient agents, which can be employed to
Promote the internal strength of our colonies, and the cheapest and best military
Posts that wise governments can employ to defend it against the predatory
Intrusions of savage tribes (in De Beer 1997:27)

In a situation where the western or developed world were seeing themselves as having the sole responsibility of civilizing and Christianising the indigenous people of Africa made Magubane echoes this perception: ‘The responsibility and the task laid upon the European is to Christianise and civilize the indigenous people demand that the former should retain the direction of affairs in the foreseeable future’ (in De Beer 1997:27).

To civilise and Christianise were perceived as a calling, because the African way of life was seen as primitive, barbaric and pagan. It therefore had to give way through development to the so-called Christian life.

3.2.2 Critical Acceptance

It did not take long for the deficiencies of this approach to the development of the poorer countries to be realized. Two important factors were appreciated: firstly, that development is more than economic growth; secondly, that development, over and above the creation of projects and programmes, has to take seriously the development of the people.

If the church has understanding of development as economic growth, this will limit her (the church) perspective because it would not take into account 'the total or complete process of human and social development' (De Beer 1997:27).

Developmental programme should be done in such a way that the poor people would be able to see and appreciate the ethical implications of the involvement of development in all aspects of their lives, which is economic, social, political and cultural. Our approach to development should be people-centric or humanistic (Van Schalkwyk 1996:48), due to the fact that this new approach promotes the perception of development as liberation. Also, it is viewed as the radical breakdown of an oppressive and negative status quo so as to free the poor and the oppressed. This goes hand in hand with the understanding of development as liberation, which means the struggle against the oppressor and breakdown of oppressive systems that did not consider the poor. Liberation theology helps us to understand better the connection between faith and the needs of the world particularly the poor people (Ibid).

It (Liberation theology) invites people to respond to the gospel in profoundly concrete ways, to establish relationships of solidarity and community. When it (liberation theology) is sincerely put into practice, our faith would make sense and Christian interaction with the world will be richer and more meaningful, because the joys and hopes, the fears and anxieties of the people of this age, especially the poor, are those of the church, so liberation theology captured the hopes and the longings of the poor people.

However, I think at the very least that liberation theology is a reflection on the fact that human liberation has to be part of the Christian understanding of salvation. Salvation is not exclusively otherworldly; it has something to do with the here and now, because the poor people were beginning to long for a change that would alter the traditional relationship in which the church was more associated with those in power (www.uscatholic.org/culture/social-justice Accessed on 22/01/2013).

So, communities of people, especially poor people, gathered to read the Bible and reflect on their faith. They moved from a fatalistic faith-one that said the poor should tolerate the present and put their hope in the afterlife-to a faith rooted in Jesus' preaching about a wholeness of life, which the prophets of the Hebrew Bible also talked about: caring for the widow, the orphan, the forgotten, the stranger.

“Liberation spirituality” requires a big change in how we think about salvation and how we think about the church. There is a kind of faith that makes a really strict division between natural and supernatural, between the earthly realm and the heavenly realm. And that division can also mean a privatized faith and a church whose purpose is getting souls to heaven, therefore, liberation theology is not just about charity to the poor people but it is all about the church fulfilling her responsibility to the poor people (Ibid).

Liberation theology’s understanding of Jesus is part of a wider 20th-century appreciation of the historical Jesus and his ministry. The primary theme of Jesus' preaching was the kingdom of God. It was not a purely otherworldly kind of preaching. It was not passively accepting the society as it was. Jesus healed those who were ostracized in his society. I believe liberation theology picks up on this. Our salvation is not just spiritual, and salvation is not strictly otherworldly, but it begins in this world (Ibid).

Our faith is an incarnational faith. It means we take history seriously. Jesus lived in a particular society, and he had a certain place in that society. He reached out to certain social classes as well, especially those who were rejected. I think that provides a model for where the church should be, and where Christians should be as well.

‘Liberation spirituality’ invites us to look at the crucified people of our own world today and ask them these questions: What have I done to crucify you? And what do I need to do to bring you down from the cross?

I believe with this liberation theology would be able to produce the transformative lens of faith through which the life of the poor people would be able to change for better (Ibid).

3.2.3 Towards transformational development

The humanist approach to development emphasised development as liberation, which meant the removal of oppressive structures. A new paradigm emerged which moved away from developmentalism. This paradigm emphasised the need for development to be viewed as the transformation of society. This transformation was coming not from above (something planned by some people and imposed on the poor) but also from below, that is something planned by the people themselves. With this method the poor people will be fully involved in shaping their own future. Through this they now become important role players or participants in developmental processes of their own lives.

Anne Hope (in Van Schalkwyk 1996:48) goes on to mention another approach; according to her there is a need to go further by building a new society, a process which she calls social transformation. This term refers to the building up of an alternative society with new values and a new order. Now development can be understood to mean social transformation, which transcends liberation in the sense of a simple breaking down of old systems. In fact, understanding this kind of development can be traced by considering the early stages of development. It started as modernization, and then moved towards a comprehensive approach which was humanistic: then it became liberation, and lastly it is understood as the building of a new society. Social transformation development refers to the process of change in values, norms, institutionalized relationships, and stratification hierarchies over time. It affects patterns of interaction and institutional arrangements within a society. The course of social transformation in any given society depends upon the specific historical events. (<http://www.uwc.ac.za/?module=cms&action=showfulltext&id 24/01/2013>)

However, many of our churches today are engaged in suicidal transformation, rather than societal transformation. As a church, we have to ask the following serious questions: Are we actively engaged in the difficult task of transformation that embraces the social, the economic and the spiritual? Are we making a lasting influence on the society? What is the score of the Church in this whole issue of spiritual and social transformation? Because I believe that the church should have overpowering influence on the society [<http://transform-world.net/newsletters/2009/> (24/01/2013)].

Transformational development is reaching the community with the whole gospel for the whole person through whole churches. Social action and evangelism go hand in hand. The community recognizes that the churches' role is not only to teach and preach the Word of God, but also to be involved in transformational development. We must preach the gospel through words and deeds. We must not dichotomise evangelism and social activism – they always go together. We must practice both personal and social holiness (Ibid).

Moreover, drawing on official World Vision documentation, transformational development is, ideally, a holistic and sustainable development process which is community based and, a process in which individuals, families and communities identify and work to overcome the root causes of their poverty or “the obstacles that prevent them from living life in all its fullness”. Transformational development adopts an “integrated physical-spiritual” view of the people, the world and the development process (WVI 2003:6); the scope of Transformation development is intended to be inclusive of social, spiritual, economic, political and environmental dimensions of life (ibid:16). The goals of Transformational development and the process whereby it is pursued are framed within the biblical narrative of the kingdom of God (WVI 2003:3, 6), but incorporate developmental insights and practice alongside the mobilisation of religious resources.

The ‘domains of change’ which Transformational development seeks to impact include wellbeing (families and communities), empowerment (of individuals, to be agents of transformation, and of communities, to function sustainably and interdependently), transformed relationships (with self, God and others, reflecting both love and justice), as well as transformed systems and structures (WV 2003:24). Transformation is the change from a condition of human existence contrary to God's purposes to one in which people are able to enjoy fullness of life in harmony with God. Bryant Myers (1998:3) in her view uses the term transformational development to reflect his concern for seeking positive change in the whole of human life materially, socially and spiritually. He stated further that:

Changed people and just and peaceful relationships are the twin goals of transformation . . . Changed people are those who have discovered their true identity as children of God and who have recovered their true vocation as faithful and productive stewards of gifts from God for the well-being of all (Bryant Myers 1998: 14).

Also the Opportunity International Network (OI) defines transformational development as:

“A deeply rooted change in people's economic, social, political, spiritual and behavioral conditions resulting in their enjoyment of wholeness of life under God's ordinances.”(Opportunity International: Transformation Indicators Paper [unpublished document: 2000]) God's design, and people conforming to it, is two common concepts that are advanced by these definitions. More specifically, these definitions not only embody the broader impact areas of secular development, but also hold them accountable to a greater purpose for human existence. In other words, Transformational development concerns change in all aspects of life - economic, social, political, spiritual and emotional - with a clear understanding of the ultimate purpose and goal of such development. Transformational development deals with the whole person. Every person is inherently an economic, a political, a social and a spiritual being at one and the same time. The transformation of the whole person means the simultaneous death of the old and the living to the new (Ibid). Herein lies the interaction between spiritual transformation and transformational development. Because God's purpose and design for human existence implies spiritual transformation, so development theories and programmes that do not address an individual's personal relationship with Christ are inadequate. While this central point of transformational development is critical to my working definition, we must also remember, with equal passion, the multiple relationships that also must be reconciled to God's intended purpose and design. There are four major areas of reconciliation that Christians recognise should take place for holistic transformational development to occur. These are the reconciliation of people to God, people with themselves, people with their neighbours, and people with the rest of creation

(http://www.medicalteams.org/docs/learningzone/Conceptual_Framework_for_Transformational_Development.pdf?sfvrsn=0 Accessed on 24/01/2013).

Therefore, while the Transformational development process is ultimately dependent upon the individual's reconciled relationship with God, the practical expression of all four reconciled relationships is the interaction that development theory and practice has with God's divine purpose and design. The extent to which current development tools and methods contribute to the reconciling of these four relationships becomes the basis for the development of new tools which can comply fully with the requirements of transformational development (Ibid).

When someone brings together all the stages that development has undergone, it converges with a meaningful and transformational framework: development as social transformation.

I hereby move on to consider some basic concepts in this process.

3.3 Some basic concepts that will be used in this research

It is appropriate now to consider my understanding of some the basic concepts of transformational development that will be used in this study.

3.3.1 Community development

It is essential to define community development as we continue to shape the theoretical framework because that is what we shall be dealing with in this study.

Therefore, community development can be defined as follows: According to Swanepoel (in Van Schalkwyk 1996:49)

Community development is the process whereby a community would, collectively and on its own initiative and responsibility, attempt to realize self-identified needs, according to pre-established procedures in order to reach set goals.

This approach starts off as a coherently functioning system. It normally does so with the help of an outside facilitator to determine the community's priorities and plans and to execute its own development programmes. The importance of community development is that it is local, carried on by the local people themselves for their own benefit. The most important thing for them is that community expertise is rated as very important, so that the whole exercise is more about the local people than about the projects and programmes. When the community is engaged in this exercise, it learns to take its destiny into its own hands.

Shenk (1996: xi) in his own view says, such a process improves the capacity of the people in a holistic manner:

Community development is an evolutionary and learning process of facilitating transformation. It includes changes in the awareness, motivation and behavior of the community towards a better quality of life in terms of initiative, participation and collective action towards positive change in the community.

The important element in community development is that the local community moves into growth mode as it takes the initiative and responsibility for improving its own conditions and meeting its own demands. Community development as a process takes seriously the need to involve the local people so that they can also grow. Community development is not about projects and programmes. All these are very important, but the most important element is the growth of the people.

3.3.2 Human-scale development

It is necessary at this point to mention the human-scale development approach. This will be used to clarify what we mean in this study by basic human needs and the holistic approach to community development. Human-scale development focuses on three sets of fundamental needs (food, clothing and shelter) that determine the whole of life. It includes not only subsistence needs but also immaterial elements such as identity, affection and recreation. This approach was developed by a team of Latin American researchers led by Manfred Max-Neef (Van Schalkwyk 1996:50). These needs are the building blocks of any given culture. Therefore, they exist in every culture. If these needs are met, life in its fullness is realised. If they are not met, the consequences are social pathology in form of corruption, destruction of family life, substance dependency, prostitution, arm robbery, violence and other forms of crime. Human-scale development is closely linked with people-centred development. By people-centred development we mean that development and relief work is concerned with improving the lives of people-

women, men and children- on a scale for which people can take responsibility. Interventions must always be measured in terms of how they affect people's lives in ways that are meaningful to the people concerned. People should also be able to take control of such endeavours to improve their quality of lives. By people-centred development, then, we mean interventions that accord priority to people and the satisfaction of their needs. It is also important to note that people-scale development not only implies the facilitation of development by outside agents, for this as always being the people's view over the years, but also that such facilitation (rather than intervention) by outside agents should empower people to take control of themselves, and also to take control of programmes and projects to improve the quality of their own lives.

3.3.3 Participation

This study will show that effective participation gives to people the opportunity to contribute meaningfully in the decisions making process that affects their lives. Men and women are disempowered when they cannot exercise this right. Development and relief work should strengthen people's capacity to participate positively in social change in terms of both personal growth and public action, and to the best of my knowledge, this is what mission encourages and does.

3.4 Theological framework for development: mission

It is my conviction that the theological framework for development can be found in Christian mission. I will therefore now describe mission as I understand it.

Over the years, 'mission' has become a controversial topic (Kritzinger 1989:33). People no longer mean the same thing when they speak of 'mission'. In fact, they all have their own perception of what mission is. David Bosch (1991:1) lists a number of meanings attached to this word, such as:

1. The sending of missionaries to a designated territory,

2. The activities undertaken by such missionaries
3. The geographical area within the overall territory where the missionaries operates and
4. The agency that dispatches missionaries towards mission fields, the non-Christian world, or local congregation without a minister

The definition of mission has change over the years with the development of the debate on what mission is and what its purpose is. For instance, earlier definitions of mission as evangelism, which emphasised the preaching, witnessing and proclamation of the gospel (Kritzinger 1988:33), are currently understood to be very narrow. These definitions see people simply as souls in need of conversion: once that is done, mission is accomplished. They do not include the need to serve people or to take their situations of struggle into account. For all these reasons, such definitions are inadequate.

People such as Du Preez (Kritzinger 1989:34) felt this definition to be unsatisfactory because it reflects only one dimension or aspect of mission. According to him, mission is multi-dimensional. In fact, he argued that mission had ten dimensions to it. These ten dimensions were grouped together under three inclusive dimensions: KERYGMA (proclamation), KOINONIA (fellowship) and DIAKONIA (Christian service). This simply means that in fellowship the church builds a community and then practices what it preaches through Christian deeds in response to real-life struggles. This rendering of what the church preaches by action and does by responding to people's life struggles can be described among other things, as community development. According to Du Preez (Ibid), he said and I quote

In Christian KOINONIA, KERYGMA AND DIAKONIA communion, proclamation and Service – or to put it in still jargons terms, a loving fellowship, sturdy witnessing to truth and a continual care of one's neighbour in need – actually constitute the worship, liturgia, which are acceptable to God and they do so in their very togetherness and secularity. A formal distinct liturgy is needed to remind us of the demands of our seven-day week liturgy.

This constitutes a good understanding of mission for the purposes of this thesis, but the problem has been that churches in their missionary endeavours have tended to separate the dimensions. Ignatius Swart (2010: 245) in his own view stated that,

Churches are sometimes very one-sided, choosing one dimension and focusing on it at the expense of all others. To the extent that in many cases most of the so-called 'church development projects' did not have any connections with the poor people in our churches and had little to do with development except the names that they carried, and that people had also created the impression that dependency on foreign resources is the easiest way to achieve development.

He expressed further that this one-sidedness is mistaken because the gospel is holistic:

Little by little other sides of life reassert themselves as one attains a more rounded wisdom at the risk of becoming bland. The art of life and of mission too, is to overcome one-sidedness, without falling into blandness. That may seem impossible
It is still a challenge... (Ibid)

A broader definition of mission is the one developed by David Bosch (1991:19) namely the participation of Christians in the liberating mission of Jesus Christ. It is the good news of God's love, incarnated in the witness of a community, for the sake of the world.

Two important points in this definition merit attention because they relate to both development and mission. These are participation and liberation. Participation means that mission is carried out not by a small minority (the ordained) but by all the people and this makes it developmental in its approach. Bosch (1991:467) holds that mission is ministry by all the people of God- both rich and the poor. He builds this understanding on the foundation laid by other theologians such as Jurgen Moltmann (in Bosch 1991: 467) says that ' Christian theology will no longer be simply a theology for priests and pastors, but also a theology for the laity in their calling in the world'.

This definition also builds on liberation theology as a response to the conservative understanding of mission, which was based on Western theories of development that in turn were aimed at Third World 'objects' and were therefore oppressive. The problem here was that mission was very closely related to the Western influence of colonization and modernization. The synchronization between mission and colonization was supported, moreover, by the mission agencies abroad and the arrogance they sometimes displayed towards the local people in the 'mission fields'.

From development there was a move towards liberation. It was realised that poverty would not be uprooted by imposing technological skills on the poor but by removing the root causes of injustice against the poor people. These two approaches to development converge with a new liberation-oriented perception of mission in which it is understood as the total transformation of the whole of life and the realization of God's shalom in both the present and the future.

I believe strongly that in the process of doing mission in community of the poor people, mission must lead to liberation and social transformation. This means that it has to remove social, economic and political injustices that exist on those communities. It has to transform an oppressive situation to a non-oppressive one. If it does not do that, it is simply offering the 'pie in the sky' of salvation some day in heaven. This does not mean that anything that is done is mission: that would be simply activism. To make them mission, these works of liberation and social transformation need to be done in the name of Jesus Christ. Christians are to respond to the invitation of Christ Himself, who sanctioned us to go out and preach the Gospel in ways that transform people's lives, because we cannot claim to be Christians yet ignore the way things are organized around us. Our engagement as Christians is meant to infuse the values that uphold the dignity of all God's creation, especially all individual human beings. We are to help the development of social solidarity, the common good and special support for those impoverished and marginalized by our social, political and economic systems. It is in this sense that we are called upon to be the salt and light of the earth. According to Pope John XXIII (in David Kaulemu 2010:77):

Christianity is the meeting-point of heaven and earth. It lays claim to the whole man body and soul, intellect and will, inducing him to raise his mind above the changing conditions of this earthly existence and reach upwards for the eternal life of heaven, where one day he will find his unfailing happiness. Hence though the Church's first care must be for souls, how she (the Church) can sanctify them and make them share in the gifts of heaven, she concerns herself too with the exigencies of man's daily life, with his livelihood and education, and his general, temporal welfare and prosperity.

It is in this frame of mind provided for by the Church that Christians engage as the key players in all social, economic and political aspects that affect the "caring of the souls".

Church-based development also known as faith based development can be regarded as mission because it is based on Christ's great commission to the church. It is done for the glory of God and in anticipation of his kingdom. It is not done for purely humanitarian reasons but for reasons that transcend humanitarianism. Because we have better understanding now that the mission of the Church, amidst all its ambiguities and the burden of history, is continually recast by communities which seek to shape their lives in the light of the promise of the gospel. The Church should bear it in mind always that mission begins with powerlessness not power (Philip Wickeri 2003: 242)

3.4.1 The purpose of mission

Now that mission has been defined in broad terms, we can proceed to talk about its purpose. The main purpose of mission is to establish God's reign of peace, which is also known as shalom.

Linthicum (1991: 86) defines mission as 'A state of wholeness and completeness possessed by a person or a group that includes good health, prosperity, security, and deep spiritual contentment.'

This is what mission seeks to bring about, and this wholeness of life can only be experienced under the reign of God, because the rule or reign of God is understood as the power of God working to bring about change (Philpott 1993: 47). It is the power of God in action. Power is not perceived as a negative attribute that casts God in the role of vindictive omnipotent dictator. Rather, power is a necessary expression of God's activity used to support the oppressed and to implement God's plan (Philpott 1993: 52). First and foremost, the power of God shows itself in miraculous deeds, such as the casting out of demons and the healing of the sick.

According to Bosch (1991: 32), God's reign arrives wherever Jesus overcomes the power of evil. Then as now, evil took many forms: pain, sickness, death, demonic possession, personal sin and immorality, the loveless self-righteousness of those who claim to know God, the maintenance of class privilege, the brokenness of human relationships. Jesus is, however, saying: If human distress takes many forms, the power of God does likewise.

In terms of my focus on development, mission therefore means bringing liberation and fullness of life to the poor. The aim of mission is to bring life to its full potential in whatever situation people find themselves. As Kritzingers puts it (1994: 146), ‘The ministry of Christian church is holistic. Its mission is to bring all of life of the gospel (the whole or complete truth) to all people in the entire world, and to teach them to obey God’s entire commandment (Matthew 28: 19-20)’.

In short, the purpose of mission is, in the words of Kritzingers (1994:1) ‘the glory and manifestation of God’s divine grace’. This covers all aspects of life- political, social and economic. In this way it is holistic. De Beer (1997:386) says that wholeness covers all spheres of life political, social, ecological and psychological.

The second purpose of mission is the issue of making disciples of all nations. Jesus said this when He commissioned His people to do mission in the world:

‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you, surely I will be with you to the very end of the age’ (Matthew 28: 18-20).

I can say categorically that this command is the main reason why the church is in the world. Mission means that the church has been sent into the world to make disciples of all nations and the church cannot abandon this responsibility, because if it does, the purpose of establishing the church will be defeated.

According to Matthews Ojo (lecture note 2009), in his own view, he understands mission as ‘the proclamation and immediate inauguration of salvation seen as a divine gift of liberation both spiritual and temporal’. Ojo writes further that the task of the church is to proclaim the word of God, to enact His works and by so doing to generate among people a fellowship which is in some way already the society of God. This is done in order to break the power of sin in people and lead them to God- that is to liberate them from bondage of sin.

Mission as the making of disciples therefore focuses on the church conversion motive- emphasizing the value of a decision to commit oneself to God. David Bosch also refers to the eschatological motive of mission- fixing the people's eyes on the reign of God as a future- but this does not mean escaping an interest in the exigencies of this life, as some have done or thought (Bosch: 1991: 5).

Moltmann (1977:11) also has this to say about the purpose of mission:

Mission is directed not only for divine service in the church but also towards divine service in the need of people's everyday life. Its practical implementation will include preaching and worship, pastoral duties and Christian community but also socialization, education towards self-reliance and political life.

The other purpose of mission is to create the community of God. It is a community of people committed to God in every community in the world. But this community must not be identified as the kingdom of God: it is an enactment of the kingdom of God. It is the church. In every society where a small community gathers which is committed to God, that community is the local church and must be taken with every sense of seriousness.

The church that is founded as a result of mission activities becomes a community of believers. It becomes a community of disciples of Jesus- one that differs from the local community of citizens or local neighbourhood (Theron 1996: 4): This newly formed community of disciples then assumes a responsibility for doing mission, playing active role in the missionary activities of God. It is sent out to propagate the gospel of Jesus. As much as mission is for building a Christian community it is also an act of building more disciples. Bosch (1991:11) has this to say on that point: 'This community of God is in the world, called out of the world and is sent out to the world to make disciples'.

The purpose of mission, then, is the building of Christian communities in the world who will also be disciples going out to the world to spread the gospel of God.

3.4.2 The beneficiaries of mission

The poor people are the first beneficiaries of mission because the gospel is good news to the poor. The question to be asked is: who are the poor? Let us briefly look at the poor. They are not only the materially poor but also the spiritually poor. People can be rich materially but poor in the spirit or rich spiritually but poor materially. Others are poor both materially and spiritually and therefore need the church to minister to them and change their situation of poverty. There are, however, a few who are rich both materially and spiritually. They too need the church's ministry to nourish their spiritual lives and to help them not to be slaves to their wealth. Therefore the ministry of the church is directed to all the people, because all the people need it (Kritzinger 1994: 124).

To my mind the target of mission is all people in their situation of need, whether spiritual or material, because the gospel of Jesus Christ confers life in its fullness, Christ Jesus says 'I come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly' (John 10:10b). Spiritual nourishment leads to well-being and empowerment, and this has to happen to the poor. So mission, which is the proclamation of the good news leads to the transformation of lives, most especially of those who are poor.

Those who are rich materially need the gospel to liberate them from the enslavement of wealth, so that they do not lose their whole lives but gain it, for the Bible says "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul (Matthew 16:26 KJV)". The gospel presents an opportunity to all the rich people to share their wealth with those who are in dire need, as this will prove truly redemptive and fulfilling. They needed, moreover, to be liberated from situations of greed and exploitation of the poor who are the victims of Mammon. Jesus said 'if the Son therefore shall make you free, you will be free indeed' (John 8:36).

Sometimes the wealthy even become blinded to the poor as human beings like themselves. They would rather see the poor as lazy people who can be ignored and blamed for their poverty. Once they are touched by the gospel, they see the poor as victims of forces beyond their control. Therefore, the rich also need conversion- they need the message of the gospel.

Both individuals and the community as a whole are in need of conversion. Everyone has a specific enslavement or sinfulness and everyone needs salvation, because the issue of salvation is like a beggar telling another beggar where to get bread, meaning that all of them need it.

The poor people also need to be freed from specific sins and enslavements such as idolatry. They, too, can be spiritually poor. The gospel is directed towards them as well.

On the other hand, the materially rich people may be spiritually poor and in need of liberation from all that stops them from being spiritually rich. The gospel is for them too. In the context of Oluyole community, mission is done to free the poor from spiritual as well as material poverty. It is also done so that the rich people of our community and other affluent neighbouring communities may be freed from the sin of exploiting and enslaving the poor people by paying them poor wages. It offers the rich people the opportunity to see the plight of the poor, so that they can be touched by what these poor people are going through and see the need to change and take part in ministering to them. The point we have here is that mission is done for the benefit of all the people, both the rich and the poor people.

To conclude this part, I must say that mission is done for all the people; nobody is excluded or exempted from mission. As in the case of transformational development, all the people need to be included- both the rich and the poor- in understanding the transformational development of the poor. These two groups have gifts they can share with each other in the process of transformational development and mission. The rich have financial and material resources which are greatly needed by the poor people, while the poor have human resources such as love, patience, care, and a deep sense of dependence on God- essential quality which the rich have sometimes lost if not completely lost. Mission reconciles the two communities (rich and poor) and facilitates the process of mutual sharing so that the sin of selfishness and individualism may be broken. I also agree with Matthews Ojo (2009: Lecture note), he says ‘the church relationship has been a good example of transformational development that includes both rich and poor and the mutual exchange of gifts and lessons which has been appreciated by both’.

3.4.3 Identity of missionaries

Traditionally ministry has been carried on mainly by the ordained, but throughout history there has been a shift. Ministry is no longer the domain of the clergy; it is the work of all the people who are committed to God. Jurgen Moltmann (in Bosch 1991: 472) addressing the issue of the church and theology today, from his own perspective 'Christian theology will no longer be simply a theology for priests and pastors but also a theology for the laity in their calling in the world'.

Once people have accepted the gospel, they are no longer objects of mission but become actors or doers, real participants in the active phase of mission. In other words, such a person becomes both the subject and the object of mission. These lay members of the church are important participants in the *Missio Dei* that starts with God himself and then draws the people in to participate in it.

In Oluyole community Baptist Churches, as soon as someone joins the church, he or she will be asked to enroll in believers' class where we have courses for new comers. This course encourages the person to discover his or her gifts and the areas of concerns and enthusiasm in which he or she would like to be involved in the life and mission of the church. In this way all are involved in some church group or project that helps them grow spiritually while also offering an opportunity to take part in mission activities of the church. In this way it is not only the minister who does mission: it is the new Christian community that becomes the primary bearer of mission. These people do not become little pastors, replicating what the minister does; their ministry is lived in the community, it is offered in church projects and programmes, in community meetings, in their families and their places of work. They serve the sick, visit the prisoners, clothe the naked people, they give water to those who are thirsty and support other people in times of various other needs. All the people of God perform this mission. Mission is done not by a few Christians but by all. All, as soon as they make the commitment to follow Christ Jesus, take part in mission.

In the process of taking part in the projects and programmes of the church, people grow spiritually, intellectually and physically. There is a recovery of self-esteem rather than the constant loss of dignity that poverty brings to people, because respect for human person entails

respect for the rights that flow from their dignity as created in the image of God. These rights are prior to society and must be recognized by it. It is through this involvement that people experience transformational development. Members of our church are encouraged to live the Christian faith even in their places of work, and to witness for God by developing a work ethics and willingness to help anybody who is in need either at home or in their places of work. Moreover, this also transforms people's view of their work, and their attitude towards fellow workers. They become positive about their work, their lives and the lives of others. This attitudinal change is credited to the teaching of the gospel which they receive from the church and its mission.

3.5 Specific missiological themes associated with development

The next points of interest are some specific themes relevant to the involvement of the church in community development. These themes are important because they justify the church's involvement in the developmental sphere of ministry. They assist the church in claiming its right to do holistic ministry. They help, moreover, to form a developmental framework for the ministry of the church.

3.5.1 God and the poor

Theologians have been saying since the 1960s that God is biased in favour of the poor. They even call it 'God's preferential option for the poor' (Bosch 1991: 436). This does not mean that God glorifies poverty so that those who want His favour must live in poverty or that poverty is better than wealth. It also does not mean that God desires the salvation of the poor more than that of the rich. It means that God focuses first on the poor, then on the rich.

As Bosch (1991: 436) has expressed it:

The point is rather that the poor are the first though not the only ones, on which God's attention focuses, therefore, the church has no choice but to cherish and demonstrate a

feeling of deep solidarity with the poor.

Because the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the poor people of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to echo in their hearts. For there is a community composed of men and women, who, united in Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit, press onwards towards the kingdom of the father and are bearers of a message of salvation intended for all men

This theme is very important for transformational development, because it builds the rationale of the church towards supporting the poor and seeking to help them in their struggles to transform their material conditions. The theology of development is built on the belief that God is on the side of the poor and the oppressed and wants to see them delivered from their plight; the privileged have to take sides with the poor and assist them. As Ronald Sider (1971: 314) puts it, God is on the side of the oppressed and if the privileged are really God's people, they too, would be on the side of the poor, indeed, those who neglect the needy are not really God's people at all.

3.5.2 God identifies himself with the poor

The Bible demonstrates this clearly. The book of proverbs says that 'Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honours God' (Proverb 14: 31 NIV). Another text states more specifically: 'He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will reward them for what they have done' (Proverbs 19: 17). The story of the incarnation of our Lord also clarifies what we mean by God's identification with the poor, weak and oppressed. 'For you know the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich' (II Corinthians 8:9).

Jesus openly identified with the poor. This was a sign of His Messiahship. Listen to Him answering the disciples of John when they came to verify whether He was the Messiah or not. Jesus pointed to his work with the poor who were healed from blindness or paralysis (Sider 1971: 62). According to Ronald Sider (1971: 61), he says, "He (Jesus) was healing the sick and

preaching to the poor (Matthew 11: 2-6)". Jesus also preached to the rich, but apparently it was His concern to preach to the poor, that validated His claim to Messiahship.

In terms of development this means that when we help to develop or empower the poor, we are doing God's will –in fact we are serving God, because He is with them in their predicaments. This means that where the poor are there is God, so when we serve the poor we are serving God.

3.5.3 God's special instruments

The Bible is full of stories in which God uses poor people rather than the rich and powerful. It is not that He did not use the rich, but He is seen to use the poor more and they also seem ready to listen to Him. Sider (1971: 62) notes the following instances of God choosing the poor: 'When God selected chosen people he picked poor slaves in Egypt (Exodus 3:7-10). When He called the early church, most of the members were poor folk (Acts of the Apostles Chapter 2). When God became flesh, He came as a poor Galilean (Luke 2:1-6)".

God might have chosen the rich and powerful people, but He chose to use the poor. This says something about God's attitude towards the poor. It shows that He loves them. If this is God's attitude, it shows that the church has to adopt a similar attitude to the poor. The church has to look for the poor so that it can minister to them. The church needs the poor, rather than the poor needing the church (Bosch 1991: 436). This means that God can use the poor to show us the need to help the needy, to remind us of our responsibility towards the poor. This reminds us of the need during mission to care not only for people's spiritual needs but also for their physical needs, and that reminds us of the importance of transformational development as part of the church's mission. According to Nadine Bowers Du Toit (2010: 267), transformational development is understood as that which 'seeks to repel the evil structures that exist in the present cosmos and to institute through the mission of the church the values of the kingdom over and against the values of the principalities and power of this world'. She explained further that humanity was created to live in shalom, that is peace, the absence of which leads to lack of harmony expressed in the social disorder of economic inequality, political oppression and exclusivity. Shalom not only means 'peace' in the sense of the absence of strife or war but also

health, wholeness, prosperity, justice, harmony and general well-being. In essence, it means peace within all relationships: with God, with self, and with others and nature.

3.5.4 Economic issues in God's household

God has never separated his dealings with His people into religious and secular. He has always addressed the totality of people's concerns. In the Scriptures, God created mechanisms and structures to prevent great economic inequalities amongst His people. The following are some of God's chosen economic principles that are relevant to development.

3.5.4.1 The law of Jubilee (Leviticus 25)

God commanded that all land should be returned to the original owners without compensation every fifty years. Physical hardship, the death of a breadwinner or a lack of natural ability may cause some people to become poorer than others. By means of this law God equalized land ownership every fifty years (Leviticus 25:10-24). Land was very important being one of the factors of production. 'Factors of Production' is an economic term used to describe the inputs that are used in the production of goods or services in the attempt to make an economic profit. The factors of production include land, labour, capital and entrepreneur. (www.investopedia.com Accessed on 21/12/2012). Land was a source of wealth, because this was an agricultural community.

According to Sider (1971: 79)

God owns the land; for a time He permits His people to sojourn on His good earth,
Cultivate it, eat from its produce and enjoy its beauty, but we are only stewards.

Seen in terms of development, this means that God has given the land and all its produce to all people, to administer and use it for the benefit of all. Good stewardship of land means that all people not just a few, must have access to it and its resources. It also means that the people must

not fold their arms and complain of hunger when they could be cultivating the land that God has given them to earn a living. And it means that during the Jubilee justice has to be done; the poor must be given another chance to improve their lives. They must be given resources that were taken from them, so that they can rebuild themselves and their future. It is there to remind the rich of their indebtedness and responsibility towards the poor people. In terms of development it reminds the rich of the responsibility they have in assisting the poor to be free from poverty.

3.5.4.2 The Law of the Sabbath year

Another relevant law was the one that provided for the liberation of the soil, slaves and debtors. Again the dominant concern is justice for the poor and disadvantaged (Sider 1971:79). The text says that

‘¹⁰“For six years you are to sow your fields and harvest the crops, ¹¹but during the seventh year let the land lie unplowed and unused. Then the poor among your people may get food from it, and the wild animals may eat what is left. Do the same with your vineyard and your olive grove. ¹²“Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and so that the slave born in your household and the foreigner living among you may be refreshed (Exodus 23: 10-12).

On the seventh year, the poor were free to gather for themselves whatever grew by itself in the fields and vineyards.

What it means in relation to development is this: God requires that during the Sabbath year there must be justice for the poor. The poor must be allowed by the rich to share the available resources. The rich must share with the poor. It means that the poor must be helped to develop themselves. They must be given the resources they need so that they can start once again to improve their condition.

3.5.4.3 The Law of tithing and gleaning

These laws extended the jubilee and sabbatical laws, such as the law that called for one tenth of all produce and animals to be set aside as a tithe. After three years these would be brought to the Levites to feed the wanderers, the fatherless, the widows; and the Lord would bless those who kept this law (Leviticus 27: 32, Deuteronomy 26: 12-15). This is another example of concern for the poor in the economy. As Sider (1971: 83) phrases it the law of gleaning was an established method for preventing debilitating poverty amongst the people of God and sojourners in the land.

In the New Testament we find Paul dramatically broadening the vision of economic sharing among the people of God. He devoted a great deal of time to raising money for Jewish Christians among Gentile congregations. In the process he developed intra-church assistance (within local churches) into inter-church sharing among all the scattered congregations of believers. Expressions of his commitment to raise funds for the poor of Jerusalem can be found in Paul's letter to the Galatians (Galatians 2:10). He also wrote to the church in Rome on this topic (Romans 15: 22-28). Paul was concerned with fellowship (Koinonia) among believers. That is why he asked for these donations. He believed that believers experience fellowship with Jesus, and that this fellowship entails sharing in the self-sacrificing, cross bearing life he lived (Philippians 3: 8-10). As he saw it, Koinonia with Jesus Christ involves Koinonia with members of His body (I Corinthians 16: 17). Paul therefore believed that Christians have to help one another in order to escape from bondage of poverty. This understanding of the economy in the household of God should inform our economic attitudes and activities. We live in a world, especially in Africa, divided between the rich and the poor. As Christians we need to share, and to exercise God's laws of economic justice that seek to liberate and empower the poor.

This point is a reminder to Christians of their responsibility towards the poor. We Christians have to be concerned about the plight of the poor and to be involved in strategies that seek to alleviate their poverty, just as Paul did. Christians must raise funds and other resources to improve the lives of the poor- without, however, creating dependency. Whatever we do must empower the poor to develop themselves.

The implication of the above themes for a Christian ministry of development is that God is concerned for the poor and wants us to be involved in addressing their predicament, not to ignore it and support the status quo. It is clear that God wants economic equality among His people. In my opinion this means that the poor need to be uplifted from poverty so that they can have enough for their needs. How do we do that as a church or as a mission organization? The answer is by bringing them the gospel, the good news. The gospel must be accompanied by transformational development so that it becomes real to the poor in their situation. By doing this we are able to deconstruct mission without destroying the gospel. Mission today should resist the powers and structures that deny abundant life to the people and also remove the barriers and hindrances that prevent the offer of abundant life reaching the people. Philip Wickeri (2003: 360) says:

Missiology studies the growth of the Church into new peoples, the birth of the Church beyond its social boundaries; beyond the linguistic barriers within which she feels at home; beyond the poetic images in which she taught her children... Missiology therefore is the study of the Church as surprise.

For mission happens in overflow of love and wisdom from a community that recognized God actively involved with itself and with all other communities, and that therefore allows for radical surprises- including those glorious surprises of love and wisdom received from the least expected sources (:2003: 309).

3.6 Church and community development

Having been exposed to the economic situation of Oluyole community, and having seen God's positive attitude towards the poor, the church has to take a decision about how it would minister to the poor that is, the least among us. Would it ignore them and concentrate on the rich and powerful? Would it concentrate on their spiritual lives and ignore their material poverty?

How can a church minister in a way that would address both spiritual and material poverty among its people?

For the church to minister, it must first discover itself to be the church of the poor. This means that the church has a duty to see itself as consisting of the poor, who need empowerment and who have to empower themselves. Robert Linthicum (1991: 24) has this to say: 'the task of the church is not to empower the community but to join in the empowerment of the community, to participate in it, to be an integral part of it. The task of the poor is empowering themselves.' The poor must be given the free hand to operate, because they are the people who know the particular problem facing them. We should let them identify the problem and be allowed as well to make suggestions regarding how the problem could be solved.

Linthicum (1991: 25) also said that the task of the poor in the community is their own empowerment; the task of the Church is to come alongside the poor- both in becoming their advocates in the face of the rich and in joining their struggle to deal with forces that exploit them. De Beer (1997: 46) says the Church belongs to the poor- who are members of the community of faith, who come from the larger community, who are sometimes called 'the community of citizens'. The community of faith (the poor people in the church) has to join the broader community and work with them as they seek empowerment. The ministry of empowerment by the church leads to an independent community-wide leadership which Linthicum (1991: 26) applauds by saying:

The poor people begin taking charge of their situation as the result of problem-

Solving coalitions. The community is organized, the church becomes integral

to community life and the poor are empowered. Under such community

organizing, the community's quality of life radically improves and

the people increasingly take charge of their own lives and their community.

In its service to the poor, the church has to move away from an ambulance ministry, relief or charity, seeking instead to accompany the poor as they work to empower themselves. The church has the resources and mandate from its Lord (Luke 4:18). It just needs to do the work. Because we are always in a hurry, some of our projects did not succeed: we had failed to take the time for proper reflection and planning in order to accompany the poor in their empowerment of themselves. Since there is no theological argument that can justify the exploitation of the poor, mission of the church should stand by the poor people always and assist them in whatever way.

3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter highlighted the basis for the theology of transformational development in the church, in which the historical relationship between the church and development, the reasons for mission, and the relationship between the mission of the church and transformational development were traced. This was done with a special reference to the poor for poverty is the main problem in the community I am studying. I considered the reasons why the two must go together, because if the mission of the church does not include transformational development our churches would only be engaging themselves in suicidal transformation, rather than societal transformation. Then we explored some themes that are relevant to mission and development, among which we have 'God identifies himself with the poor', Jesus openly identified with the poor and this was a sign of His Messiahship, as we have it in the book of II Corinthians 8:9 'For you know the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich'. I concluded by looking at the relationship of the church to transformational development. All that this chapter tried to do was to prove that the church's mission and transformational development can be brought together to bring about community development in the community of the poor people. There is no basis for

separating the two as being 'secular' and 'spiritual' respectively. I hereby move to the next chapter which is theological assessment of development.

CHAPTER 4:

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION: MISSION, MISSIOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Definitions of development

It is obvious that I will need to be quite clear on my definitions of development, especially sustainable socio-economic development. I therefore start with my literature review with understanding I have gained about the meaning of this concept in what I consider to be the most important publications in this area. Having clarified my understanding of development I then continue with theological reflection on mission, missiology and development.

There has been a remarkable escalation in the literature in the use of the phrase “socio-economic development” in that it has become public property. The meaning of the phrase is always highly contested in the development debate as well as in missionary enterprise. The phrase has many meanings. Socio-economic development, according to August (2006:4) is a capacity defined by what people can do with whatever they have to improve their own quality of life and that of others. Development embodies a desire, motivation and knowledge for sustainable livelihood. Burkey (1993:34) observes that development concerns people; it affects their way of life and is influenced by their conceptions of the good life, as determined by their cultures or ethnicity. Many governments define development as building new towns, hospitals, clinics, schools, roads, etc. In churches, development is described as anything pertaining to a person's physical and spiritual growth. To some people, development necessarily involves structural transformation, which implies personal, political, social and economic changes. Socio economic development is not just a question of infrastructural projects such as schools, clinics, roads and dams as some people think. Development means a process of enabling people to accomplish things that they could not do before – that is to learn and apply information, attitudes, values and skills previously unavailable to them. Development is one of the most talked-about objectives of every person and every government or institution. Genuine socio-economic development, however, is the creation of adequate capacity (human resources) in every organization. Development depends a lot on human knowledge (mental wealth) and skills, and where this knowledge and these skills are inadequate to the task in hand; socio-economic development will be thwarted. The development of human resources must include cognitive and affective development, physical

development and the development of suitable attitudes and world-views. It is also a systematic procedure of training and growth in which communities gain and apply knowledge, skills, and insights to their situation. This leaves me with a very broad and general understanding of development, so I need to try and be more specific. For this reason I review various theories of development.

4.2 Multiple lenses on the definition of sustainable development

Development is a complex issue. It refers to a complex world of institutions and ideas, one that is in flux, representing widely different approaches that can be reflected upon using multiple lenses. Thus, development or lack of it also manifests itself in different dimensions that also need various lenses for the relevant assessment of development needs of the poor. My intention here is to find the appropriate lens in order to establish what the development needs of the poor in Nigeria are. I am going to follow Burkey (1993: 35-39), who claims that development needs can be divided into at least four sub-divisions, namely, human (personal), economic, political and social development needs:

4.2.1 Human (personal) Development

Human (personal) development is a process by which an individual develops self-respect, and becomes more self-confident, self-reliant, cooperative and tolerant of others through becoming aware of his/her shortcomings, as well as his/her potential for positive change (ibid.). This takes place through working with others, acquiring new skills and knowledge, and through active participation in the economic, social and political development of the community.

This shows that development in any meaningful sense must begin with and within the individual within their specific contexts. Unless motivation comes from within, efforts to promote change will not be sustainable. The individual will remain under the power of others. According to Oyedepo (2005:7) -one of the famous pastors we have in Nigeria, he says- "Until something

changes within you, nothing changes around you. Every change begins from within. Without a change within, there can never be a change without".

4.2.2 Economic Development

Economic development is a process by which people through their individual or joint efforts boost production for consumption and to have a surplus to sell for cash. This means that the returns to the activity must be greater than the cost, that is, the activity must be profitable. The flipside of production is marketing/selling – there can be no cash profits without available markets. So, economic development also includes developing markets. It also means that some of the surplus produced must be reinvested in the same activity or in profitable new activities (Nolan 1998:67).

4.2.3 Political Development

Swart (2003:405) says political development is a process of gradual change over time in which the people increase their awareness of their own capabilities, their rights and their responsibilities and use this knowledge to organize themselves so as to acquire political power in order to:

- (1) Participate in decision-making at local level and to choose their own leaders and representatives at higher levels of government who are accountable to the people,
 - (2) Plan and share power democratically; and
 - (3) Create and allocate communal resources evenly and efficiently among individual groups.
- Hence it may be possible to avoid corruption and exploitation, realise social and economic development and political stability and create a politicised population within the context of their own culture and their political system (ibid.).

4.2.4 Social Development

Social development is a process of gradual change in which people increase their awareness of their communal capabilities and common interests, and use this knowledge to analyse their needs; find solutions; organize themselves for cooperative efforts; and mobilize their human, financial and natural resources to improve, establish and maintain their social services and institutions within the context of their own culture and their own political system (Burkey 1993: 39).

So one can say that, from a Christian perspective, the aim of holistic development (social, economic, political, etc.) should be to form human beings “who understand and appreciate their integral role in society as both Christians and good and responsible citizens” (Kaulema 2010:76), in line with their Christian vocation to promote Gospel values.

All of these lenses will be necessary in searching for a suitable kind of development which can be utilized by Christian mission to help alleviate poverty in Nigeria. I therefore turn my attention to theories of development.

4.3 Theories of development

The field of development in its broadest sense includes both socio-cultural and socio-economic aspects. Bullon (2007:93) argues that the classical discourse on development as promoting the welfare in poor regions, countries or localities had its origins in the Western countries during the late 1940s and was institutionalized in the 1950s and 1960s. This discourse on development included security issues in the context of the Cold War, and viewed global poverty as a threat to the liberal world order. For this reason, an interdisciplinary field of studies emerged, containing a set of theoretical cores with development economics as the leading discipline of the group. Bullon further states that the most important theoretical schools on the hermeneutics of development until the 1980s have been:

1. Alternative Development Theory.
2. Dependency Development Theory
3. Globalisation Development Theory

4. Modernisation Development Theory
5. Sustainable Development Theory
6. Transformation Development Theory.

4.3.1 Alternative Development Theory

The alternative development school of thought tries to emphasize some features which have appeared across history in successful civilizations, as counterpoints to the modernist view. They suggest development should arise from within the context and be need-oriented, self-reliant, and ecologically sound and based on structural transformation. These emphases were proposed to improve the real conditions of poor people who usually were excluded in the mainstream discourse (Bullon, 2007:93).

4.3.2 Dependency Development Theory

From the late 1960s modernisation theory was confronted by the Latin American dependencia school (a neo-Marxist interpretation), which, together with the more global *world system theory*, articulated the weak structural position of Third World countries in the world system against First World countries (Schuurman 2001:5). Since these countries occupied such a weak position, characterized by dominance of First World countries and dependency in Third World countries, they stated that development as it had been practiced since the Second World War would never solve the problem. The ‘dependentists’ therefore asked for more radical transformation, that is liberation in theological terms, emphasizing more autonomy by delinking their economies from the world market totally dominated by the First World (ibid.; cf also Alawode & Saayman 2013).

4.3.3 Globalization Development theory

In order to properly understand development in the new millennium, one needs to have a better understanding of the new concepts, ideas and debates surrounding the debate about globalization (Stewart 2001:74). Modern technology—the Internet, satellite TV and communication technologies like cellular phones - contributes much to the notion of a global society. However, at the same time there are millions of poor people who still live their lives totally untouched by these changes, and quite possibly will never be impacted by them in terms of their poverty. Globalization is a concept used to describe new features of the international economy involving the emergence of global production systems, worldwide communication networks and the relatively free flow of finance over most of the world. Globalization is also used to refer to new processes in politics, society and culture, which reflect increased international influence and interdependence. All the same, globalization, the gigantic idea of the late twentieth century—lacks precise definition. It is in danger of becoming, if it has not already become, the chestnut of our times (Held *et. al.* 1999:7). Nonetheless, the term captures elements of a widespread perception that there is a broadening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnections in all aspects of life, which must direct a new form of development (Ibid).

4.3.4 Modernisation Development Theory

In the modernisation theory, lack of development was defined in terms of differences between rich and poor nations as understood in “modern” (post nineteenth century) terms. Development in order to modernize in this case implied the bridging of the gap by the less developed countries. They were required to imitate and gradually assume the qualities of the modernized states: state-led investment, electronic technology and education were critical factors (Bullon 2007:3).

4.3.5 Sustainable Development Theory

This is affecting every contemporary policy and understood as the way to fulfill present human needs without exhausting the earth's finite resources, thus endangering the lives and opportunities of future generations (Bullon 2007:94). Quaddus et al (2004:115) define sustainable development as a process of development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability to meet those of the future. But according to Elliot (2006:9), Sustainable Development should also be understood as literally referring to maintaining development over time. She further argues that sustainable development is fundamentally about reconciling development and the environmental resources on which society depends (Elliot 2006:46). Rooyen (2002:136-137) states that during 1992, in Rio de Janeiro, as part of the United Nations conference on Environment and Development, an action plan and blueprint for sustainable development was adopted by more than 178 governments. These governments committed their nations to taking action to facilitate sustainable development and environmental preservation. The action plan was called Agenda 21. Agenda 21 proposes a plan for environmental management and development which provides for a new and integrated policy framework for national and regional action to enhance sustainable development. Agenda 21 includes strategies for good governance, democracy, human rights and an improved quality of life for the current generation and those to come. One cannot say, though, that it has been successfully implemented yet.

4.3.6 Transformation Development Theory

Among mainly Evangelicals at Wheaton in 1983 (cf. Bosch 1991:406-408), a new term and concept of development emerged: "transformative development", to be understood by Evangelicals as a holistic perspective of development (Bullon 2007:96). It is now recognised that social sciences and related disciplines help us understand what is at stake when we talk of "social transformation" and its connectedness with holistic spirituality. Christian development will seek integration at every level. Theorists and practitioners need to understand and recognize that development involves the permanent and existential /continuous relationships between and

among human beings and with our natural and social environment. This is the model which seems most suited to my study, so I wish to elaborate further on it.

In view of the above, it is important to remember that implicit in the idea of development is the division that is made between communities or societies or nations that are considered as the most advanced and those which are considered to have not yet undergone the necessary transformation towards prosperity and economic growth. Walt W. Rostow in Bragg (1987:22, 48) saw the process of development as a succession of natural stages from “traditional” to “modern”, in which societies develop from a backward stage through the transformational process until the “take off” into sustained economic growth. This process accelerates, according to the theory, through the transfer of knowledge, technology, and capital from the “advanced” to less advanced nation, until it reaches the final stages of high production and mass consumption (August 2006:2). Modernisation as a development construct has ignored indigenous culture within its paradigm of sustained economic growth. August observes that the dominant (western) monoculture of modernisation has led to the developing world or the “underdeveloped world” being continually dependent (ibid.). The “have-nots” depend on the “haves” instead of being interdependent (Swart 2003:411-413). In view of the above, August (2006) makes an acute observation that, “theology values development as long as it is holistic and people-centred, reflects respect for human dignity and self-worth.” However, the relationship between culture and theology will always exhibit a dialectical tension. August then argues for an epistemology of transformation as a Christian framework for looking at human and social change. His hypothesis is that the best characteristic of Transformational development theory is its sense of hospitality – in that it is a theology of generosity which requires a willingness to embrace the other. The researcher believes this is an emancipatory process that should be supported in Church and society as it emphasizes non-discriminative cultural reciprocity based on equality and respect for the dignity of all human beings. Whereas many development workers from the West always think of development as “a programme prepared for implementation among the poor”, they have often forgotten that the poor are also human beings with their own thinking abilities and understanding of what they need. The tragedy of many Western development programmes in which even the Western churches have participated, is their treatment of people as “objects for compassionate hand-outs” rather than subjects with whom they can work together in synergy to achieve their own destiny. Moreover, August (2006:2-4) observes that human beings are

multidimensional with the psychological need for dignity, self-esteem, freedom, and participation. To reduce them to mere producers and consumers is to assume that some basic materialism is the goal of life. Of course, meeting human material needs makes life possible, but as Maslow's hierarchy of needs shows, it is not sufficient for human self-realisation and actualization. The loss of traditional values and whole cultures through the cultural imperialism of Westernisation is increasing. Modernisation has provided a radical improvement for one-fourth of the world's population, but is a complex issue and we do not have the space and time to go into all the details. However, we will not fail to point out that though development necessarily involves structural transformation, which implies political, social and economic transformation, primarily, development should start from where the people are. Rather than just handing out food to people, our task then is to engage in a process with them to discover the hidden talents and resources that can help them truly realize their full humanity in a sustainable way. This is what the Church is supposed to do in line with her calling as agent of the *missio Dei*. For this reason I now move specifically to theological reflection.

4.4 A Theology of development

Our approach to ministry must have a solid foundation in our theology of development. Having this at the back of my mind I hereby propose to introduce further themes of a theology of development around which my practical ministry revolves in Nigerian Baptist Convention. These themes have helped me to grow both theologically and developmentally.

Theology is very important to the church and even the society because it can inform our practice. Theology reminds us of the worth of all the people and that is crucial both to the mission of the church and to transformational development. Several authors have spoken on theology of development but Canaan Banana (1994:59) put his view this way:

Theology is important to society, also because it reminds us of the worth and potential of all the people. I believe it tells us that no one is expendable and that the rights of the ones regarded as insignificant in society are to be treated with respect. Only then can we have peace.

4.4.1 The image of God and the theology of development

In order to get what theology of development is all about in its real sense it must be placed at the centre of the truth that all human beings are made in the image of God. For this reason, all human beings are of equal worth, having the same soul because God is the source of our being. This is central to our creation theology. We attribute to it certain elements that are crucial to our understanding and experience of God, for example dignity, creativity, power, holiness and love. These elements must be redirected back to their divine source. A theology of development has the task of restoring and recovering God's image in humanity. We fulfill that task by helping each other to reflect this human fullness which Christ Jesus demonstrated to excellence. One can do this by oneself, but we can facilitate and make it possible for one another. According to Iranius (in Mpumlwana 1997:73) "Our humanity is fundamentally rooted in our divinity". So the incarnation makes sense in the way that God became human in Christ Jesus so that we may become more holy. Development can therefore never simply be regarded as a matter of economics and industry – it is centred on human beings who are created in the image of God. Christian involvement in development must therefore be solidly grounded in theology.

4.4.2 Holism

This concern for our Christ-like humanity implies a concern for the whole of life and all its aspects- not only the spiritual but also the material being of a comprehensive human being. Theology and the church must be concerned with all the needs of the people, just as Jesus was. Jesus preached the whole gospel, which is a total gospel; he cared for every aspect of human experience and suffering and made the people whole again. Considering all the healing he did, causing people that had been objectified by society to be subjects of their own lives again. Therefore, a theology of development defines development as the comprehensive progression and well-being of individual humans as well as of the whole of creation. Nurnberger (1994:10) in his own view says, "Comprehensive well-being covers the immanent needs for human survival and well-being as well as transcendent needs of human beings (the right to existence and empowerment in order to find meaning in one' life) and a personal relationship to God". Also he places the various types of needs in concentric circles, the transcendent and religious needs

(personal relationship to God) being the inner circle and the immanent needs the outer circle. Salvation, then presupposes an analysis of human needs. This holistic understanding of salvation also means that the well-being of creation—humans as well as animals and nature—is central to a theology of development. In practice, holism involves a perspective on people, time and worldview (Miller 1998:73):

4.4.2.1 A holistic view of people- recognizes that there can be no meaningful understanding of a person apart from their relationships—with God, self, community, those they call “other,” and the environment. People as individuals are inseparable from the social systems in which they live. Theology and the Church must be concerned with all the needs of people, as Jesus himself modeled for us. “The world which we must claim for the Gospel is crowded, complicated and captive. It is a conglomeration of billions of women, men, and children clustered in a variety of cultures and social groups. They all need to hear of liberation and life through God’s Son—Jesus Christ” (Myers 1999:135). The gospel is an encounter with a person, not merely a message. Life with Christ is just that. Even the two great commandments—loving God and loving our neighbour—are relational in nature. Transformation is about relationships before it is about anything else.

The fundamental transformative relationship is with God through Jesus Christ and we will only experience transformation towards the kingdom values of community and sharing, justice, and peace, productive work and creation of wealth as our relationships with each other and our environment are transformed by the work of Christ’s disciples (Myers 1999:224). “Just as the gospel is a person and not a programme, so holistic ministry must be personal, not programmatic” (Bediako 1996:189). Missiologically, our ministries have been too dichotomized and prioritized instead of biblically integrated and holistic (Hoke 1996:116).

4.4.2.2 A holistic view of time- will mitigate the propensity for dichotomization and prioritization. We need to understand time as a unified whole of past, present, future and eternity (Bosch 1991:508). Separating the time of our story (past, present and future) from the time of God’s larger story (eternity) is a mistake. The ultimate goal of mission is the Kingdom of God,

which transcends the Church in its earthly pilgrimage. Humanity's calling is to fulfill God's telos (Miller 1998:261). The Kingdom manifested in Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church's mission and the consummation of the kingdom at his parousia is its goal. Matthew 24 is but one of several passages that portrays the in-gathering of God's people from among the Gentile nations as preparatory to the end of the age. In the economy of God, the disciplining of all peoples is an essential step in the advent of God's perfect rule (Bosch 1991:508-510). A useful concept here is that of penultimacy, first employed in theology by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. His argument sees *ultimate* need and *penultimate* need in a relation of mutual inclusiveness (Ross 1995:64). Liberation, humanization and social engagement are all genuine felt needs experienced by people—these are penultimate needs. Salvation in Jesus Christ, the reconciliation with God is the ultimate need of humanity. A holistic evangelical theology of mission is one that addresses both of these needs in mutual inclusiveness, because in Christ both are held together: “To give food to the hungry man is not the same as to proclaim the grace of God and justification to Him, and to have received bread is not the same as to have faith. Yet for him who does these things for the sake of the ultimate, and in the knowledge of the ultimate, this penultimate does bear relation to the ultimate” (Bonhoeffer 1971:84). Christian hope finds its ultimate resting place only in eternity, God's larger story. Yet there is also a penultimate focus of this same faith. For John Calvin, the *penultimate* and the *ultimate* were integrally related: *justice* in this world and *justification* in the world to come. Eternal life was not contingent upon human effort. It was a gift of grace, but one that called forth human response in this life, for this was precisely how life was appropriated (Ross 1995:65). Both are vitally important as true Christianity unfolds in a synergy of the two. Ultimate and penultimate needs encompass the totality of what holistic mission needs to address.

4.4.2.3. A holistic worldview- Worldview is a structure that ties everything together, that allows us to understand society, the world, and our place in it, hence it helps us to make the critical decisions which will shape our future. Also it synthesizes the wisdom gathered in the different scientific disciplines, philosophies and religions, and rather than focusing on small sections of reality, it provides us with a picture of the whole. In particular, it helps us to understand, and

therefore cope with the complexity and change (<http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be/WORLVIEW.html> Accessed on 09/10/2012). Worldview is therefore important to any discussion about a transformational praxis of development. Every person carries in his or her head a mental model of the world, a subjective representation of external reality (Toffler 1970:73). A holistic worldview is based on *theism in relation to* ultimate reality, is personal and relational, connected to the Creator and creation, and thus is ontological and teleological. If there is no work directed at spiritual or value change; no work involving the church (it is hard to imagine transformational development without the church); no mention of meaning, discovery, identity and vocation, then it is highly questionable that a development programme is holistic. As argued, a theology of development defines development as “*the comprehensive progression and well-being of individual humans as well as the whole of creation.*”(Miller1998:17).

If mission—in the context of *theology and development*—is to be effective in multicultural settings, it must be sensitive to both the value bases and delivery systems that will facilitate integrated development (Hoke1996:118). For ministry to be truly holistic, it must be seen as holistic by the person receiving the ministry and not just by the person providing it (Muchena 1996:178).

4.4.3 Solidarity and people-centric practice of ministry

A holistic approach to development requires solidarity with those ministered to. Solidarity is the support that people in a community or a group give each other because they have the same opinions or aims (Oxford Advanced English Dictionary.1997), and since the only reason why the ministry would be what God wants it to be on earth, is because it focuses on human beings. Therefore, unity or harmony amongst the people and also the people being at the centre of our ministry would make serious impact on our theology of development. Moreover, a fundamental element of biblical theology is that all human beings, irrespective of their social position, status, gender, colour or creed, are created in the image of God and we are all the same. A person who discriminates against others accords them less dignity than God intended, thereby devaluing the image of God and mocking God himself (Proverbs 17:5) and degrades their own humanity and

human dignity in the process, as they are part of the same humanity (Ngewu 1999:64). “We need to remember that the goal of human transformation is the discovery of true identity and vocation” (Myers 1999:122). Human solidarity therefore matters more than efficiency. Reflecting on Israel’s’ making of the golden calf because Moses was too long on the mountain, Koyama (1985:139) argues that Israel’s pragmatism, driven by a sense of urgency, resulted in “theological impatience and technological efficiency.” The result was “disfigurement of their own history and the loss of their own identity.” When we place a higher value on efficiency than on discovering solidarity with our brothers and sisters, poverty continues.

The transformation model argued for thus far brings together in synergy the right approaches and processes for effective partnerships in sustainable socio-economic development. This takes us from a *training mindset* to a *facilitative lifestyle*, from an external to an internal motivation, from technique-centered methodology to relational empowerment (Hoke 1996b:158). This theology of development is people-centric, based on community needs and dependent on human resources; but in its comprehensiveness, its concern for social justice, it implies a bias towards the suffering, the marginalized and the poor and the affiliated task of restoring their humanity. It requires a perspective on reality which is universal, but which is also focused around the experiences of the poor; since their context reveals the nature of our reality most clearly (Kumalo 2001:135). This people-centric theology is imperative to relevant missiological praxis of development.

4.4.4 The prophetic role of the church

What is the day-to-day role of the church in all this? The Church has a *prophetic role* in a theology of development both on an institutional level, because the church is a place where people “feel at home”, and in humanitarian terms as an institution which exemplifies caring for people in a compassionate way (Oxford Advanced English Dictionary.1997).

The church is called to be a prophetic ‘sign,’ a prophetic community through which and by which the transformation of the world can take place. “It is only a church, which goes

out from its Eucharistic centre, strengthened by word and sacrament and thus strengthened in its own identity that can take the world on to its agenda. There will never be a time when the world, with all its political, social and economic issues, ceases to be the agenda of the Church. At the same time, the Church can go out to the edges of society, not fearful of being distorted or confused by the world's agenda, but confident and capable of recognizing that God is already there" (WCC 1983:50).

As previously argued, this concerns the need for the Church to develop its *prophetic role* with the power structures (Villa-Vicencio 1992:20). On the institutional level Gustafson (1988:23) explains, "A theology of development has a prophetic function in relation to government and society as well as in relation to the church which, as an institution, is a human community which should be put under the spotlight of social theory, as well as being the body of Christ in its prophetic capacity." All development requires change. Although psychologically, people are generally resistant to change, still change is inevitable - change is indeed the one thing that is always constant. On the humanitarian level, the prophetic role of the Church is to be a voice-with-the poor and to speak up with them. "The role of the church community is to ensure that the voices of the poor reverberate in the halls of public policy" (Nolan 1998:26). Elsewhere, Nolan (1996:3) affirms "*churches are being called upon to make statements about what is right and what is wrong in this area of economics.*" In my view, churches have been ominously silent in the face of some exciting possibilities.

For too long now the evangelical church community seems to perpetuate its theology of non-engagement and/or exclusivism. Our individual piety or other-worldly preoccupations continues to serve as a major deterrent in living out the gospel of Jesus Christ that continues to bring sight to the blind, bread for the hungry, release for the captives, legs for the lame, strength for the weak etc. In order for the church to have a prophetic voice it needs to rediscover its faith in the particular context in which it lives. Freire (1973:47) joins this argument by affirming,

Such a prophetic perspective does not represent an escape into a world of unattainable dreams. It demands a scientific knowledge of the world as it really is. For to denounce the present reality and announce its radical transformation into another reality capable of giving birth to new men and women, implies gaining through praxis a new knowledge of reality.

Freire says, the prophetic church cannot consider itself as neutral. It does not separate worldliness from transcendence or salvation from liberation (1973:46).

4.4.5 The local church as the church in mission

The church being the closest institution to the people should make it easier for her to really assist the poor in getting above the poverty line in every community. However, for the church to exercise her mission vision adequately, the issue of poverty amongst its people must be properly addressed. The church that is ready to do mission work must have structures through which socio-economic development can be practiced amongst the poor people.

So, to the extent that a church engages in the rediscovery of its faith in a given context, to that extent is it engaged in mission. Bosch (1991:381) points out the creative tension on this point as two views of the church, which appear to be fundamentally irreconcilable. At one end of the spectrum, the church perceives itself to be the sole bearer of a message of salvation on which it has a monopoly; at the other end, the church views itself, at most, as an illustration of God's involvement with the world. Where one chooses the first view, the church is seen as a partial realization of God's reign on earth and mission as that activity through which individual converts are transferred from eternal death to life. Where one opts for the alternative view, the church is, at best, only a pointer to the way God acts in respect to the world and mission is viewed as a contribution toward the humanization of society—a process in which the church may perhaps be involved in the role of consciousness-raiser (Dunn 1980:83-103). Newbigin (1954:21) reconciles this tension by saying that God has already put a living sign of his Kingdom (the church) in the community:

It is surely a fact of inexhaustible significance that what our Lord left behind him was not a book or a creed, nor a system of thought, nor a rule of life, but a visible community...He committed the entire work of salvation to that community...The church does not depend for its existence upon our understanding of it or faith in it.

When the church is at its best, it is a sign of the values of the kingdom and is contributing holistic disciples to the community for its well-being. Although the church has a prophetic role, its greater contribution is as a source of people rather than as a source of education or prophetic word. And Newbigin (1989:139) in his own view said:

“The major role of the church in relationship to the great issue of justice and peace will not be in its formal pronouncement, but in its continually nourishing and sustaining men and women who will act responsibly as believers in the course of their secular duties as citizens”.

It is hard to believe in sustainable socio-economic development in a community in which the church is not acting as a sign of the Kingdom of God's better future (Myers 1999:133). The church plays this role by what it does even more effectively than by what it proclaims. The church is not so much the Christians gathered, although it is this too, as it's the place where Christians learn and are challenged to live the whole gospel in its fullness of the life of the larger community. The function of the church is to be an instrument of the kingdom of God. As such, the church's primary responsibility is to preach the kingdom of God as Good News to all people, especially the poor and the oppressed. This comprehensive understanding of the Kingdom of God requires the church to be in the front line of development in society.

4.4.6 Theology of development, hope and power

A theology of holistic development must further generate a spirituality that brings hope, strength and power to the poor and marginalized. Additionally, it should give the not-so-poor the courage and insight to transform themselves. Mission as action in hope needs to be rekindled and re-appropriated in a theology of development.

An important characteristic of Enlightenment thought, according to Bosch (1991:265, 271) were *“the elimination of purpose from science and the introduction of direct causality as the clue to the understanding of reality.”* In the Newtonian worldview, with its deterministic philosophy of cause and effect relationships, human planning took the place of trust in God. Teleological thinking and eschatology had no place. Missiologist and theologians who shared the late

Victorian optimism concerning human progress often expressed confidence in human efforts to build the kingdom of God on earth. Bosch's argument for the paradigm of mission as, *action in hope* is based on a new teleology and eschatology. This paradigm began with the central question, "What is the significance of eschatology for the Church's mission?" discussed at the International Missionary Council (IMC) Willingen Conference in 1952. This was against the backdrop of all missionaries being expelled from that "jewel" of missions—China. "The Church has to proclaim by word and deed that God in Christ is ruling this world" (Bosch 1991:502). Oscar Cullmann (1961:42-45) a noted Swiss theologian demonstrated New Testament support for the understanding that God's action in history was continuous. Knowing that we live in Christ's age between his resurrection and the end time, mission is living in tune with God's action. The missionary work of the Church is the eschatological foretaste of the kingdom of God, and the biblical hope of the "end" constitutes the keenest incentive to action. German missiologist Walter Freytag (1961: 17) contributed to the understanding that biblical sending is linked inextricably with eschatological hope. He placed hope in God's end-time working and believed authentic mission to be a sign of God's action to bring in God's reign (Rzepkowski 1992:167-168). Mission is the act of hope, which soberly holds the view to the end. It lives from the hidden glory of Jesus, in its entire fullness. This sending is not only the salvation of souls, but it also sees the coming world of God (Bosch 1991:502-507). Hans Margull, in *Hope in Action* (1962: 277), contends that the concept of the missionary "is abused and depleted" when it is not regarded as "an eschatological ministry". The association of evangelism with foreign missions insures an eschatological understanding of evangelism. Evangelism stands with this, and without it, fails as missionary proclamation. Simply defined, Margull says, "evangelism is hope in action" (1962:80). Then Moltmann, in his *Theology of Hope* (1967: 283), argued that eschatology was important in making the Christian faith credible and relevant in the modern world. He found it determinative for understanding the biblical faith. In his book Moltmann identified the ideas of future and hope in the Bible. God's promise in salvation history is of new creation in the risen Christ. The resurrection set in motion that historical process of promise that is the church's mission. The hope is to transform the world in anticipation of its promised eschatological transformation by God (Marty & Peerman 1985:660-676). Thus the transforming mission seeks for that which is really, objectively possible in this world, in order to grasp it and

realize it in the direction of the promised future of the righteousness, the life and the kingdom of God (Moltmann 1967:289).

From the South came perspectives that Bosch calls eschatology and mission in creative tension (1991:507). Padilla (1985:187-199) built on the realized eschatology of C. H. Dodd; God's reign is already present in the cross and resurrection, still to come in its fullness. We live between the times. This simultaneous affirmation of the present and the future gives rise to the eschatological tension that permeates the entire New Testament and undoubtedly represents a rediscovery of the Old Testament "*prophetic-apocalyptic*" eschatology that Judaism had lost (Ladd 1974:318).

Rose Fernando (1985:489-501) advocates a theology of presence by which we live as persons of hope in a troubled world:

That God is active in the process of transforming this world...is the hope that sustains us...Hope has taken on a new meaning because of Jesus Christ, and therefore hope is the hallmark of Christians. It is because we are convinced that God's love is active in the world that fear and discouragement does not cripple us. It is because we continue to hope that we continue to participate actively with God in God's creation and redemption. By vocation we are called to be persons of hope, so that we can rekindle the embers of love that are being extinguished through violence...

"The reality in Africa," says Jean-Marc Ela (1988:90-101),

After it has been stripped of its folklore—demands attention. Twenty years of independence have not brought development, but rather developed under development. The situation becomes more serious when the state itself is the instrument of repression. It is important to understand the relationship in Africa between the government and the people. There is little effective participation of the people in public affairs, and the masses have practically no way of controlling government power, but only of applauding its use. Did God really plan that our continent be a land of oppression, poverty, and injustice? As black Africa becomes increasingly impoverished, must we close the door on hope?

Building upon Orlando Costas's concept of "Christ outside the gate" Ela asks,

“Can we be the signs of hope in a world of hunger, poverty and exploitation?”

Following the apostle Paul (Philippians 2:5-11) Éla prefers mission as kenosis—joining Christ in suffering in the awesome birth pangs of God’s creation (Bosch 1991:502). When mission as action in hope is rekindled and re-appropriated in a theology of development, our missiological praxis in the construction of sustainable socio-economic development will lead to a greater relevance in training and equipping poor people, and a greater impact for ministry through the church and when this is done it will fundamentally shape our understanding of development due to practical ministry that poor people will experience by seeing the gospel being preached not in words alone but in deeds as well—“ a whole gospel”. It is therefore our duty to incarnate the Gospel of Christ in development efforts.

4.5 Incarnating Christ in development

Development is fraught with deep-seated problems: the so called Western model of development tends to be capital-intensive rather than labour intensive, focusing on production rather than on people; the further it moves, the more it creates unemployment. The Western model of development tends to erode traditional cultural values and to replace them with “the same dull sameness of a faceless technological society” (Cogswell 1987:74). Perhaps the word ‘*development*’ is an inadequate word, if it does not relevantly penetrate to the deeper level of reality that underlies the hunger and poverty of the people. It is like a chameleon word that takes on the colour of its context. As Christians, we must make a contribution to an understanding of development. We must fill it with the meaning that grows out of the basic convictions of our faith as found in the Scriptures and described above. I would argue that this can be attained if Christians incarnate Christ in their development efforts by way of the ancient key words of Christian ministry (Bosch 1991:511):

1. Martyria – witness
2. Kerygma – proclamation
3. Koinonia – community, fellowship, participation
4. Diakonia – ministry/service

5. Dikaiosyne – righteousness/justice

There is an amazing flow and blend to these words and concepts. They are not separated from one another, but exist in mutuality and harmony with one another.

4.5.1 Martyria.

The early chapters of Acts are inundated with the words, “*You shall be my witnesses...*” The word *witness* is often attached to the word *resurrection*. The apostles were to be “*witnesses to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.*” They are witnesses that it happened; they themselves are evidence that it happened. Jesus sent out witnesses not only to tell the good news of what had happened, but also to make Good News happen. The risen Christ is made evident both in the message at Pentecost and in the healing of the poor beggar at the temple gate. Hence, our calling in martyrria is to witness and be Good News. Gustavo Gutiérrez (1984:45) in his book, *We Drink from Our Own Wells*, also expresses this ideal:

This word is used in Acts 1:8 in the commission of the risen Lord. For Luke it is the apostles, the disciples,

A follower of Jesus is a witness to life. This statement takes on a special meaning in Latin America where the forces of death have created a social system that marginalizes the very poor who have a privileged place in the Kingdom of life...the experience of martyrdom lived in Latin America heightens and sharpens this meaning... there are many who have devoted their lives, to the point of suffering death, in order to bear witness to the presence of the poor in the Latin American world and to the preferential love God has for them.

The implication that this would have on development is that, it will influence the pastors in my community in Nigeria to work together ecumenically to fight against poverty, local government authorities will also help where possible and National church authorities in this regard may include development unit as part of their organogram.

4.5.2 Kerygma

This does not represent some extraneous telling of the story of the cross and the resurrection; it is a manifestation of the conviction that no cross shall kill this Christ and that the power of his resurrection is at work in the world. Any kind of development that deserves the name Christian will reflect this conviction. This kind of development costs something. It represents an investment of life, not just dollars. It is a witness to life, that others may have life. Because our transformation from darkness to light in the first instance does not come easily, it cost our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ his blood being shed on the cross at Calvary. So for us to have a significant development amongst the poor people there are prices that must be paid (Gustavo Gutiérrez 1984:47).

4.5.3 Koinonia

There is no easy English equivalent for this word. Koinonia embodies sharing, participating, giving, fellowship, to be connected with our community. Fellowship is not enough to get the real meaning of the word “koinonia”. Community is probably the closest equivalent. There is no way to separate witness from the creation of community. As soon as the gospel is proclaimed it acts like a magnet, drawing people into community (Cogswell: 1987:73). It is potentially a community that reaches beyond all barriers of race, tribe and tongue. It is a community in which the needs of all are taken seriously, in light of all we possess. The political debate aside, the important point is that the basic human needs were met, because there was a sense of community (Acts 2:42-46). Hence, concern for development must flow out of a genuine sense of community, not out of pretentious charity or relief, or some other sense of moral obligation.

Cogswell further asks the question, “Why is it that, after over thirty years and billions of dollars of development aid, third world nations and people are immersed even more deeply in the cauldron of poverty and hunger?” Part of the problem he says, is the *concept of relief* (first-generation development). Relief goes against the natural flow of the necessities of life emerging from the land where people live. Relief work is fraught with political interests and power brokering *with reference to* ‘food aid as a weapon’. Who determines the agenda for where relief

is needed? After relief, then what? Relief, then as a part of Christian mission, must not become a hiding place for those who do not wish to face the grim realities of underlying hunger and poverty. For the church, development must be an expression of the depth of community rooted in our fellowship around the person of Christ, a projecting of that *koinonia* into the broader community (Ibid).

4.5.4 Diakonia.

This word is easily translated as ministry. In the early chapters of Acts, *diakonia* refers first to the “*ministry of the word*” (Acts 1:17, 25), and only afterward to the work of the first set of deacons in the distribution of resources to those neglected within the Christian community (Acts 6:1). The message is clear, witness and service cannot be separated or viewed as distinct from one another. Both are inextricably a part of the *diakonia* of the church. *Diakonia* cannot be simply a humanitarian activity that lacks the courage to stand up to the opposition, to deal with the tough questions. Far more than relief or charity, it is an expression of the creative tension brought about by the experience of life in the new community and willingness to be the least with no arrogant superiority (Bosch 1991:11).

Christian *diakonia* is sharing in the self-emptying love of Christ, participating with the total body of Christ in releasing God’s power of love and justice into the world.

That must be the underlying motive and spirit of the church in its understanding and praxis of development.

4.5.5 Dikaiosyne.

According to Brown 1978c:352-354, dikaiosyne can refer to:

- **Justification**—God’s merciful act of declaring us just, thus changing our status and pronouncing us acceptable to him.
- **Righteousness**—a pre-eminently religious or spiritual concept; an attribute of God or a spiritual quality that we receive from God.
- **Justice**—people’s right conduct in relation to their fellow human beings, seeking for them that to which they have a right.

It is most frequently translated as *righteousness* in the New Testament, but it carries with it the weight of the Old Testament theme of justice. The problem of seeking a correct translation for this word may lie in the inadequacy of the English language to fully embrace the totality of the concept *dikaiosyne* in one word. Bosch (1991:72) suggests translating it as “*justice-righteousness*” in an attempt to hold onto the fullest dimension of the word. The sense of justice, which was proclaimed out of the prophetic message of the Old Testament, found expression as the early church proclaimed the life and ministry of Jesus Christ— his declaration of purpose in Nazareth, his alliance with the poor and his clash with the religious elite. God’s justice is his saving activity on behalf of his people. Human justice is the effort we make to respond to God’s goodness by carrying out His will (Crosby 1981:139). It calls us to go beyond the shallow expression of compassion, to stand with, struggle with those who are oppressed by the world systems of injustice. The strong biblical sense of justice is desperately needed in our understanding and praxis of development, if we consider it closely it will be clearer to us that justice refers to the conduct a person owes towards God, the principle by which human conduct towards one another and towards their God is measured and judged; and by the claim made by Yahweh’s requirements upon his worshipers (Brown 1978:354-359).

If the Christian community incarnates Christ in this way in our understanding of development, it will lead to an understanding of development as compassion.

4.6 Development and compassion

God has mandated that we proclaim the gospel, disciple the nations, care for the poor—that we should identify with the vulnerable, the hungry, the sick, the lame and the prisoner. There is no question about God’s concern for the “*least of these*.” Compassion toward the least of these has always been a biblical agenda for God’s people (Lloyd 2002:7). To say that God has compassion for the poor and the victims of injustice is to say that he actually suffers with them. At the root of God’s compassion is the fact that he sees, witnesses and directly observes the suffering of the abused (Exodus 3:7-8). Biblically, compassion plays a core role in humanity’s search to understand the nature of both divinity and human beings. The Hebrew word for compassion, *rachamim* and its variants (e.g. Deuteronomy 13:17 “*that the Lord...may have compassion on you*”), describe God’s being and God’s activity; and by analogy, the being and activity of humanity (Floyd 1993:36). One of the Old Testament scholars, Abraham Heschel (1975:64) in his view stated that, the prophets especially, understood the difficulty of the Hebrew worldview to conceive of a God indifferent to suffering. This was the case particularly in the face of Israel’s experiences of divine distaste for injustice, and as a corollary, God’s compassionate demand for justice. Compassion is a divine attribute, and God is often referred to as *ha-Rachaman*—the compassionate One. Thus the human practice of compassion is one of the main examples of “imitation Dei” (Werblowsky & Wigoder 1966:95)—the way of God in which man was commanded to walk (Deut. 8:6). Heschel further distinguishes between *imitatio Dei* and *imago Dei* when he said, “*God created a reminder, an image. Humanity is a reminder of God. As God is compassionate, let humanity be compassionate*” (Stern 1973:78). Christology however, is the *place* where the Christian theological understanding of compassion has long been centred. Both the compassion of God and the possibility of genuine human compassion are exemplified in the Christian community’s affirmations concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ. Karl Barth has been perhaps the most direct about this. In Barth’s terms, the *imago Dei*—the image of God in human beings—is the reflection of God’s way of being-in-compassionate relationship with humanity. “God is in relationship, and so too, is the man created by Him. This is His divine likeness” (Barth 1960:324). As Jesus is interpreted as God-in-relationship to human beings, so human beings similarly are interpreted as made in the *imago Dei* through their relationships to God and to one another. God’s image in humanity is seen in the similarity between God’s relationships (vertical relationship) and human relationships (horizontal relationship). As Edward

Schillebeeckx has put it, “*God’s concern for man becomes the criterion, the standard, and at the same time the boundless measure of our concern for the needy*” (Schillebeeckx 1987:283). *What is it to be a neighbor?* Jesus is asked. It is to be like the “Good Samaritan” as we have it in Luke 10:29-37, the man who found a stranger beaten and half dead—“and when he saw him, he had compassion” (Luke 10:33). For Jesus, compassion is not just a responsive attitude of solidarity with a stranger; rather, it involves the radical risk of personal involvement into the context of suffering and needy (Merton 1974:348-356). Compassion also involves heeding the call to redemptive commitment, or discipleship, whose epitome among Jesus’ teachings is the charge at the end of the Good Samaritan story, “*go and do likewise*” (Luke 10:37). James Cone (1975:175), the North American black theologian, has summarized, “*the cross of Jesus reveals the extent of God’s involvement in the suffering of the poor. He is not merely sympathetic with the social plan of the poor but becomes totally identified with them in their agony and pain.*” To be created in the image of God means: “*go and do likewise.*”

4.7 Compassionate development

Compassion as a theological value is closely linked to empowerment and development. The Christian theological tradition has long emphasized compassion as not just the desire of compassionate persons to dispel suffering, but their active participation in its alleviation. Blum (1980:507) articulates this affective approach to compassion as, “*it is not enough that we imaginatively reconstruct someone’s suffering... in addition, we must care about that suffering and desire its alleviation.*”

The words *participation* and *alleviation* underscore the linkage of theology to empowerment and development. While alleviation closely resembles a broadly agreed upon definition of development: the alleviation of poverty (Cornwell 2002:73), Participation parallels the aspects of empowerment, from both the provider and receptor perspectives.

Compassionate development should embody:

- 4.7.1 A disposition of solidarity towards suffering:** Freire (1972:34) writes that solidarity requires that one enter into the situation of those with whom one exists in

solidarity...“*it is a radical posture.*” It demands a *radical contextualization* of concern. Nouwen (McNeill, Morrison & Nouwen 1982:62-64) has called this “a voluntary displacement from one’s ordinary, proper places, a dislocation out of the safety of apathy into the risk and costliness of responsible compassion—the practice of mercy.”

4.7.2 The action of entering into the context of that suffering as one’s own: In McNeill *et. al.* (1982:101) persuasive words, “*only when the compassionate person is related by his compassion to the sufferer that in the strictest sense he comprehends that it is his own cause which is here in question, does compassion acquire significance, and only then does it perhaps find a meaning.*”

4.7.3 A commitment to overcoming the cause of the suffering itself: Compassion demands not messianic aspirations, but the human vocation of active justice. As McNeill *et. al.* (1982:124) state, “*We cannot profess our solidarity with those who are oppressed when we are unwilling to confront the oppressor.*” Compassion without confrontation fades quickly into fruitless sentimental commiseration. Compassionate justice means humanity’s participation in the *missio Dei*, the work of God in the world. Being a neighbor implies action (Koyama 1974:89). Compassion might be best understood as a dynamic process, which includes the affective and active dimensions (Floyd 1993:48).

If the church in Nigeria could be committed to overcoming the cause of suffering in the community, it will give the church acceptance amongst the people and also the government agencies will be looking to the church for clear sense of direction

4.8 Conclusion

In putting together all the theological assessment on mission as development in this chapter, a framework for transformation emerges that points us to the best human future—the kingdom of God (Van Schalkwyk 1999:23). Myers (1999:135-136) captures this chapter's argument in the following way:

The future is framed by the twin goals of transformation: *changed people* and *changed relationships*. Changed people have discovered their true identity and vocation; changed relationships that are just and peaceful. These goals are sought with a process of change that is people-centred. The development process belongs to the people; relationships are the critical factor for change; the end of transformation is truth-telling, righteousness and justice; and practitioners are contextually sensitive to do no harm. These principles are expressed through persons or groups working in the community: God, the church, the mission practitioner and the Evil one. The first three are working in favour of a better human future, while the mission of the latter one is to distract, divide and destroy. Finally, these transformational development principle seeks to move a community towards the goals of transformation in a way that is sustainable physically, economically, mentally, socially and spiritually.

Transformational development implies a process of social change or transformation in every sphere of life for individuals and communities, in the fullest sense of God's redemptive purpose. Hope et al (1984:3) expressed his view as follows:

Development is first of all about liberating people from all that holds them back from experiencing a full human life. Ultimately development is about transforming society...Development, liberation, and transformation are all aspects of the same process. It is not a marginal activity. It is the core of all creative human living.

I would add to this that development should be at the core of holistic ministry that is such a priority for Nigeria today. In this way, it should also be a prominent feature in our consideration

for constructing sustainable socio-economic development amongst the rural poor. It specifically urges the church to reflect on the question, *what does an empowered person in the Nigerian context look like?* In order for church and mission to continue to play a critical and informed role in holistic redemptive ministry, there needs to be a greater commitment to dialogue between the church and the poor on how to have a better future.

CHAPTER 5

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION: A PERSPECTIVE ON POVERTY

5.1 Introduction

Having reflected briefly on theology and development, I now turn to address the core of the problem I want to try and solve: poverty. Theology of mission is increasingly being written at the grassroots of the poor (Bradshaw 1993:1). We are living in a time when the numbers of “the least among us” (Luke 9:48) are growing at an alarming rate. This poverty is being compounded by dependency and hopelessness. However, referring to people by a label—‘the poor’—is always dangerous. We may forget that the poor are not an abstraction but rather a group of human beings who have names, who are made in the image of God, whose hairs are numbered and for whom Jesus died (Myers 1999:57).

When the poor become nameless, they are treated as objects of charity, as a “thing” with which the non-poor can do what they believe is best, can help as they (the non-poor) decide to do. As such, the non-poor take it upon themselves to name them—homeless, destitute, indigenious, working poor, refugees, etc. The departure point for a Christian understanding of poverty is to emphasise that the poor are people with names, people whom God has given gifts and people with whom and among whom God has been working ever since. Therefore, a theology of empowerment must generate a spirituality that brings hope, strength and power to the poor and the marginalized. It should also give the rich people the courage and insight to transform themselves. The images of God in a spirituality of development should stress issues such as freedom, love, holiness, dignity, power and creativity. Humans are created in the image of God. These dimensions are part of our existence and should be the basis for all people’s lives (Ibid). This importance I ascribe to the humanity and agency of the poor leads me to my next important point: the new theological thinking on the poor which is incarnated in Liberation Theology flowing from the Biblical concept of shalom.

5.2. Biblical concept of shalom

The departure point established for this chapter is the question, what better future?

The quest for transformational development therefore, begins with the need to articulate the better future the community decides to pursue. As argued and developed thus far, the kingdom of God, as the vision for the better future is summarized by the idea of *shalom*: just, peaceful, harmonious and enjoyable relationships with each other, ourselves, our environment and God. This kingdom framework is inclusive of the physical, social, mental and spiritual manifestations of poverty; and so all are legitimate areas of focus for transformational development. In the biblical story *shalom* may be described as the fullness of God's salvation that is realized in the relational dimension of social and ecological events in God's world (Van Schalkwyk 1999:15). As the salvific contents (wholeness, peace, well-being, harmony, and justice) of the reign of God, *shalom* is partly realized in the here and now, although it will be ultimately realized in the eschaton, when the day of God's peace will finally dawn. Generally translated as *peace*, the concept of *shalom* means more than the mere absence of war- our common understanding of peace, but presence of justice, best translated as well-being. In the biblical view it is right conduct that leads to *shalom* (Pobee 1997:156). *Shalom* is a way of life that characterizes the covenant relationship between God and his people. Malachi declares this covenant to be one of "life and shalom" (Malachi 2:5).

As such, the *missio Dei* is aimed at the realization of *shalom*. In the words of Russell (1974:125), "the mission of God in handing over Jesus Christ demonstrates God's shalomitic purposes to bring liberation and blessing to all humanity." By participating in the struggle to realize *shalom*, God's children and God's church become part of mission, which is the cyclical movement from God to world to kingdom (Hoekendijk 1952:10). This *shalom* emphasis is an occasion for the Church to think differently about life. One fresh way of doing this is around the theme of *chaos* and *order* (Brueggemann 1982:74). If we are to be seriously engaged with our faith, then we must be more sensitized to a central *shalom* question: *How are things ordered? How did they get that way? Shalom* leads us to raise several issues. These will be explored in the polemic themes of hope and despair, *gift and task*, evangelism and development.

My argument in this section is that theology-and-development is a 'shalom tool.'

5.2.1. Polemic tension between hope and despair.

A *theology of hope* centers itself in the conviction that things do not need to remain as they are; and that if things have been made the way they are, *with reference to* poverty, injustice, disharmony, environmental degradation, etc., they can be unmade from that form and ordered in another way (Brueggemann 1982:74). The antithesis, a *theology of despair*, is the awful conclusion that things are hopeless, that the world is a “closed system” in which creation is finite and that things are a given and must be the way they are ordered now (Miller 1998:147). Such a conclusion is to abandon hope and to decide that the world is beyond renewal. *Shalom* is rooted in a theology of hope, in the powerful, buoyant conviction that the world can and will be transformed and renewed, that life can and will be changed and newness can and will come (Brueggemann 1982:74).

5.2.2 Polemic tension between gift and task.

Shalom is also about *doing* theology. In the context of ministry, the question arises, *how do we address chaos? How do we celebrate order?* Doing theology in a spiritual sense involves the questions of sin and salvation, which are fundamental tasks. However, doing theology in development often involves addressing socio-political questions on a macro level such as, freedom, power, authority and responsibility with institutions and systems. Doing theology on all levels is authentic *shalom*.

Order, which is the promise of wholeness, harmony, well-being and justice in the midst of chaos, is both a *gift* and *task* (Brueggemann 1982:87). To the extent that it is a gift, we are relieved of anxiety and have hope. We can view creation as an “open system” (Miller 1998:147) because the Creator is both personal and relational. The drive towards *shalom* located in the promises of God cannot be obviated, in spite of our self-inflated capacities to make and unmake the world. The witness of Scripture is clear. We cannot make or unmake the world because it is not ours (Brueggemann 1982:88). In Luke 12:13-31, Jesus makes a perceptive connection of *little faith*, *coveting* and *anxiety*. Underneath all three and common to all three is the assessment that the

world will cohere only if we hustle to make it so. The gospel refutes such a desperate pretension. Order is a gift. The world is safe and that calls for wonder, amazement and gratitude.

According to Wakeman (1973:40)

People who lack the sense of astonishment are likely to take themselves too seriously and for them the world may finally become too anxious. Peace cannot come from anxiety but only from confidence. So at the outset let us face the reality: order is a precious gift from God

On the other hand, it must also be affirmed that order is a *task entrusted to us*. The promise of wholeness, harmony, wellbeing and justice, which God has ordained for this world, is not self-actualized or automatic. It must be “*stewarded*” and nurtured. This is precisely the polemic tension. How do we seriously and competently “*steward*” the drive toward the *shalomatic* promise, which God has ordained, without presuming, possessing, or emptying it of its *gift* quality?

The Bible, at least in most parts, is affirmative about the legitimate existence and function of ordering agents *in relation to* authorities and government. This affirmation is predicated on the right use of ordering power. Authority and government is not ontological (not ordained for itself as a center of reality), but is an incidental arrangement carved out of historical opportunity, always in service of another ontological principle (Brueggemann 1982:92). The biblical story and Israel in its reflection on monarchy are peculiar in affirming that the fundamental religio-political reality is not king, but Torah, not human distribution of power, but divine vision for society (Mendenhall 1973: 196-197). Thus the threat of the world falling apart, descending into chaos, has been made into an ethical issue. The threat of chaos brings development into the arena of Christian social ethics as it becomes drawn into the challenges of power, injustice, oppression, economics, poverty, gender relations, environmental degradation, etc. As such, *shalom* is also about doing theology on the macro level involving the institutional, systemic and global development issues (De Gruchy 2003:6-9). *Shalom* is not only an incredible gift; it is a most demanding mission as well.

5.2.3 Polemic tension between evangelism and development.

Most Christian missions and Christian development agencies have struggled with defining the relationship between *development* and *evangelism*. Western cultures, in particular, see development and evangelism as separate enterprises—development is not necessarily evangelistic. Evangelism affirms the Good News of Jesus Christ as salvation to all who believe. Development on the other hand, attempts to relieve the vulnerability to pain and suffering that people experience when they live in deteriorating conditions. *Dualism* in this worldview sees evangelism as addressing the spiritual needs while development addresses the physical needs. This separation of evangelism from development creates a crisis of intersubjectivity in mission today that mitigates revealing the redemptive work of Christ within a culture. *Holism* is what should characterize Christian ministry. My argument here is the intrinsic relationship between evangelism and development. This relationship exists because Christ's redemptive work includes the entire creation, things seen and unseen. In this sense, redemption is defined as restoring the elements of creation to fulfill the purposes for which God created them. Holism seeks to restore the harmony of creation that reflects the glory of God. To this extent, separations between evangelism and development, or the physical and spiritual aspects of creation, are detrimental to our understanding and fulfilling the call of Christian ministry (Miller 1998:16). The inauguration of Jesus' ministry (Luke 4:18-21) illustrates the holistic nature of Christian ministry, and to buttress this point I hereby consider what Willem Saayman says in his book 'Christian Mission in South Africa' (1993: 5-8). He illustrates his understanding of mission in the light of Luke 4:18- 21 by using the image of a rainbow.

‘The rainbow always reflects the full spectrum of colours, wherever we may be and these colours belong together, and if one is lacking, we no longer have a real rainbow. In the same way the various dimensions of all our missionary endeavours must reflect the fullness of *missio Dei*. These dimensions are evangelism dimension; healing dimension; and a dimension of striving for social, political and economic justice.’

All these dimensions belong together whether we are involved in mission in Nigeria or outside the country.

Furthermore, in Luke 4:18- 21, Jesus affirms that the poor will hear the Good News, the prisoners will be freed, the blind will see, the oppressed will be liberated and he proclaims Jubilee, the year of the Lord's favour. Understanding the nature of Jesus ministry and in fulfilling his mandate—is making a relationship between preaching, advocating justice and ministering to the poor, sick, hungry, and oppressed. Do we advocate justice and minister to the poor, sick, hungry and oppressed because it gives us the opportunity to preach the Good News to them? On the other hand, is advocating justice and ministering to the poor, sick, hungry, and oppressed, in itself, Good News?

A holistic approach to mission affirms that ministering to the poor, sick, hungry, and oppressed *and* preaching the message of eternal salvation is Good News. The biblical concepts of evangelism and development are not separate. The words used for healing—*soteria* and *sozo* — also mean salvation. These words blur the separations we tend to make as we think of healing and salvation as disconnected physical and spiritual ministries. Other biblical concepts, such as *koinonia*, also have physical and spiritual connotations. We frequently think of the covenant between God and his people as a covenant of salvation, yet salvation is but one aspect of *shalom*. It also defines the state of wholeness and holiness possessed by individuals and communities, as they become part of the greater community of faith. *Shalom* describes the “condition of well-being resulting from the sound relationships among people and between people and God” (Miller 1978:30). It includes social justice: the protection of widows, orphans, and society's dependents; the struggle against exploitation and oppression; the protection of lives and properties (Voolstra 1978:30). *Shalom* is the expression of harmony God intended (Haring 1986:32). Nature itself is included in *shalom* (Voolstra 1978:30). From the interruption of *shalom* in the Garden of Eden to its total renewal in the New Jerusalem, the object of all God's work is the recovery of *shalom* in his creation (Metzler 1978:40).

A concept of development that is both Christian and holistic emphasises revealing God's presence and empowering people to experience the principles of the Kingdom that *shalom* embodies. Holistic Christian development, characterized by *shalom*, recognizes the gospel has present and future tenses. We look forward to the day when the Kingdom of God is with us and brings peace to our present life and situations (Bradshaw 1993:18). Because of the present and future hope of the gospel, holism affirms that poverty, oppression and injustice are not incidental

to revealing the redemptive nature of the gospel. Rather, the Good News of Christ cannot be revealed without speaking to these issues.

In addressing poverty, oppression and injustice, *shalom* is the medium that comprises the liberating message of a development approach that is both Christian and holistic.

Shalom bridges the gap between development and evangelism by its concern for truth, power and control. It does not see these things as contradictory or competitive, but sees their roles redemptively. God works to bring these aspects of high religion, folk religion and science together within *shalom*. It is a comprehensive term that defies the categories within which we want to place it. Through *shalom* truth, power and control have a place in making known the covenant that reconciles creation to the Creator.

In the light of the centrality of the concept of *shalom* in both Old and New Testaments, especially also in the gospel of Jesus, it is actually no surprise that a new expression developed in Liberation Theology in the late 1960s: God's preferential option for the poor.

5.3 God's preferential option for the poor

According to Bosch (1991:435) the phrase "*preferential option for the poor*" was coined from the *Latin American Conference of Bishops* (CELAM III, 1979) in Puebla. There has been a considerable amount of confusion and misunderstanding about the meaning of the phrase. It is not my intention to open up the debate or make a novel contribution, but rather, to reflect on it as praxis for constructing sustainable socio-economic development today. As Gutiérrez has explained (1988: xxvf), the very word *preference*, denies all exclusiveness, as though God would be interested only in the poor, while the word *option* should not be understood to mean optional. The poor are first, though not the only ones, on which God's attention focuses; therefore the Church has no choice but to demonstrate solidarity with the poor. "The poor have an epistemological privilege". They are the new interlocutors of theology (Frostin 1988:6).

The danger in all this according to Bosch (1991:436) is that one may easily fall into the trap of the *church-for-others* instead of the *church-with-others*, in other words, the *church for- the-poor* instead of the *church-with-the-poor*. In his *Letters and Papers from Prison*, Bonhoeffer coined the phrase—the "*church-for-others*." To live in Christ, Bonhoeffer believed, meant to be a

church that exists not for the pious faithful, but for others. “The church is the church only when it exists for others...the church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving” (1971:382-383). Although the *church-for-others* is a powerful phrase, the Bonhoeffer formula might distract us from the reality that all theology is at some level the product of personal constructs and contextual factors.

For Bonhoeffer, it was the typical liberal-humanist bourgeois climate and the idea that Western Christians know what is best for others, thus they paternalistically proclaim themselves the guardians of others (Sundermeier 1986:62-65). Sundermeier’s observation illustrates that the language of the *church-for-others*, the “*church as sacrament*,” etc., is not free from hazard. We should rather speak of the *church-with-others* (Bosch 1991:375).

This relationship between the congregation and the world is very important. It places before every congregation, which finds itself in a world of poverty, the exceptional responsibility and challenge of taking this context seriously. Studying it and trying to understand it, serving the context and specifically the people involved, with loving empathy (. Matthew 25:31-46; James 2: 14-26), trying to alleviate some of the misery involved in it, eliminating some of the causes responsible for it, and to bring about something of the renewal which is present in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The *option for the poor* is not primarily a choice about the recipients of the gospel message. It is not to whom we must preach the gospel; it is about *what gospel* we preach to anyone at all. It is concerned with the *content* of the gospel message itself. Pablo Richard in his book, *Death of Christendoms: Birth of the Church* (1987:172, 184-185; cf. Bosch 1991:386) articulates this very distinction,

“The church must arise out of the ‘liberating potential’ of the poor—that is, out of the power of the faith of the poor—to discover and announce the true God, who is the liberating God of the Bible, and also out of the power of the faith of the poor to destroy the idolatry and fetishism of the system of domination. Hence the challenge to the church-of-the-poor is to develop a ‘popular’ kind of liberating work, a developmental process that will reflect the logic of themajority, and likewise, be a church that is built up as the people of God through its ability to empower the people...”

The poor are the oppressed, the victims of the social sin of *injustice*. The *option for the poor* is concerned with the sin of oppression and what Christians should be doing about it (Dorr 1983:243). It is not a romanticization of the poor or an imputation of guilt on those who are not

poor; rather, it is a matter of taking up the cause of the poor as opposed to the cause of the rich. Self-interest becomes detrimental to a community when the competitive nature of capitalism becomes more appealing to the people in that community than the cooperative nature of *shalom*, preventing the poor from getting the basic needs of life.

However, in a more pragmatic world, economics that are concerned with *shalom* seek to insure that the luxuries and excesses of the rich do not jeopardize the just demands of the poor (Bradshaw 1993:119). The *option for the poor* then is an uncompromising and unequivocal taking side in a situation of structural conflict (Nolan 1986:19). It is the assertion that Christian faith entails, for everyone and as part of its essence, the taking of sides in the structural conflict between the oppressor and the oppressed (Gutiérrez 1983: 73). “*Option for the poor*” is not as such, a biblical phrase, but it does sum up a central theme in the Bible. The concept of the poor is present throughout the whole biblical revelation and it is easily spiritualized by an understanding of spiritual poverty as the attitude of total reliance upon God and having a humble and contrite spirit. Understanding the *option for the poor* and what is said in the Bible concerning the poor must be interpreted as clear as possible in terms of the different historical contexts.

5.3.1 God’s option for the poor in the Exodus paradigm.

Exodus was the original and paradigmatic saving act of God (Nolan 1986:20). It was the foundational revelation of Yahweh. The exodus was the experience that molded the consciousness of the people of Israel; determining the logic with which Israel assimilated the facts of its historical experience and the principle by which it organized them and interpreted them. The story was told and retold, celebrated each year at the Passover and used as an interpretive framework for understanding all God’s saving activities, including the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus—the new Passover. Yahweh took notice of the Hebrews, saw their oppression, heard their cries and liberated them from their oppressors. “*I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians...*” (Exodus 3:7-8).

The Hebrew slaves in Egypt were the original poor people of the Bible. Their poverty was material and economic, which was a direct result of the structural oppression of Egyptian society. In the Exodus story, Yahweh himself takes the option for these oppressed Hebrews in the first place. God takes sides with the oppressed and is clearly against the oppressor. This is precisely the fundamental revelation about Yahweh (Fierro 1977:20). There is no aspect of God trying to reconcile or make peace between Pharaoh and the Hebrew slaves. God liberates the oppressed from the oppressor, and this pattern is seen throughout the Scriptures.

“The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed” (Psalm 103:6).

The option for the poor is usually thought of as a commitment that the rich or non-poor have to make on behalf of those who are oppressed. However, what is far more fundamental in this account is the principle of participation; the option of the poor for their own cause. Participation is a core requisite for empowerment. Empowerment concerns the lack of participation by people in their own development. This contributes to what Chambers (1997:112) calls ‘powerlessness’. Often these people are the poor and marginalized. Empowerment has to do with personal participation—people being fully utilized in achieving social progress and development. The work of Moses was what faith and trust in Yahweh meant for them in practice (Tamez 1982:60-64). Moses is further an example of someone who was not oppressed siding with those who were oppressed.

5.3.2 God’s option for the poor in the paradigm of the Prophets.

The egalitarian society in the Promised Land did not last. Gradually, inequality set in, despite the Jubilee legislation (Leviticus 25) to stem the tide, until eventually, the people of Israel began asking for a king in order to be like other nations. The prophet Samuel resisted and warned them of the oppression that a king would bring.

However, the people insisted and God allowed them to have a king (1 Samuel 8:1-22). Thus began a paradigm of oppressive structures within Israel itself. In time, the majority of the people had been reduced to the same level of poverty and oppression that Yahweh had once liberated them in Egypt and Canaan. Hence, those prophets who took up the cause of justice for the poor

as Yahweh's cause rose up. The result for almost all of the pre-exilic prophets was persecution, imprisonment and martyrdom (Jeremiah 20:13; Matthew 23:29-32).

The prophets were by definition those who took up an option for the oppressed. The kings were the oppressors (Kegler 1984:49-54). The failure in this paradigm was not so much on the part of the prophets, but because the oppressed—out of their unfaithfulness and disobedience to God—had themselves not taken an option for their own cause. The result was the destruction of Israel as an independent nation, the deportation of its elite into Babylon (Jeremiah 29:1-2) and the scattering of the poor and oppressed into the surrounding nations (Anderson 1978:399-400, 404-405, 418).

5.3.3 God's option for the poor during and after the Exile paradigm.

During the years after the fall of Jerusalem and the monarchy through the years of exile in Babylon to the years after the return to Jerusalem—the remnant remained a small colony oppressed by a succession of empires: Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman. There was suffering but for the most part, it was not remotely as bad as the oppression experienced originally in Egypt. There was a measure of persecution, but now it was mostly a religious persecution. With the exception of the Maccabees and later the Zealots, there was no attempt to struggle for liberation. Israel became submissive and opted for a kind of religious independence. It was during that time that the people of Israel developed that very special form of Jewish piety known as *spiritual poverty* (Nolan 1986:23). The Jewish leaders who developed this spirituality of poverty were indeed oppressed, but they regarded themselves alone as the poor of Yahweh. The poor and oppressed were central to the written tradition they had inherited. The poor were God's favorites and they applied the texts (Zephaniah 3:11-13; Isaiah 49:13) about the poor to themselves. Hence, being a member of the remnant of Israel, remaining faithful and obedient to Yahweh—became a matter of personal choice and individual responsibility. Thus, poverty came to be thought of as a moral rather than socio-economic category. This was the beginning of the detachment of spiritual poverty from its roots in material poverty and in the social category of all

oppressed classes. Instead of taking the *option for the poor*—one can take the option for the ‘virtues of the poor’ in a way that enables the status quo of oppression to continue unchallenged. However, some aspects of this piety of the poor that evolved can be of value in our commitment to the cause of the poor. For Israel as a nation, there had to be transformation. The very poverty of their spiritual condition (unfaithfulness to God and disobedience of God’s standards) affected their praxis in taking an *option for the poor*. The principle we can draw from this is that the motivation for taking the *option for the poor*— is out of obedience to the will and purposes of God for the poor in the *missio Dei* (Micah 6:8). Later, Jesus finally brought the piety of the poor down to earth again and rooted it firmly in an option for the materially poor and politically oppressed.

5.3.4 God’s option for the poor in the paradigm of the Gospels.

In the midst of *external political* (Roman) and *internal political* (Pharisees, Sadducees, priests, elders, nobility and landowners) structures of oppression, Jesus took sides clearly and unequivocally with the poor (Luke 4:16- 22; 6:20-23; 12:32). He preached the kingdom of God that would set them free and that God’s kingdom belonged to them. Jesus’ *option for the poor* also included a determined effort to get the poor to take an option for their own cause. He taught them that it was their faith that would heal and save them (Mark 2:11-12; Luke 17:19; Nolan 1977:92-100). His preaching of the kingdom restored their dignity and self-confidence by breaking their dependency and giving them hope—they were the “*salt of the earth*” and the “*light of the world.*” Jesus’ *option for the poor* led him to identify himself totally with the poor: “*whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me*” (Matthew 25:40). These were the sinners, prostitutes and tax collectors. They included people who were hungry, thirsty and begging on the streets. What moved Jesus to identify with them was not their piety but their suffering (Gutiérrez 1983:95, 116, 138, 140-142). The central challenge Jesus communicated to the rich and powerful was the simple uncompromising option—between God and money (Matthew 6:24; Mark 4:19). Jesus demanded from the rich young ruler a complete renunciation of his possessions for the sake of the kingdom of God. He was told to “sell what

you possess” (Matthew. 19:21); “sell whatever you have and give to the poor” (Mark 10:21; Luke 18:22).” The chains of his possessions were so strong however (Matthew 19:22; Mark 10:22; Luke 18:23); it kept him from following Jesus’ call. Hence, a rich person can only enter the kingdom of God with great difficulty. Conversely, when those same riches and possessions are rightly used, they become channels for good works—as in the cases of the women who provided for *Jesus* and his disciples (Luke 8:3) and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:8; 12:33)

Those who would choose God would have to sell their possessions (Matthew 6:19-21; Luke 12:33-34; 14:33) and join with the poor in a (*koinonia*) sharing community in which no one would be in need (Acts 2:44-46; 4:32; 34-35). They would not be poor in the destitute sense, but they would be poor in the sense of having rejected all greed, and oppression—poor in spirit. In Matthews words, they would “*hunger and thirst for justice*” they would not be destitute but they would be “*poor in spirit*” (Matthew 5:3).

In the new spirituality of God’s preferential *option for the poor*, there is no glorification of poverty but a determination (based on the purposes of God) to overcome it. There is no refusal to recognize the reality of sin in the world, but a determination to extend forgiveness (Matthew. 18:21-22). There must be a struggle against all forms of oppression, but there must not be a hint of vengeance (Matthew. 5:38-39). This would be the spirit and praxis of the new community that takes an option against suffering and oppression. It would be a *sign* or *symbol* of the kingdom that is arriving. In summarizing this section on God’s *option for the poor*, I offer the following principles that are helpful in informing holistic development praxis:

1. Siding (solidarity) with the oppressed honours God’s intention for the world and is doing His will.
2. God chooses the poor as recipients of his mercy and uses the poor as agents for His purposes.
3. A holistic practice of mission meets both the spiritual and physical needs.
4. Personal participation on the part of the poor for their own cause is a requisite for their transformation.
5. The motivation for taking the *option for the poor*—is out of obedience to the will and purposes of God for the poor.
6. A Christian praxis that does not take an *option for the poor* is unbiblical.

As the poor obviously occupies a preferential position in God's concerns, it is very important to establish whether our general concepts of poverty and the poor correspond with this. That will be the next aspect of my reflection.

5.4 Epistemological priority of the poor

I stated above that the poor are autonomous human beings who can describe their own situations and contribute to finding solutions. Gutierrez (1983:17) can help us in describing and understanding the contributions the poor themselves can make. He explains it by making use of the concept of "the epistemological priority of the poor" (related to God's preferential option for the poor). Understanding God's preferential option for the poor is ecclesiological [and missiologically] significant and is divided into three aspects (Gutierrez, 1983:69). First, to accept God's forgiveness of sin requires making God's preferential love for the poor our own. Second, authentic conversion of the Church--its members and its structures--takes place through solidarity with the outcasts of the world. Third, the effective evangelization and conscientisation of members and indeed the larger church itself must of necessity be rooted in the world of the poor

5.4.1 Forgiveness of sin and God's preferential love.

In Gutierrez's view (1983: *passim*), the Bible makes care for despised, abused, and insignificant human beings the clearest sign of God's presence in history. For Christians the mystery of a love which both condemns and forgives the mistreatment of human beings confronts us on the cross and in the resurrection of Jesus. The Church is the "universal sacrament of salvation" insofar as it incarnates God's special love for the "scum of society." The Church reflects God's judgment and mercy by gathering the scorned of the world, condemning their marginalization, and proclaiming a universal human communion. Redemption is necessary from that which divides, marginalizes, oppresses, and destroys human beings, that is, at its deepest level, sin. A Church of the poor

effectively signifies the victory of God's forgiving and redeeming grace. The Church of the poor makes visible the power of love over sin and death. Preferential option for the poor, as articulated by Gutierrez, moves beyond Roman Catholic preconciliar and conciliar approaches to the dialectic of the gratuity and exigency of love among all Christians.

For Gutierrez (1983:17), humanity's redemption in Christ from sin passes through God's preferential love for the victims of sin in history. God's option precedes the Church's and is binding upon believers. Yet in the final analysis the disciples are told to "love one another" not because Jesus orders them to do so but because, in Jesus' words, "I have loved you" (John 13:34). Love for God begins with gratitude for the gift of life (and for the new life made possible through divine forgiveness); from within such gratitude comes the desire to give life to others, especially those in need (1983:75).

5.4.2 Solidarity with the poor and ecclesial conversion.

The Church's decision to accept God's love by placing the poor and their world in the centre of its life and mission is thus inspired by God; it is also the fruit of the Church's own conversion. The refusal to build the Church around and for the poor constitutes "a contradiction of the very essence of the ecclesial community" and a rejection of God's will "to place the poor at the center of the history of the Church." God's preferential option gives "epistemological priority" to the struggle of the poor for life and dignity (1983:76-81). This means adopting the viewpoint, or standpoint, of the poor, not necessarily their views. Gutierrez urged radical change in the Church as a transformation undertaken in function of the Church's mission in the world and not for the sake of the Church itself. The temptation to ecclesiocentrism may be as great for reformers as for those who uphold the status quo.

"To seek anxiously after changes in the Church is to pose the question in terms of survival. But this is not the only question. The point is not to survive, but to serve. However, authentic Christian conversion, always personal and communal, and mediated by the other, exacts a high price. A Church in solidarity with the poor not only 'gets its

hands dirty’; it is a Church of the ‘dirty’ and the despised people-the poor (1 Corinthians 1:26-29)” (ibid).

Though a cultural revolution rooted in solidarity with the poor cannot by itself guarantee structural change in the Church or society, the presence of the poor does promote affective, intellectual, moral, socio-political, and religious conversions without which structural change is unlikely and meaningless. This explains Gutierrez's special pastoral and scholarly devotion to cultural transformation and the creation of a new humanity; this is another level of liberation and the medium of a new society and a new Church (ibid.). How can that come about? The best way, in my opinion, is through evangelization and conscientization. To this I now turn my attention.

5.4.3 Evangelisation and Conscientisation:

Evangelisation and conscientisation converge and reinforce each other while maintaining their own autonomy. Proclamation of the gospel in its essence includes the work of social analysis, organizing and sustaining communities of solidarity, and fostering new cultural values among the poor in the name of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. The message of God's love cannot help but shape efforts of the poor to comprehend their situation, overcome fear, and create communities within which "qualitatively different" people (or alternative communities) are coming to birth. Evangelization takes place within the very people whose awareness of their collective interests is growing – a process we call “conscientisation”. Conscientisation also happens outside the context of Christian faith, but in the context of Christian belief explicitly link efforts to create a new humanity and new society to the message and person of Jesus Christ (1983:98-112). Moreover, loyalty to God and to the Church is demonstrated by solidarity with the poor, the gratuitous gift of the kingdom is accepted by the poor in their efforts to free themselves from exploitation. Gutierrez shares Karl Rahner's conviction (Ibid) that only by experiencing oneself as a free subject responsible before God and by accepting this responsibility can one understand the direct proportion between radical dependence on God and genuine human autonomy. Gutierrez notes the complexity which oppressed people who both believe in God and fight for their freedom present for theological reflection. The "real meeting ground"

between "the possibilities of a liberative faith" and the "capacity for social transformation" is the "concrete life of our people"(ibid).

This innovative view on "the power of the poor in history" therefore has important consequences for our understanding of empowerment through development.

5.5 Theological perspective on empowerment

The epistemological priority of the poor must then, in my opinion, enlighten our understanding of a theological perspective on empowerment. Empowerment addresses the lack of participation by people in their own development. This implies that I do not understand church involvement in combating poverty as something the church must do for the poor; the church in mission should rather empower individuals and groups in order to discover ways and means to help themselves (Nkunsane 2010:82). People who do not participate in their own development do not have a say in their own future. This contributes to what Chambers (1997:112) calls "powerlessness." Often these people are the poor and the marginalized. Empowerment has to do with personal participation—people being fully employed in achieving social progress and development: people in general and the poor in particular have to be involved with how life is organized around them (:76). Simply put, empowerment is capacity building on the individual and community level, which allows individuals to accomplish their full redemptive potential. The entire issue of empowerment has strong evangelical implications. If power means anything, given the human condition, it means transformation of lives through the energy of the gospel (Pannell 2002:15). If Jesus preached the gospel to the poor as a certification that he was the Promised One, then that act was more than words. It meant that he was part of the proclamation and that he lived in solidarity with the people. Empowerment reflects a transformation of minds as I understand and interpret a verse such as Romans 12:2. It has been argued that worldview as the total complex of beliefs, cultural practices and norms held by people affects ideas and ideas have consequences. It has also been argued that physical conditions alone do not dictate poverty; but that poverty also comes from a marred identity and a web of lies that blinds people on both personal and cultural levels. Thus empowerment needs to facilitate the ability of people to think in a Christian way (Miller 1998:73) in every area of life (Mark 12:29-30; Romans 12:2; 2

Corinthians 10:5). Empowerment must be an integral part of development if we are to go far towards a better future. Going far together is not just about the teaching of techniques, but the restoring of identity, of trustful collaborative partnerships, of working together in community and of transformation in all aspects of life. This transformation begins, in my understanding, on the inside, at the level of beliefs and values and moves outward to embrace behaviour and consequences (Miller 1998:73). Our goal in development should be nothing short of a gospel-inspired transformation. As Nkunsane (2010:77) formulates it, “our engagement as Christians [in development] is meant to infuse the values that uphold the dignity of all of God’s creation, especially all individual human beings”.

In the light of what I have argued so far, it is necessary to inspect the general public’s assumptions about the poor, and how one can empower them in order to escape from shackles of poverty.

5.6 People’s assumptions about the poor and how best they could be empowered

Before identifying various ways by which the poor can be empowered, it is good to first of all identify what people everywhere and in general assume about those who are identified as poor. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary (1997), the poor can be defined as those without enough money to live comfortably, those who are deficient in a possession, or those who are unfortunate. That is probably a general perception of the poor by the non-poor. There are, though, to my knowledge based on my own experience, also less favourable and often unspoken assumptions about the poor: that, they are lazy, uneducated, often criminals and a burden on society. In order to help the poor, Corbett(2009:103) says, a helpful first step in any context is to determine their situation more precisely, that is, to know what makes them poor or how do they become poor. As soon as this is known, it will be easier to determine the best way to empower them. The situation of some poor people calls for relief, some for rehabilitation, while the situation of others calls for development. Failure to distinguish properly among these situations is one of the most common reasons why poverty-alleviation efforts, either by the government,

charity organizations, or individuals would not yield any profitable result if it is understood simply as “relief”.

Relief can be defined as the urgent and temporary provision of emergency aid to reduce immediate suffering from a natural or man-made disaster (ibid). Therefore, if a poor man or a woman does not experience natural or man-made disasters, but we treated him/her as such, we are not helping the situation, because as soon as those relief materials finish, the person will still continue to struggle for survival. But the goal of rehabilitation is to restore to effective or normal life (in other words, the way in which the person or community lived before) especially after something terrible has happened to someone. That is, to take the person back to his or her former privileges – if he/she had any. But the issue of development goes beyond that, because development is a process of on-going change that moves all the people involved closer to be in right relationship with God, self, others, and the rest of creation. It is noteworthy, that as the materially poor develop, they are better able to fulfill their calling of glorifying God by working and supporting themselves and their families with the fruits of that work (Corbett, 2009:104-105). Embarking on a development programme for the poor, which is built on changing individuals as well as their contexts) is therefore probably the best way by which the poor can be truly empowered.

It is for this reason that some of the writers are of the opinion that the first step to take is to ascertain the needs of the individual or the community (Corbett 2009:125). This is called “Needs-based approach”. But in my own view, as good as this method is, it’s equally dangerous. This is so because a needs-based development approach focuses on what is lacking in the life of a person or a community, and the assumption in this approach is that the solutions to poverty are dependent upon outside human and financial resources. Therefore, instead of using a needs-based community development approach (NBCD) in empowering the poor, an asset-based community development approach (ABCD) should rather be used. Aid institutions and churches should not do for people what they can do for themselves by this paternalism would be avoided and this will foster better understanding of people’s relationships with God, self, others and the rest of creation. ABCD is consistent with the perspective that God has blessed every individual and community with a host of gifts, including such diverse things as land, social networks, knowledge, animals, savings, intelligence, schools, and creativity. ABCD puts emphasis on what the materially poor people already have and take them up from there.

Also, the helpers must avoid a prior blueprint approach (where the solution is constructed before the questions are answered) which would just impose solutions on poor communities that are inconsistent with the local culture. The helpers should embrace a learning process approach to development, an approach that seeks to facilitate an action-reflection cycle in which poor people participate in all aspects of their development project. Corbett (2009:126) also advises that the materially poor people should be prepared to learn or acquire new skills through training. If someone has a job today, to avoid total breakdown of economic structure, the person must be ready to adjust, get retrained, and learn new skills if the job disappears (ibid).

Having gone this far is now necessary for me to integrate the understandings of Christian mission development.

5.7 Integrating understandings of Christian mission and development

This is where the real focus of my thesis will have to be. Much has been said and written since the nineteenth century on this topic, and I do not plan to review that whole debate. I wish to focus more specifically on contemporary issues in my area (Nigeria) as part of the continent of Africa. In a symposium volume put together under the auspices of the Eastern and Southern African region of the African Forum for Catholic Social Teachings (AFCAST): *Political participation in Zimbabwe*, edited by David Kaulema and published by AFCAST, Harare, Zimbabwe, in 2010, the authors employ a comprehensive understanding of Christian outreach and politics, including areas such as political processes, human rights, economics (especially poverty), and social empowerment. The localized empirical research done among various community groups (such as church communities) is valuable to use as guideline for the research I did in Nigeria, as there are many similar dimensions to the situations in Nigeria and Zimbabwe. In his introductory article titled “Linking political participation, democracy and human rights”, Saki (2010:1-14) concludes that poverty is in itself “a state of powerlessness and inability to influence decisions and change” (:14). In my experience, this holds true also for the community I am studying in Nigeria, which emphasizes the need for empowerment through suitable development. Chiware, in an article titled “Obstacles to political participation in Zimbabwe and

recommendations for improvement (2010:15-28) ascribes this powerlessness partly to “the absence of adequate channels for participation...Citizens must be continuously engaged in governance issues and processes” (:21). I think that the churches, through their participation in mission, can be used to provide both the engagement and channels of participation. This idea is developed further by Nkunsane, who in his article on “Empowering community for active and objective engagement” (Nkunsane 2010:76-84) analyses the involvement of the Roman Catholic Commission for Justice and peace in the Archdiocese of Harare. He emphasizes the goal of this commission to form “persons who understand and appreciate their integral role in society as both Christians and good and responsible citizens” with a calling “to promote Gospel values” (:76). My opinion is that many churches in Africa, and especially in my own area, have not done enough in this regard. This is more important if one considers the statement of Shylet (2010:72) that public participation is made easier through institutions which are nearer to the people and can react rapidly to arising challenges. In many areas of Africa churches are the social institutions which not only are close to the people, but which are also still functioning properly. When religion and health align: mobilising religious health assets for transformation, is edited by Cochrane, Schmid and Cutts, and published by Cluster Publications, Pietermaritzburg, SA, in 2011, (based on papers presented at a conference of the African Religious Health Assets Programme of the University of Kwazulu-Natal held in 2009 in Cape Town), state that lack of health services often overlap with poverty and lack of economic opportunity (2010:212). So, many of their research findings also apply to the alignment between religion and poverty. Their focus is not only on one African country or region, but on various parts of the continent, and is therefore useful for my research in Nigeria. The most important article for me is one written by Katherine Marshall, entitled “Frontiers of public health and social transformation: faith at the table” (2010:212-233). She writes about development issues in the Third World based on her experience in global institutions such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the World Bank, etc. So her thinking on development issues provides useful guidelines on what the latest thinking is, as well on what works in practice and what not. I find her statement about “disconnects and tensions around religion and development” (:215-216) useful:

International affairs actors generally, and the development community more specifically, are considering, in diverse ways, their relationships with religion, from both practical and theoretical perspectives. Faith inspired actors and institutions, for

their part, are rethinking relationships with many public programmes and institutions.

In this regard she mentions the establishment of the World Faiths Development Dialogue by the World Bank, for example (:217). It seems to me the right time, therefore to consider how Nigerian churches in their mission can start to help alleviate poverty in the communities they serve. These latter two sources I find especially helpful because they work with a holistic understanding of Christian faith, and they work with an integrated understanding of development. In other words, they do not treat development in isolation – they approach development as one dimension of human well-being, which includes dimensions such as health, politics, economics, culture, and the whole spectrum of human life. In order to develop such a co-operative approach, it is not only concepts of development which will have to change: our understanding of Christian mission will also have to change. This is the more necessary given the bad history of the entanglement of colonialism and mission in Africa. In this respect an article by Philip Wickeri, “Towards a kenosis of mission: emptying and empowerment for the church and for the world” is helpful. This article was published in a volume of essays in honour of D Preman Niles, titled *Scripture, community, and mission*, published in 2003 by the Christian Conference of Asia (Wickeri ed. 2003). Wickeri (:342) quotes a document of the CCA titled, “The people of God among all God’s people”, which states the following: “We understand that the mission of the Church, amidst all its ambiguities and the burden of history, is continually recast by communities which seek to shape their lives in light of the promise of the gospel”. Wickeri (ibid.) goes on to say that the first major shift necessary for such a new approach, is the need to accept that “mission begins with powerlessness, not power”. This is why he uses the term *kenosis*, because his interpretation of the Christian *kenosis* implies both “emptying and empowerment” (:344). Understood in this way, he argues (:346) that the biblical text then is not simply regarded as “an anchor of tradition”, but can indeed become “a springboard for faith and action”. So he does not see *kenosis* leading to a defeatist and negative mindset, but rather to a “theology of servanthood” (:348). This implies that “salvation and well-being are attained not by conquest or by domination of the other, but by self-effacement and by self-giving love” (ibid). It is in this spirit I believe that mission praxis should be constructed for helping the poor to help themselves alleviate their poverty.

5.8 *Corruptio totalis*

Although the biblical story affirms God's *option for the poor* and teaches that being poor is not itself a sin, the cause of poverty is fundamentally spiritual (Miller 1998:67). *What causes distortion and injustice in relationships? What stands between God and us? What separates us within our community? Why do we abuse the earth? What works against shalom?* Any theory of poverty must have answers to these questions. For the Christian, the biblical story provides an unambiguous answer. Sin is what distorts these relationships. Sin is the root cause of deception, distortion and dominion (Myers 1999:88).

God's primary missionary concern, as exemplified by Jesus, is towards the human race, created in God's image (*imago Dei*), and yet corrupted by sin. This sin, is not just a private affair between an individual and God (Padilla 1985). It is also social and is manifested in both individuals and the very structures of society. The poor are caught in a *web of lies* and have a *marred identity* (Christian 1994:17); are *denied access to social power* (Friedman 1992:73); and are *lacking well-being* (Chambers 1997:17) because of deceptive and dominating relationships, because we are unable to love God and neighbor, because of sin.

Consequently, my argument is that without a strong *theology of sin*, comprehensive explanations for poverty are hard to come by (Miller 1998:67). In our consideration of poverty, it becomes very important to factor in the theological reality of *corruptio totalis*. The latter is an all-embracing and inclusive problem in which an external visibility is found in predominantly one aspect of the whole—the economic aspect (an undersupply of basic provisions for survival)—but which at the same time, distorts the fundamental and total existence of the individual, group, family and community.

It is important to see sin not only in personal terms but also in structural terms (Pobee 1997:160). For the Christian development practitioner, there is an obvious implication. There can be no practice of transformational development that is Christian unless somewhere, in some form, people are hearing the Good News of the gospel and being given a chance to respond (Myers 1999:88). Bosch (1991:117) points out that in Luke the verb "*save*" from which we derive the noun 'salvation' includes healing the sick. For Luke, salvation has five dimensions: economic, social, physical, psychological and spiritual.

This implies that poverty cannot be solely described in economic terms; but that thorough attention be given to the theological, anthropological, psychological, political, demographic, ecological, social, medical, educational and jurisdictional perspectives. These perspectives as coherent parts of the greater internal and external whole of the *comprehensive problem of poverty*—require increasing interdisciplinary attention in the ongoing study of poverty in order to seek for a resolution to this problem (Max-Neef 1991:73).

However, the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism that took place in Melbourne, Australia, between 12th and 25th May 1980, reflected on the theme "Your kingdom come", the conference insisted on the particular role of the poor and churches of the poor in God's mission. Influenced by the Latin American liberation theologies, the delegates highlighted the radical aspects of the kingdom message and the serious challenge it threw to traditional missiology and mission programmes. At the same time, the conference's section dealing with the church's witness did remarkable work on evangelism and on the church as healing community. The conference also reflected on how Christ's choice of vulnerability and way to the cross challenged the use of power, in political, church and mission life. [<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/who-are-we/organization-structure/consultative-bodies/world-mission-and-evangelism/history.html> (Accessed on 29/10/2012)]

In his own presentation during the conference, Raymond Fung argued for a missionary movement among the world's poor so that the slum dwellers, factory workers, street laborers, farm hands, and their families could be confronted with the claims of Jesus. By the missionary movement he meant evangelizing and witnessing communities of the poor which will discover and live their expression of faith among the masses of the poor and the oppressed. He pointed out that a person is not only a sinner but is also the sinned against. A person is lost not only in the sins of his own heart but also in the sinning grasp of principalities and powers of the world, demonic forces which cast a bondage over human lives and human institutions and infiltrate their very textures. A person persistently deprived of basic material needs and political rights is also a person deprived of much of his or her soul - self-respect, dignity and will. The destroyer of the body may not be able to kill the soul, but it can, and too often does, rape and maim the soul. Hence Fung urged that the Gospel should not only call on the people to repent of their sins, but must also call on them to resist the forces that sin against them. The Gospel empowers the poor

for such struggles. [<http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=1573&C=1523> (Accessed on 29/10/2012)]

In summary, there are many reasons for poverty that are beyond the scope of this study. Governments, NGOs, relief agencies and other development practitioners are all involved in addressing other (external) causes. Poverty in broad theological terms can be described as having a direct association with the power of sin, which has affected and distorted the total creation (*corruptio totalis*). It is precisely with regard to this, that the concept of poverty should be reflected on in its widest sense and that its consequence of *corruptio totalis* should be maintained. This represents the internal dimension of poverty that NGOs, relief agencies, etc. are seemingly not interested in or equipped to deal with. The church in this regard has a greater potential for holistic development, by addressing both the internal and external causes of poverty.

5.9 Conclusion

In this chapter theological perspective on poverty was considered as a way of experiencing true peace (Shalom) in our community and for the poor people to have hope and also for them to be delivered from bondage of poverty, things should not remain the way they are, because if we keep on doing things the same way, we would continue to get the same result. But if we are really interested in empowering the poor so as better their lives, things must be done differently, and for mission to be what it supposed to be, evangelism and development must go hand in hand, because advocating justice and ministering to the poor, sick, hungry, and oppressed, in itself, is a Good News. Finally, indeed God has the poor in mind and that is the reason why He sent His only begotten Son to this world and Christ Jesus became poor so that we (the poor people) might be rich (II Corinthians 8: 9). According to a common saying in Nigeria that goes thus ‘peace is not the absence of war but the presence of justice’, truly the poor must be empowered if we want to experience lasting peace in the world. From here I hereby turn to the next chapter which is planning for mission and this will further deal with the steps of pastoral planning in the cycle.

CHAPTER SIX

PASTORAL PLANNING: PLANNING FOR MISSION

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate some causes of poverty in Oluyole community Oyo state, Nigeria and the role that the Church should play in poverty eradication. The findings challenged the Church to play its prophetic role fully and also encouraged it to promote justice and equity. This concluding chapter encapsulates the main arguments by providing some concrete recommendations in an attempt to assist the finding of the path to the prosperous future that the rural poor people deserve.

Moreover, in this chapter I would like to discuss how we did our pastoral planning in the community, as it is an important step in the process of constructing mission praxis. I shall try to indicate how the strategic planning that we did and the changes we implemented in our community in preparation for a new phase of mission can be implemented in other communities.

6.2 Planning in the pastoral cycle

In the pastoral cycle, planning generally follows theological reflection (although it is important to note that there is no single strict order in the chronology of the various steps in the cycle). In theological reflection the church has discovered God's will for it in a particular community, and come to understand the dynamics and needs of that community and has discerned what God requires of it in that community. It is at that stage that the church decides on its mission and plans that mission strategically. The cycle as a whole includes strategic planning, action and evaluation. My next step will therefore be to discuss what happened in Oluyole community when we reached this stage of planning.

6.2.1 Decision-making

The church training programme group came to the decision that its ministry in this community was to proclaim the Good News to the people of Oluyole community. The gospel needed to be preached in such a way that the people could see that in their fight for survival and against poverty they are not alone, that Christ is with them. The mission of the church was to reveal the Christ who is present in the community, so that they could come to him and work with him for the salvation of all. Another important decision was that all the people should participate in the ministry of the church and they should play their part very well; it was agreed that space should be created for all people to take part in the church's ministry and to use their gifts wherever they see the need for them.

Also it was agreed due to the poverty level of the community that it is necessary for the church to make its ministry to be holistic - this is what we call "integrated church mission". It had to take seriously both the spiritual and the physical needs of the people. The gospel in this community must be preached both in words and in deeds, and both are as a matter of urgency. It was also agreed, however, that as much as possible charity should be discouraged, because it does not liberate the people - on the contrary, it enslaves both the giver and the recipient. It does so by keeping the recipient dependent on the giver instead of fostering self-reliance. We agreed that the people should be trained how to catch fish but not to be given fish always. This became our focus in the practical ministry, which is putting your biblical knowledge and theology into practice. We are committed to moving the ministry of the church from service to empowering the local people to stand on their feet instead of depending on the services of the church.

6.2.2 Strategic planning

Based on the decisions we had taken about what we wanted to be and do as a church in this community, we carried out our strategic planning. Strategic planning is not common in the church; it is often associated only with the business world. A few churches are doing it, but it has not been propagated as one of the crucial elements in the church's ministry. The essence of this

strategic planning is that it helps us in setting goals and evaluating the ministry as often as necessary. We did this strategic planning in order to provide a focus for our ministry as a church in our community and also to see where we are going and equally important to evaluate the effectiveness of our ministry as the years go by. What I discovered from my field work was that strategic planning works better if we understand the problem on the ground very well, then we go back to our drawing board to design appropriate methods of solving the problem. After this the methods designed must be delivered to the people but we must note right from the outset that the methods designed are sustainable.

6.2.3 Formulation of mission statement

Our next step was to decide on our mission statement. Looking at our decisions on what we wanted to be in this community, we formulated our own mission statement as ‘the gospel must be preached to the people in words and deeds’, that is taking Christ to the community through serving. If Christ must be preached in words and deeds it means that the church has a long way to go in ensuring that whatever they do after preaching the gospel of salvation to these poor people must be the one through which they would have income generating support. For us, taking Christ to the people meant carrying on the mission of God in that community. Christ is the gospel; He is the only good news to the people. For us this is the proclamation part of mission. Taking Him to the community is an emphatic way of stating our “first leg of mission”, which is to preach the Christ whom we believed to be already present in that community.

The next step to be taken in the process following the pastoral cycle, must be pastoral planning.

6.3 Theological reflection

6.3.1 The Community, the poor

In order to facilitate theological reflection in Oluyole community, it is necessary to keep in mind that this is basically a poor community (as I have shown earlier in the thesis). Our aim in preaching the gospel is to create a new community, which is a community of believers or a community of faith or disciples living with a new hope. This then becomes the “second leg of mission”, the creation of a Christian community. Our task in this mission statement was therefore to proclaim the gospel to a community of citizens in such a way that it becomes a community of believers. This is an important task, because Christ commanded it when he said ‘Go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit’ (Matthew 28:16-20).

6.3.2 Service as community development among the poor: people-centred development

The other important point in the mission statement was the service by which we would carry on our ministry. Our theological reflection led us to conclude that we are not just going to preach the gospel, and leave the people the same way we met them; the commitment was that we would serve the people in order to promote improvement. We would listen to their needs and look for a way of addressing them as we minister to them. This would be done in order that the gospel might not be just a sleeping pill for hungry people but a source of hope and a satisfaction of their hunger. Under service we would add the proclamation of the gospel by words but we would also proclaim it by works of grace, by which I mean projects and programmes that seek to address people’s needs. This aspect of proclamation is what I called “the third leg of mission”. As already stated, this service to the people was designed not to keep them dependent on the church but to empower them to be independent.

6.3.3 Conscientising the community to take the initiative

If the community were to become independent, they needed to take the initiative themselves in order to improve their lives. The church training programme group as an agent of transformation had a good understanding of the church. It is seen as a body with the ability to conscientise the people in order to take the initiative in solving their own problems by themselves. This is a very important thing for our church to do because of the location in which it found itself. The Bible is the revolutionary book that can be used to conscientise the people in order to believe in themselves and change their situation. We thought that we would need the message of the gospel to call on people to stand up for themselves. This was done by means of the preaching in our house to house evangelism, and also by the messages that came from our pulpits. From time to time we agreed that messages should be preached showing Jesus Christ as a friend of the poor, the lowly and the outcasts of the society. This was done so that the congregation could see Christ identifying with them in their poverty, and could see him challenging them to stand up for themselves. The aim of this type of message is to encourage people to take the initiative, and to assure them that Christ is with them. This is the opposite of leaving them in their state of poverty and giving them the messages that would make them accept their condition. Contrary to that we gave them messages that challenge their poverty, so that their lives would be changed for better.

6.3.4 Evangelism and caring (formation of community)

The vision held by the group was to do evangelism that would be holistic and empowering to the poor people of Oluyole community. The aim is to invite them to Christ, and in that process we would help meet their immediate needs (charity) while also helping them to help themselves through our projects, such as provision of vocational training. That is how we understand evangelism. It is a call to life, a call to the healing of all problems through Christ; not just a call to follow our local Baptist church but to follow the Christ who gives life and He gives it abundantly (John 10:10).

6.4 Insertion: the minister as a catalyst

The minister's role is of specific importance in a context where mission is necessary. The minister must assume this role as a facilitator so that he can be of assistance to the poor in order to develop themselves and transform their situation.

Any minister who is in a community of the poor must have a passion for holistic mission. This is imperative because of the needs of the people that the minister will constantly be dealing with while working in the community. The minister will need to develop an interest in the healing ministries of Jesus Christ, such as feeding the hungry with both material and spiritual bread. The minister will need to read books on mission and development. Even though the church is the people of God, and the people are the doers of mission, the truth is that the minister is still very important in a congregation. The minister must also be aware that he needs to learn a lot from the congregation and from the community of the poor themselves. The poor people are the ones who know what type of minister they need. The minister also needs to contact other people who are involved in the community, such as development officers and social workers, to find out what is being done and what is expected of the church. I understand the minister's catalytic role to mean the facilitation of transforming ministry in a community. A facilitator, especially in a church context, can be defined in the words of Gerald West (1993:24): a facilitator is one who helps the progress and empowerment of others, who makes it easier for others to act, to contribute and to acquire skill. The minister has the task of facilitating a holistic ministry to his congregation. He needs to use a method of ministry that encourages as many people as possible to participate in the church. Being a facilitator means learning to be an enabler, not a dominator- a constant temptation in the ministry. There is a need to allow the growth of mutual respect and trust between minister and congregation. This will in turn foster self-confidence, responsibility and accountability. These should be the underlying principles for a minister to follow as he prepares for ministry.

6.5 The pastoral cycle: an adequate theological tool for transformation?

There is need to learn about the community. The pastoral cycle provides the guidelines and steps that a minister can use to understand the community, especially the first three steps: insertion, social analysis and theological reflection. Ministers should go through the pastoral cycle on their own in trying to understand their context. Pastoral visitation affords an opportunity to listen to the stories of the people, which in turn supply more information enabling him to understand the dynamics of the community.

6.6 Evaluation and concluding remarks

Constant evaluation of the work is very important in such a context. It is absolutely essential for monitoring the progress of the project (vocational training). Evaluation is also a good thing because it offers an opportunity of growth to those involved. They will learn new lessons and implement them, and this allows further reflection; and so the cycle continues.

The Bible considers poverty as being evil, especially when it subjects its victims to disrespectful treatment. Poverty is also considered as a violation of human rights. The responsibility of theologians and Christians (the church) in general is to promote a fair and just society in which the poor will be empowered in such a manner that they can contribute to the development of their community.

From a theological perspective, it was shown that the law in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 15: 11) was intended to protect the disadvantaged. Poverty as discussed in this chapter was found to be humankind's creation. It is based on the exploitation of the powerless and the establishment of structures that benefit the rich, owing to the fact that people have forgotten God's laws. Moral virtues, social justice and solidarity constitute a common ground for a life of dependence on one another. This contributes greatly to care and concern for each person's problem. For the eradication of poverty and the advancement of economic justice, an effort ought to be made regarding social commitment and respect for the common good.

It was also argued that the widespread nature of poverty in Nigeria is a consequence of the collapse of values among the rich; many of them are doing money laundering and some other evil practices which make the poor to be poorer. The Church should not be indifferent to hearing the cry of suffering people when it has the opportunity to do so.

6.7 Recommendations

I wish to conclude with a few practical recommendations based on the results of my study.

6.7.1 The Church

- For the mission of the church in communities of the poor to lead towards transformational development the church can make loans available to the poor people through which they can start their own small businesses.
- The church should adopt a positive attitude towards poverty and the poor by establishing a welfare unit through which the basic needs, especially food and clothing of the poor people, will be catered for.
- Since Christian mission and economic development go hand in hand, the church should consider the physical well-being of the poor very well, not their spiritual well-being alone.
- Since education will assist the Christian missionary organizations to overcome some likely challenges they might be facing in the process of empowering the poor, therefore, the church should endeavour to establish more schools for rural people's children and adult education programme for the older generation.
- The Christians' missionary organisations should adopt vocational training as one of their strategies for poverty alleviation amongst the rural poor.
- The church leaders should encourage the formation of "social groups" also known as "help groups" through which members will be able to contribute positively to each other's life.

- The church should try as much as possible to be the mouth piece for the rural poor people for them to be liberated through which the church would be fulfilling her responsibilities towards the poor.
- The church leaders should complement the effort of the government wherever possible in order to better the lot of their members.
- The church can enhance its missionary activities among the rural poor people by organising an orientation programme through which the poor rural people would have a better understanding of their condition.
- The church leadership should always tell the government officials the truth without fear or favour when it comes to the matter of the poor, with this the church will make herself relevant in this generation.
- The Church in Nigeria should collaborate with other mission organizations in the area of poverty eradication.
- The Church should develop the capacity to conduct independent surveys of service delivery, corruption and mismanagement and also to track surveys in connection with public expenditure to make sure that such expenditure benefits the poor people.
- The Church should embark on particular projects for eradicating poverty and target the most urgently needed locations for its implementation. This could entail projects such as agriculture, micro-credit loans and a wide variety of entrepreneurial projects.
- Since the eradication of poverty is one of the priorities of the government, the Church should monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy and make sure that poor people benefit from the funds allocated to this programme.

6.7.2 The Government

- Since a larger percentage of the total respondents said government is the one responsible for poverty in Nigeria therefore, government officials should wake up from their sleep and play their leadership role with all honesty
- As part of a programme to eradicate poverty, the government of Nigeria should develop programmes that deal with the welfare of people, such as housing, transportation, food and cheaper quality clothes.
- The government of Nigeria should make sure that its poverty reduction strategy is implemented and bears fruit; reports on any improvement regarding the situation of poverty in the country should be made available and published in the media to ensure transparency.
- The government of the Nigeria should provide the necessary means for the functioning of institutions such as Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices and related Commission (ICPC) in order to fight corruption in the land, because multiplying effect of corruption is poverty.
- Government officials should be patriotic and seek first of all the interests of the Nigerians rather than their own selfish interest.
- The government officials should set an example of transparency; assets declarations should be their priority as soon as they get to power.
- The government of Nigeria should make sure that every citizen benefit in one way or the other from the multiple wealth we have in the country.

6.8 A final word

According to Femi Ajibade (2013: lecture note), “in any economy where human development index is low, the strength of the oppressors will always be in the sustenance of the level of the people’s ignorance. In Nigeria today, our indices for measuring success at home, in the business arena, social circle as well as in the political sphere are very weak. An upwardly inclined and progressive society must focus on building on a culture of service with sacrifice, accountability, entrepreneurship and true patriotism”.

Equally important, the statistical information from the Nigerian Baptist Convention daily encounter booklet (May 2, 2013), says the church in Nigeria is populated by well over 87 million Christians from 520 different ethnic tribes who attend more than 5,000 different denominations and more than half of these people are rural poor people.

The above information shows that poverty is a serious concern for the present and future of both the Church and society in Nigeria. Commitment to poverty eradication is more than just a policy action. There has to be a simultaneous change in the thinking of leaders in both Church and the government of Nigeria about poverty. The researcher is convinced that without a resurrection of moral responsibility and a reaffirmation of fundamental moral and ethical values, any programme for economic growth, eradication of poverty and fight against corruption will be ineffective.

The rural people of the Nigeria do not deserve the poverty that has been imposed on them. The numerous resources available in the country and good leadership should be enough for the country to flourish.

The Church in Nigeria should wake up from its deep sleep and play the prophetic role expected from it, guiding people in the light and warning leaders who tend to oppress people through allowing suffering of all kinds.

WE SHOULD ALL BE THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE IN NIGERIA.

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APPENDIX A

Letter requesting permission to conduct the research

401 Fountain View,
71 Willow Road,
Muckleneuk, Pretoria 0002,
South Africa.

4th March 2013

The Chairman,
Oluyole Local Government Area,
Idi-Ayunre, Ibadan.

Dear Sir,

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY

This letter serves to request permission to conduct a study entitled: **CONSTRUCTING MISSION PRAXIS FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIO- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AMONGST THE RURAL PEOPLE OF OLUYOLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (OYO STATE), NIGERIA.**

I hereby formally request permission to carry out the above study in Oluyole local government area for the Doctoral degree in Theology in the subject of Missiology at the University of South Africa. The purpose of this study is to find out how the Christian churches can contribute their own quota towards the development of Oluyole local government rural community. This will involve the use of questionnaire.

This study is quite significant because the findings will not only be used for academic qualification but can also be used to develop interventions to improve or strengthen the role Christian churches play not only in Oluyole local government but also in the entire country- Nigeria.

Yours faithfully,

Akinyemi O. Alawode.

APPENDIX B

Letter granting permission to conduct the research study from ministry of Local Government and chieftaincy matters, Oyo state secretariat, Ibadan.



TELEGRAM

TELEPHONE: IBADAN.....

MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND CHIEFTAINCY MATTERS, P.M.B. 5043, SECRETARIAT



IBADAN, OYO STATE OF NIGERIA

Your Ref. No.
Further Communication should be
addressed to the Honorable
Commissioner Quoting:

Our Ref. No. **E.1077/T/103**.....

27th
Date **March, 2013**.....

The Care-Taker Chairman,
Oluyole Local Government,
Idi-Ayunre,
Ibadan.

Re-Request For Permission To Conduct A Research Study

I have the directive to refer to the above subject and to request you to render necessary assistance to Akinyemi.O. Alawode a PH.D student at University of South Africa to conduct his research work on: Constructing Mission Praxis For Sustainable Socio-Economic Development Amongst Rural People of Oluyole Local Government, Oyo State.

2. Regards.


T.A.Ajibola
for: Honourable Commissioner

APPENDIX C

**Letter granting permission to conduct the research study from
Oluyole local government authority, Idi Ayunre, Ibadan.**

OLUYOLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

All Communication should be addressed
to the Chairman quoting

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICE:
Idi-Ayunre Ibadan.



Postal Address:
P.M.B. 01
Mapo Post Office
Ibadan

Our Ref.NO: OLG/42T/2.....

Your Ref.....

Date..... 2nd April, 2013.....

Rev. Akinyemi O. Alawode,
Department of Christian Spirituality,
Church History & Missiology,
University of South Africa,
Pretoria,
0003, South Africa.

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY

I have directives to refer to a letter from the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Matters No: E1077/T/103 of 27th March 2013 on the above subject matter which was at your instance and inform you that the Management of this Local Government has granted you permission to conduct your Ph.D. research work titled: **Constructing Mission Praxis for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development Amongst Rural People of Oluyole Local Government, Oyo State** in the Local Government area.

2. I wish you all the best.


*Jola Oladiran
Deputy Director,
Administration & General Services
For: Chairman
Oluyole Local Government,
Idi-Ayunre.

APPENDIX D
QUESTIONNAIRE

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA, P.O.BOX 392, MUCKLENEUK CAMPUS,
PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA, COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES.
DEPARTMENT OF MISSIOLOGY, CHURCH HISTORY AND CHRISTIAN
SPIRITUALITY.**

Introduction.

This questionnaire is designed to elicit information on the topic”Constructing Mission Praxis for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development amongst the Rural Poor of Oluyole local government, (Oyo state), Nigeria.” The researcher is a Doctoral student of the above named institution and department.

Please respond to all these questions as honest as possible and all responses shall be treated confidentially.

Instruction: Tick [X] as appropriate.

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Your Age: 15-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60+
3. Marital Status: Single Married Separated Divorced Widowed
4. Educational Qualification:
 - a). No formal education
 - b). Basic/Primary school
 - c). Matric/WAEC
 - (d). Diploma
 - (e).B.Tech/Honours
5. Employment status. (a) Government employee (b) Private company employee (c) Self-employed (d) Unemployed
6. If there is a provision of vocational training programmes through which you can acquire new skill(s), will you attend? Yes No

7. Do you belong to any social group in your community, like Corporative society, etc?

Yes No

8. In your own view, do you think the church is fulfilling her responsibilities towards the poor?

Yes No

9. What do you think is the best way of empowering the rural poor? Tick as many as applicable:

(a) Give them food (b) Provide shelter for them (c) Give them clothes (d) Give them loan (e) Give them entrepreneurial training through which they can earn income

10. Why do you think people are poor?

(a) It has been ordained by God (b) because they are lazy (c) Government's fault
(d) Church's fault (e) Lack of foreign aid

11. How do you view poverty in Federal Republic of Nigeria?

Widespread Worse in some areas Linked to social and class position

12. What institution in Nigeria is responsible for poverty?

Government Church Individual

13. Does the Church in the Federal Republic of Nigeria play her role in poverty alleviation?

Yes No