

**The Yoruba Culture's Influence on the Redeemed Christian Church of God
Intercultural Missions in North-Central Nigeria**

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Studies, Faculty of Arts, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria**

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Certification

This is to certify that Ayotunde William OKELANA, with matric Number LCU/PG/001994 carried out this research work titled “The Yoruba Culture as a Connect and Disconnect to the Redeemed Christian Church of God Intercultural Missions in North-Central Nigeria” in the Department of Religious and Intercultural Studies, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, for the award of Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD.) in Intercultural Studies and Administration; and that this work has not been previously submitted.

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Dedication

This research work is dedicated to the blood of men who birth our intercultural fields in the North of Nigeria.

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Abstract

Culture plays a significant role in shaping religious beliefs. It influences peoples' beliefs, practices, values, cosmology and how they embrace religious experiences. Many researches have been carried out on the cultural influences and colouration of religions by the cultures of the society where they originated from. These include the impact of Judaism and western culture on Christianity in Nigeria, Arabic culture on Islamic Religion and Yoruba cultural influence on traditional worshippers across the world. However, the influence of Yoruba as a predominating culture within the Redeemed Christian Church (RCCG) birthed in Yoruba land has not received adequate attention. Hence, the examination of the impact of the Yoruba culture on the growth of (RCCG) missions in North-Central Nigeria is the aim of this dissertation. The qualitative research method is adopted for its explorative process engaging descriptive techniques. The theoretical framework centres on Hofstede's cultural dimension, which describes the non-superiority of any culture, identifying repressed cultures and giving them a voice, with the fact that every culture has something to celebrate and that communication is the key to balanced intercultural relations. Three hundred and ten (310) volunteers (members and ministers) were sampled, 280 responded to the Questionnaire while the key informant interview participants were 30. Data collected were analysed along ethnographic lines. Findings indicate that: the initial argument of Yoruba predominance in the RCCG mission is factual; the Yoruba culture has a positive influence on North-Central intercultural missions, but if best practices to promoting humane cultural values are repressed on mission fields there shall be power shift, except cultural balancing principles are implemented. Conclusively, in spite of the fact that culture is transferable, cultural balancing should be sensitively integrated into missionary propagation of the RCCG. Therefore, it is recommended that elements of Intercultural Balancing such as equity, mutual respect, adaptation, acculturation and identity should be deployed in RCCG intercultural missions in North-Central Nigeria since there are no 'inferior cultures'.

Keywords: Intercultural Mission, Yoruba culture, The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Intercultural balancing, Power shift

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Culture has several aspects which make a unify definition of culture seems difficult for scholars across different field of studies. One of the reasons is that culture is not an isolated word. The root word of culture connects to several words related to growth and development. For instance, the word culture originates from the Latin word *Colere*, meaning to tend to the earth, growth, cultivate, or nurture. But there is popular definition and concept that culture is a way of life, and how people comport themselves. Culture gives people identity and influences their behaviours. Culture is the way of being and refers to the shared languages, beliefs, values, norms, behaviours, and material objects that are passed down from one generation to another¹.

Culture in common parlance is a concept grossly expressed as a singularity which describes a people or a people group². This include the way they make decisions, shape and run their day-to-day living activities in respect to their world view which in-turn influences their personal and collective consciousness^{3, 4, 5}. This is consciously expressed in Durkheim “The Division of Labour”, where he contended that totemic religion was crucial in totemic societies⁶. By this, referring to those clans, families, or tribal ties brought together by a fostered shared consciousness, or ‘conscience collective’ in the original French. In these kinds of civilisation, a person's awareness is essentially shared by all other members of the society, resulting in a mechanical solidarity through mutual similarity⁷. Hence, this emphasises that a society's average members' collective thoughts and feelings naturally and intuitively combine to create a definite system that has its own identity. From this ideology, culture can be referred to, as the common or group awareness⁸.

A lot of authors from Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 BC – 46 BC) to Edward Tylor (1832 – 1917), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 – 1900) and by Max Weber (1864 – 1921), or Franz Boas (1854 – 1942) have discussed and defined culture from their perspectives and cultural understanding^{9, 10, 11, 12, 13}. Distilling from all of these scholars, culture could be seen as an epitome of the reality of creativity of man derived from the likeness of God to create. The ancient Roman orator Cicero in his *Tusculanae Disputationes*, has been tagged with the creation of the modern term “culture” where he described the "*cultura animi*"¹⁴. By this writing, Cicero used an agricultural metaphor for the development of a philosophical soul, which is understood in the teleological thought as the highest possible ideal for human development¹⁵. Thus, he created a focus on the purpose of the soul which he perceived should be philosophical in so many aspects including morality, ethics, rationality and logical reasoning. This school of thought has shaped most of definitions on culture examined in this work which are both subjective, and objective inferring from the theory of cultural relativism by Franz^{16,17} as well as Jean Jordan's Relational-Cultural Theory¹⁸.

This understanding of cultural relativism and relational cultural theory seem to be less understood and narrowly practiced by the Church, though not in principle or policy, but in practice. Some cultures seem to be favoured by some at the detriment of others. Yet, it is thought-provoking to note that even the Bible reads in consonance to the principle of cultural relativism when it emphasises that there should be no difference between the Greek and the Jew; or the Jew and Gentiles¹⁹. On the contrary, ancient readings from Herodotus made an anecdote on Darius the Great, who illustrated how the world runs when it comes to the idea of cultural relativism. This was at the instance he referred to the funeral traditions of two people groups, one to his east and the other to his west. The Callatiae (an ancient Indian tribe) live at the far east of his realm and the Greeks on his far west²⁰. These two were usually horrified and disgusted by the culture of the other tribes' customs of burial, since both of

these engaged in funerary cannibalism and cremation, respectively²¹. This is the way of world. Herodotus in his view further explains that any individual, regardless of nationality, would unavoidably select their own country's views after carefully weighing their relative qualities if given the option to select from among all the nations in the world. Everyone, without exception, considers their upbringing's religion and native customs to be the best. Hence, it is improbable that anyone other than a lunatic would make fun of them. There is a lot of evidence to suggest that this is how people generally feel about their nation's traditional practices²². Unfortunately, this is also the state of the church when it comes to cultural affinity, cultural differentiation and the missionary enterprise in Nigeria.

Yet all of these cannot be divorced from latter history of western ethnocentrism which was one of prominent reasons of schismatic denominationalism in Nigeria²³. The western missionaries began to act superior in thought, arts, lifestyle, language and theology. By this, they considered the African Christians to be inferior to their colour, culture and custom. This was what led Bishop Ajayi Crowther to leave the Christian Missionary Society that ordained him²⁴. Andrew Barnes recalled that numerous Africans were drawn to the Anglican Church by the allure of Crowther's educational policy for Africa²⁵. By the time of his death, however, Europeans were increasingly criticising Crowther's schools for forcing Africans to compete too much with Europeans²⁶. It is unfortunate that Africans do not often learn from history, and sadly, the human mind is quick to forget. This is the derivation of the notion of this investigation of the Yoruba culture's influence on the RCCG intercultural missions in North-Central Nigeria.

The malaise of ethnocentrism cannot be overemphasised in the advancement of intercultural missions globally. This was a part of the trigger against Western ethnocentrism when Franz Boas propounded the theory of cultural relativism emphasising that all cultural values and beliefs should be understood in the context of their own culture and not be evaluated in

accordance with external norms and standards. By implication, this holds that there is no universal yardstick by which to measure the civilisations of any people²⁷. Ethnocentrism can manifest itself in overt ways, which could include a sudden conviction that the arts, values, and beliefs of one's own people are the most exquisite, morally superior, and authentic. This research underscores the position of the Yoruba culture has been ethnocentric and overarching over the activities of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in her business of reaching the unreached people groups (UPGs) in the north-central region of Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Culture plays a significant role in shaping religious beliefs. It influences peoples' belief, practice, values, cosmology and how they embrace religious experiences. Many researches have been carried out on the cultural influences and colouration of various religions by the cultures of the society where they originated from. These include the impact of Judaism and western culture on Christianity in Nigeria, Arabic culture on Islamic Religion and Yoruba cultural influence on Sango worshippers across the world. However, the influence of Yoruba as a predominating culture within the Redeemed Christian Church (RCCG) birthed in Yoruba land has not received adequate attention. The examination of the impact of the Yoruba culture on the growth of (RCCG) missions in North-Central Nigeria is the aim of this dissertation.

Subjective culture and cultural practices that are not intercultural-inclusive have been the problem of connection which the Redeemed Christian Church of God has been experiencing over the years since she exploded as a mega and global Christian denomination. The impact of the Yoruba culture on the RCCG cannot be overemphasised in the philosophy and practice of giving, hospitality values, the philosophy of respect, and the ethical consideration of honour. But within the space of intercultural missions in Nigeria, and with a spotlight on the missionary enterprise; the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) with her claims of

multiculturalism is grossly measuring below cultural-connecting standards when it comes to where and how she promotes the Yoruba culture. For the fact that the founder was of the Yoruba descent is not a barrier; but many observers have frequently laid verbal complaint that the Yoruba culture predominates and preoccupies the middle leadership attitude and the denominational worship space of the RCCG. By this they show no regard to the ideals of the hosting community, or their culture, especially in the north-central of Nigeria where a missionary still wears 3-piece suit. Hardly could a RCCG pastor in northern Nigeria put on the traditional wears such as iro, buba, agbada, sokoto, etc. for worship. The field missionaries in this geopolitical zone have severally been accused of not practicing any form of acculturation and there had been scholastic criticism in this regard. This is the reason there continues to be a massive disconnects between the intercultural mission-base stakeholders of the RCCG and the target people groups. On several occasions, a large number of souls that have been won through 'Crusades' and countless outdoor outreaches have left the church because of this attitude; while those who are not leaving are not at home with the cultural impositions. Oftentimes in Niger State or Benue, you begin to hear "*È bá mi rá bàbà f'Ọba ògo*"; or, "*Èru Rẹ n bà mí, Ọba t'ó fidi ayé sọ lẹ*" (Yoruba worship songs) are what you hear during praises and worship sessions, or even during the preaching services. This has made the people of the land to see the Redeemed Christian of God as a Yoruba church, and in their description of the denomination they say: "The Yoruba People's Church". This is a clog in the wheel of progress of the RCCG, if her intercultural mission to the north central of Nigeria would be efficacious. Millions of Naira has been expended in the Northern part of Nigeria by the primacy of the leadership of the Church. 1996 for example witnessed the huge amount of money the mother-in-Israel expended on the people groups in Koma Hill's people; and same goes for several other missional efforts in Abuja, Jos, Niger, Nasarawa and other parts.

However like the description of the biblical ostrich described by Job, she lays her egg and wastes them all by herself²⁸.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the effect of the Yoruba culture on the intercultural missionary effort of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in the North-Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria in relation to the vision and mission statement of the denomination. In order to achieve this aim, a set of four (4) objectives has been set. They are:

- i. Evaluating opinions of RCCG non-Yoruba members and leaders as regards the influence of Yoruba culture in relation to the church's intercultural missions in North-Central Nigeria.
- ii. Examines the different dimensions the Yoruba culture has been a disconnect to RCCG intercultural missions in North-Central Nigeria.
- iii. Assess the Yoruba cultural values in the propagation of RCCG intercultural mission in North-Central Nigeria in understanding the complex interplay that exists between cultural values and religiosity in a multicultural society such as Nigeria
- iv. Proffering an intercultural balancing model for positive cultural interaction to enhance RCCG missions in North-Central Nigeria.

1.3 Research Questions

- i. Evaluating opinions of RCCG non-Yoruba members and leaders in North-Central Nigeria as regards the Yoruba culture in relation to the church's intercultural missions in the region.
- ii. In what dimensions has the Yoruba culture posing discontentment to the intercultural mission of RCCG in North-Central Nigeria?

- iii. Does Yoruba culture have any positive impact on other cultures of the North-Central Nigeria?
- iv. What methods can the RCCG adopt to blend the Yoruba culture with other cultures of the North-Central Nigeria for the purpose of boosting the effort of her intercultural missions in the location?

1.4 Significant of the Study

This study helps the authority of the Redeem Christian Church of God to appropriate the influence of the Yoruba culture on the intercultural missionary efforts of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in North-Central Nigeria.

This will be a template to all Christian denominations who are involved in intercultural missions in pluralistic societies because the study enhances the understanding of the complex interplay that exists between cultural values and religiosity in a multicultural society such as Nigeria. A lot of the times, the concept of church is used to downplay the cultural realities of people groups, in which at the end of the day, this people would either turn around to start another church of their own culture, or a church that would respect their own culture.

This study contributes to the ability to foster cross-cultural understanding, address intercultural challenges, and promote peaceful coexistence among diverse communities of variant cultures within the Nigerian geopolitical entity.

This study stands out of the shelf as one that has hardly been conducted, or documented by any scholar of the Intercultural Studies genre focusing the dual impact of the positive and negative influences of the Yoruba culture on the intercultural missionary effort; especially of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in North-Central Nigeria; and how this has enhanced or delimit the growth and development of the intercultural mission of RCCG.

Scope of the Study

North Central Zone is made up of six States (Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau) and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. While the states have 114 Local Government Areas with a total population of over 20 million, the FCT has 6 council areas with a population of about 1.41 million²⁹. This geopolitical zone of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is the scope of this study, but the Federal Capital Territory focal State. There are numerous ethnic groups in this region, hence different cultural representation are expressed within the landscape.

In Benue, the Tiv, Idoma, Iggede, Etulo, Ufia Orring, Abakpa, Jukun, Igbo, Akweya, and Nyifon are among the various ethnic groups in the jurisdiction. Together with the Etulo and Jukun, the Tiv occupy 14 local government areas, while the Idoma, Orring, Iggede, Igbo, Akweya, and Nyifon occupy nine³⁰. Kogi is home to the Igala, Ebira, and Okun (similar to Yoruba) ethnic groups and languages, with additional minorities including Bassa, a tiny Nupe population primarily in Lokoja, Gwari, Kakanda, Oworo people (similar to Yoruba), ogori magongo, and the Eggan community within Lokoja Local Government³¹. In Kwara State, the Yoruba, Nupe, Fulani, and Baruba are the main ethnic groupings, even though some are of the opinion it is a Yoruba State principally^{32, 33}. There are 25 distinct ethnic groups in Nasarawa State³⁴. Miligi (Koro), Alago, Mada, Gwandara, Kanuri, Hausa, Fulani, Gbagyi, Rindre, Buh, Afo, Eggon, and Ebira are the principal sociological people groups within the State³⁵. In Niger State, there are more than only the three main ethnic groups of Nupe, Gbagyi, and Hausa. These groups are Kadara, Koro, Baraba, Kakanda, Ganagana, Dibo, Kambari, Kamuku, Pangu, Dukkawa, Gwada, and Ingwai³⁶. Over forty ethno-linguistic groups are found in Plateau state. The Berom, Afizere, Amo, Anaguta, Aten, Bogghom, Buji, Challa, Chip, Fier, Gashish, Goemai, Irigwe, Jarawa, Jukun, Kofyar (which includes Doemak, Kwalla, and Mernyang), Montol, Mushere, Mupun, Mwaghavul, Ngas, Piapung, Pyem, Ron-

Kulere, Bache, Talet, Taroh (Tarok), Youm, and Fulani/Kanuri in Wase are a few of the state's indigenous tribes³⁷.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

Christian Missions across cultures is one of the history and heritage pillars of the Church right from her birth over 2000 years ago and the church is still marching on; although she has been stopped and limited at several times by intercultural interferences, conflicts and barriers of leadership, language, customs and geopolitical norms across borders and within her own boundaries. As much as this research is concerned, it is limited to the examination of the Yoruba culture as connect or disconnect to the intercultural missionary enterprise of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in the North-Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

1.6 Definitions of Operational Terms

- i. **Altar minister:** These are leaders at the grassroots who are expected to implement the policies of the Church at that level and assist the Pastor-in-charge of Parish as a well as identify with at least one functional department in the Church. Such individuals whether male or female are expected to minister to the congregation alongside the pastor-in-charge of parish.
- ii. **Area:** An Area in the RCCG is the combination of a group of parishes not less than less (2) and a maximum of eight (8). This is usually under the leadership of a Pastor-in-charge of Area (PICA).
- iii. **Assistant Pastor:** An assistant pastor is a minister of the gospel of Jesus who has been ordained twice in the Redeemed Christian Church of God.
- iv. **Continent:** This is a group of countries where the RCCG is operating and led by a continental overseer who reports to the General Overseer directly.

- v. **Classical Church:** The Redeemed Church of God is such a dynamic whose spirit of accommodation has created a kind of two segments within the Church. The very first of the segment is the Classical Church. The classical are referred to as the older generation of the church who still hold on to the old tenets, e.g. the use of earrings, or perming of the hair, etc.
- vi. **Deacon (ness):** A deacon (male) or deaconess (female) in the RCCG is a minister of the gospel of Jesus who has got an initial ordination after being a worker for about 5 years in the mission.
- vii. **Foreign missions:** In the Redeemed Christian Church of God, foreign missions is referred to as the intercultural activities of the church in mission fields outside of the boundaries of Nigeria.
- viii. **General Overseer:** This is the office of head shepherd of Redeemed Christian Church of God globally. To this office every continental overseer, regional overseer, and other assistants to the leadership of the RCCG mission submits to this office in all things.
- ix. **Mission field:** In the RCCG, a mission field is a location where missionary activities are conducted whether this is within Nigeria, or outside of the country.
- x. **Mission:** in the course of this study, Mission could be referred to two different, but related concepts:
- a. This could be a referent to the Redeemed Christian Church of God organisation being called 'Mission', or, 'the Mission'. Ministers in the church refer to the RCCG thus because the whole set up is seen as a part of the mission of God that is given to the founder – Rev'd Josiah Akindayomi, which is passed down to the denomination through the General Overseer, and a mandate that must be fulfilled as a part of the global evangelisation.

- b. The word 'mission' in this study could also be a referent to a specific missionary intervention embarked upon by the church on a mission field in the form of social action, with evangelism embedded.
- xi. **Missions:** as discussed in this study, mission in the pluralised form implies divergent forms of missionary activities carried out on a given mission field combined with social welfare, or social action such as education, health, sports, agriculture, advocacy for women, or children on a human right bases, and so on.
- xii. **Missionary:** A missionary is a man or woman who has received a call to preach the gospel beyond sharing the message to reaching a people group (be it in the urban or the rural) and trained. Before a 'called minister' is called a missionary such must have undergone training in a mission school, college or university of Missions, and thus sent forth to represent the interest of the Lord Jesus Christ in a given location, be it within, or outside of country.
- xiii. **Nation:** A nation can infer three entities in this study:
 - a. As in geopolitics, it is a unit of persons which is also included in the philosophy of this study as a geographical entity, or a country of people living together in a marked jurisdiction as recognised by the United Nation, or such regional organisations as independent and sovereign States. This is the case of a part of a country seceding from the established country as found in East Timor leaving Indonesia, Eritrea leaving Ethiopia, Bangladesh leaving Pakistan, etc.
 - b. In Missiology, a nation goes by the description of the Greek word '*ethne*', or *ethnos* which speaks to a socio-cultural people group who are bound by same language and culture.

- c. In the RCCG parlance, a nation is a combination of parishes within a country.
It is usually led by a national pastor.
- xiv. **National Headquarters:** The RCCG national headquarter in any country is expected to be the coordinating office for all RCCG activities in that country; and this reports to the Nigeria headquarters.
- xv. **Parish:** A parish of the Redeemed Christian Church of God is a church location where weekly services are held on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. These meetings days vary across regions of the world. The Parish is usually under the pastorate of a Pastor-in-charge of Parish (PICPa)
- xvi. **Pastor:** A pastor in the RCCG context can infer two offices:
- This could be the office of a pastor-in-charge of a parish, area, zone, Province, region, or continent; or
 - The office of a minister of in the RCCG who has been ordained three times under the pastoral leadership of the general overseer. This second office uses the title 'Pastor' as officially. He or she is also known as '**Full Pastor**'. No other pastor-in-charge of parish uses this title officially except certified a Pastor by the authority of the RCCG (ordination as a pastor is done by presenting a certificate and ID card aside the oil to anoint.
- xvii. **Assistant Pastor:** An assistant pastor, or 'AP' as fondly used, is a minister of the RCCG who has been **ordained twice**, and certified to support the 'full pastor' in certain capacity as described in the AP certificate.
- xviii. **Pastor-in-Charge of Area:** This minister could be a deacon, or deaconess as the case may be. In some other instances an Assistant Pastor or a Full Pastor could be a pastor-in-charge of Area. He is expected to administer the work of the Lord through the RCCG in an Area.

- xix. **Pastor-in-charge of Parish:** This individual is expected to be an ordained minister in the RCCG who has been assigned to oversee spiritual, financial, and physical administration of a parish. He or she could be a deacon, deaconess, Assistant Pastor, or Full Pastor.
- xx. **Pastor-in-charge of Province:** Mostly, this individual is a full pastor of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. He directs the affairs of the RCCG in that Province which is usually a combination of a several zones.
- xxi. **Pastor-in-charge of Region:** No pastor in charge of a region would be less than a full pastor of several years in the RCCG. He is expected to be the administrator of the Region and reports to the General Overseer on the state-of-things within the Region.
- xxii. **Pastor-in-Charge of Zone:** This pastor as the case may be could be any of the ordained ministers of the RCCG. He or she is in charge of a Zone.
- xxiii. **People group:** An ethno-linguistic group with a common self-identity that is shared by the various members. For strategic purposes it is the largest group within which the Gospel can spread without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance
- xxiv. **Province:** A Province in the Redeemed Christian Church of God is a combination of several Zones, Areas, or Parishes not less than one hundred (100). It is led under the leadership of a Pastor-in-Charge of Province (PICP) and assisted by either one Assistant Pastor-in-Charge of Province (APICP), or two APICPs depending on the capacity of the Province in terms of population and financial ability.

- xxv. **Region:** A Region is a combination of Provinces in a country, and under the leadership of a Pastor-in-charge of Region (PICR). It is expected that this would be a minimum of ten (10) Provinces.
- xxvi. **Sister culture:** a sister culture as used in this study are identified Nigerian cultures that inhabit and co-habit with indigenous cultures of the North-Central Nigeria who are also represented in the RCCG.
- xxvii. **Unreached People Groups:** People groups with fewer than two per cent evangelical Christian representation and less than five per cent nominal Christian presence are sometimes referred to as unreached people groups (UPGs). Practically speaking, there are regions and people groups where little is known about Christ, and there isn't a church with sufficient resources to help spread the word about him among the general public without outside assistance.
- xxviii. **Zone:** A Zone in the RCCG is a combination of five (5) maximum, or two (2) minimum Areas. This group is coordinated by a Pastor-in-charge of Zone (PICZ)
- xxix. **Intercultural Communication:** Intercultural communication refers to the ability to effectively connect people verbally or nonverbally across different cultural contexts.
- xxx. **Pluralistic Society:** A diversified society where people accept and tolerate varying opinions, values, and beliefs is known as a pluralistic society. Different political parties and groupings can coexist and take an equal part in the political process in such a society.

End note

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Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

The conceptual review of this study focuses on the understanding of the researcher as regards the main concepts of culture, ethnocentrism, and religiosity. It integrates the assumed association between the variables and to solve research gaps identified by other literature reviews. As an inclusion, the experience of the investigator as well as experiments of some social scientists are also integrated in, covering new concepts that are proposed for future developments and criticisms that have not yet found a home in popular literature. Every idea presented herein is in coherence with the theoretical framing proposed for this study. This review generally articulates the variables under examination through written descriptions and a succinct presentation of a visual representation of the relative solution to the problem being researched known as 'Intercultural Balancing Model' (IBM).

The review examines the Perception of culture, the Attributes of culture, Learning and the transmission of culture, cultural adaptation and change, Dynamics of cultural adaptation, Cultural norms and behavioural patterns, Cultural impact on social structures, cultural impact on perception and cognition, Ethnocentrism, People groups and culture, Language and communication, Culture and the contextualisation of the Christian message, Cultural receptivity and resistance, Impact of mission on indigenous practices and beliefs, Community integration and long-term engagement, The concept of mission and missions, Evangelism and Missions, Studies on Christianity and culture, and the Theology of Missions.

2.1.1 The Perception of Culture

Culture has several meanings and implications to so many people across the globe from Lagos to Laos. In this light of this understanding, people within a given cultural enclave demonstrate numerous styles of living, due to the form and level of education, magnitude of travel experiences, quantity of infused religion, or depth of personal philosophies developed over time as the individual advances in age. A good example of this is the culture of the Recabites as described in the 35th chapter of Jeremiah¹. It is so interesting to note that the attention of the Prophet Jeremiah was drawn to this important sub-group of Israelis whose ancestral biological father technically introduced into a sub-culture into the already stringent existing culture of Israel. Interestingly, God who knows, and recognises diversity in the human culture identified this sub-community; and even asked His servant to go ahead and understudy them. This is an introduction to the reality that culture meant many things to many people in sundry places.

A cultural anthropologist for instance does not view culture as esoteric or residual². This is because culture is a social phenomenon that manifests itself quite clearly, even if the manifestations are not always easy to explain³. In fact, anthropologists do consider culture as being such an occurrence of immense essence and which should have its own field of study⁴. Hence, culture should not be seen or perceived as a single variable; but an exceptionally complex system, which should be analysed in terms of its constituents and their interactions⁵. Culture is not a particular material thing with an objective existence of its own. It is supported by actual events that we, as humans, interpret and evaluate in our own ways⁶. Therefore, this study is of the genre that perceives culture as being of subjective conceptualisations by various scholars and every user of the phenomenon.

The conceptualisation of the word culture can be discussed from a selection of sources. From the Latin word "*cultura*", culture is a derivative of the verb *colo* (infinitive *colere*), which can indicate a range of things as well, including "to tend," "to cultivate," and "to till"⁷. Then, inferring from the verb "to till" it may accept things like *ager*, relating to the word "*agricultura*," which literally means "field tilling"; if mission fields can be metaphorically transmitted as people, and which they are by Christ's own allusion in the Bible⁸. Character, or *animus*, is another possible object of the verb '*colo*'. By this the Jungian archetype theory may be reflecting in the ideology of the perception of culture and cultural relations. According to Jung, archetypes are ideas and pictures with a universal, cross-cultural meaning that inspire literature, art, dreams, and religion. According to Jung, symbols from many cultures are frequently strikingly similar because they derive from universal human archetypes that are a part of the collective unconscious. According to Jung, the foundation of the human soul, which governs and shapes present conduct, is our prehistoric past. Like masks, shadows, *animus* or *anima*, and the self, this symbol image lives beyond of time and space⁹. This statement would then be making an indication to the development of human character. Thus, culture which is a Latin word can be linked to learning and sophistication. From this point of view, the etymological interpretation of the word "culture" is mostly accepted. Yet, things are far more complicated in the discipline of anthropology than this acceptance¹⁰. Definitions of culture are copious and vary greatly in complexity. Kroeber and Parsons for instance gave a complicated one in which they expressed cultures as transmitted and created content and patterns of values, ideas, and other symbolic – meaningful systems as factors in the shaping of human behaviour¹¹. White defined culture as an extra-somatic, temporal continuum of things and events dependent upon symbolising, which is even less understandable¹². Additionally is Kluckhohn's 1951 definition which is frequently cited: The distinctive accomplishments of human groups are represented by their patterned ways of

thinking, feeling, and acting, which are primarily acquired and transmitted through symbols¹³. These ways of thinking, feeling, and acting are embodied in artefacts. Traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and their associated values make up the essential core of culture.

2.1.2 The Attributes of Culture

i. Shared Beliefs and Values

Shared beliefs and values create a framework for social norms, delineating acceptable behaviours within a cultural context. They dictate conduct in various aspects of life, including family dynamics, interpersonal relationships, work ethics, and moral codes. For instance, in collectivist cultures, where communal harmony is prioritized, values emphasizing cooperation, interdependence, and familial obligations significantly influence individual behaviour¹⁴. These shared ideologies profoundly impact decision-making processes. They influence choices regarding education, career paths, relationships, and ethical considerations. For example, cultures valuing individual autonomy and independence may encourage pursuing personal goals, whereas cultures emphasizing collective welfare might prioritize decisions benefiting the larger community¹⁵. Shared beliefs and values are transmitted and perpetuated through various socialization mechanisms, such as family, education, religious institutions, media, and societal norms. Individuals learn and internalize these cultural norms from an early age, shaping their worldviews and behaviours.¹⁶

ii. Intergenerational Continuity

Cultural continuity relies on the intergenerational transfer of values and beliefs. Parents and elders play a pivotal role in passing down cultural traditions, rituals, stories, and moral teachings to younger generations, ensuring the preservation of cultural identity over time.¹⁷

iii. Symbolic Systems and Meaning

Symbolic Systems and Meaning Culture relies heavily on symbolic systems, including language, rituals, art, and traditions, to convey meaning and communicate shared understandings. Language plays an integral role as the primary symbolic system within a culture, functioning as more than a mere communication tool. It serves as a conduit for the transmission and preservation of a society's rich cultural heritage, encompassing traditions, beliefs, and historical narratives.

iv. Conveyance of Complex Ideas and Emotions

Beyond its fundamental role in communication, language enables the expression of intricate concepts and emotions. It acts as a medium through which intricate philosophical ideas, abstract concepts, and deep emotions are conveyed. Through linguistic expression, individuals articulate their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings, reflecting the nuances and depth of cultural values and norms.

v. Preservation and Transmission of Cultural Heritage

Language serves as the custodian of cultural narratives, myths, folklore, and historical accounts. These oral and written traditions encapsulate a society's collective wisdom, passing down from one generation to another. By preserving and transmitting cultural knowledge through language, societies maintain continuity, allowing individuals to understand their roots, shape their identities, and comprehend the essence of their culture.

vi. Formation of Cultural Identities

The linguistic nuances within a culture contribute significantly to the formation of cultural identities. Dialects, idiomatic expressions, and specific linguistic structures embody the uniqueness of a community's worldview and collective experiences. Language, therefore,

becomes a powerful emblem of cultural distinctiveness, fostering a sense of belonging and unity among individuals within a particular cultural framework.

vii. Cultural Integration and Adaptation

Language acts as a tool for cultural integration and adaptation. As cultures interact and merge, languages evolve, incorporating new vocabulary, expressions, and idioms. This process of linguistic evolution reflects the adaptive nature of cultures, highlighting their ability to absorb and integrate external influences while retaining their core values and traditions.

viii. Rituals, Art, and Traditions

Beyond language, cultural symbolism manifests through rituals, art forms, and traditions. Rituals – formalized behaviours imbued with symbolic meaning – serve to mark important events such as births, weddings, and funerals, reinforcing social bonds and shared beliefs¹⁸. Art, whether visual, performing, or literary, reflects cultural aesthetics, values, and narratives, serving as a platform for expressing and perpetuating cultural identity¹⁹. Similarly, traditions – customary practices passed down through generations – act as symbolic markers of a community's values and heritage. Rituals, art, and traditions serve as profound expressions of cultural symbolism, carrying significant meaning and reflecting the essence of a society's values, beliefs, and identity. Rituals are formalised actions performed within a cultural context, often marking important life events or communal activities. These actions are imbued with symbolic significance, reinforcing social bonds and shared beliefs among participants. Rituals contribute to a sense of unity and belonging, fostering a collective identity within a community. They can range from religious ceremonies to everyday practices, all of which play a pivotal role in shaping cultural cohesion. Through rituals, individuals actively participate in preserving and perpetuating their cultural heritage, carrying forward traditions that bind generations together.

ix. Art: Reflection of Cultural Aesthetics and Identity

Art, in its various forms – be it visual arts, performing arts, or literary arts – serves as a reflection of cultural aesthetics and identity. It encapsulates the values, stories, and beliefs of a society, providing a platform for individuals to express and perpetuate their cultural identity. Artistic expressions often embody the essence of a culture, showcasing its history, mythology, social norms, and emotional experiences. They convey intricate narratives, symbolism, and beauty, becoming a repository of a community's collective consciousness and allowing for the transmission of cultural heritage across generations.

x. Traditions: Symbolic Markers of Cultural Values

Traditions, as customary practices passed down through generations, act as symbolic markers of a community's values and heritage. These practices, ranging from rituals to celebrations and everyday customs, serve as anchors to a society's past, embodying its core principles and beliefs. Maintaining and honouring traditions reinforces a sense of continuity and connection with ancestral knowledge and societal norms. Through the preservation and observance of traditions, communities affirm their cultural identity, ensuring the legacy of their values and customs persists through time.

xi. Fostered Sense of Belonging and Unity

Symbolic systems foster a sense of belonging and unity among members of a particular culture. They create a shared framework of meanings and references that individual within a society can relate to and identify with.²⁰ For instance, symbols such as national flags, religious emblems, or traditional attire serve as powerful identifiers, evoking a sense of pride, affiliation, and belonging among community members. Symbols such as national flags, religious emblems, cultural artefacts, or traditional attire serve as

potent identifiers within a community. These symbols carry deep cultural significance and act as visual representations of shared values, history, and beliefs. When individuals encounter these symbols, they evoke a sense of recognition and connection, fostering a collective identity and belongingness.

xii. Eliciting Pride and Affiliation

These symbolic identifiers often evoke feelings of pride and affiliation among community members. For example, the national flag represents a nation's history, values, and struggles, evoking patriotism and a shared sense of pride among its citizens. Similarly, religious symbols or traditional clothing signify adherence to specific beliefs or cultural practices, generating a sense of belonging and unity among adherents.

xiii. Reinforcement of Social Bonds

Symbolic systems reinforce social bonds by creating a sense of shared heritage and common identity. They serve as unifying elements that transcend individual differences, bringing together diverse groups within a culture. Shared symbols and rituals facilitate social cohesion by providing a sense of belonging to something larger than oneself, strengthening interpersonal connections and solidarity within the community.

xiv. Cultural Transmission and Continuity

Furthermore, these symbols play a pivotal role in cultural transmission and continuity. They are passed down through generations, carrying the legacy of cultural traditions and values. As individuals learn and engage with these symbols, they internalize a collective identity, contributing to the preservation and perpetuation of their cultural heritage.

xv. Evolution and Adaptation

These symbolic systems are not static but evolve over time, adapting to changing societal dynamics and external influences²¹. Cultural symbols may undergo reinterpretation or transformation, reflecting shifting values and beliefs within a society while still maintaining their core significance. Indeed, symbolic systems within cultures exhibit a dynamic nature, continuously evolving and adapting in response to changing societal dynamics and external influences. This evolution allows cultural symbols to remain relevant and meaningful while accommodating transformations in values, beliefs, and social contexts.

xvi. Adaptation to Changing Value

Cultural symbols often undergo adaptation to align with evolving societal values and norms. They might be reinterpreted or modified to reflect contemporary perspectives while retaining their foundational significance. For instance, traditional symbols or rituals might be reimagined or modified to resonate with modern sensibilities and changing cultural paradigms.

xvii. Reinterpretation and Transformation

As societies evolve, cultural symbols can undergo reinterpretation or transformation to accommodate new meanings or functions. This process reflects the flexibility and adaptability of these symbols. An example could be traditional ceremonies or festivals that take on modified forms to suit contemporary contexts while preserving their essence and historical significance.

xviii. Reflection of Societal Changes

The evolution of cultural symbols often mirrors broader societal changes. Symbolic systems may reflect shifts in attitudes, technological advancements, or cultural exchanges with other

societies. They serve as reflections of societal dynamics, providing insights into how cultures respond and adapt to internal and external influences.

xix. Preservation of Core Significance

Despite adaptations, cultural symbols often maintain their core significance and value. While they may evolve to suit contemporary contexts, they continue to hold intrinsic meaning and historical roots, ensuring continuity and connection with the cultural heritage of a community.

xx. Balancing Tradition and Innovation

The evolution of cultural symbols navigates a delicate balance between tradition and innovation. It involves preserving the essence of traditions while embracing new interpretations that resonate with present-day contexts. This balance allows for the preservation of cultural identity while facilitating cultural growth and relevance.

2.1.3. Learning and Transmission in Culture

Enculturation, as a primary mechanism, facilitates the transmission of cultural values, beliefs, and behaviours from one generation to the next.²² It begins in early childhood and continues throughout an individual's life, involving interactions with family, peers, educational institutions, and societal structures²³.

i. Socialisation Mechanisms

Various socialization mechanisms contribute to the acquisition of cultural knowledge. Families serve as the initial agents of enculturation, introducing children to cultural practices, languages, traditions, and moral values²⁴. Educational systems further reinforce cultural norms by imparting formal knowledge and societal expectations. Moreover, peer groups, media, and religious institutions also play significant roles in shaping individuals' cultural understanding.²⁵

ii. Families as Primary Socialising Agents

Families play a fundamental role as the initial and primary agents of socialization. They serve as the first point of contact where children are introduced to cultural practices, languages, traditions, and moral values. Through day-to-day interactions, familial rituals, storytelling, and guidance, children absorb fundamental aspects of their culture, internalizing societal norms and values.

iii. Educational Systems and Cultural Reinforcement

Educational systems, including schools and academic institutions, reinforce cultural norms by imparting formal knowledge and societal expectations. These institutions teach not only academic subjects but also convey cultural histories, literature, and norms. Educational curricula often reflect the values and beliefs of a society, shaping individuals' perceptions and understanding of their cultural identity.

iv. Influence of Peer Groups and Media

Peer groups and media significantly contribute to shaping cultural understanding. Peer interactions allow individuals to exchange ideas, beliefs, and behaviours, influencing each other's perceptions of cultural norms. Likewise, media platforms, including television, internet, and social media, act as pervasive sources of cultural influence, disseminating values, trends, and ideologies that contribute to cultural socialization.

v. Role of Religious Institutions

Religious institutions also play a significant role in cultural socialization. They transmit religious beliefs, rituals, and moral values, which are often deeply intertwined with cultural practices. Religious teachings contribute to shaping individuals' ethical frameworks and cultural perspectives, impacting their behaviours and social interactions.

vi. Multifaceted Influence and Interaction

These socialization agents do not function in isolation but interact dynamically, influencing of individuals' cultural learning in interconnected ways. The combined influence of these agents contributes to the multifaceted development of an individual's cultural understanding, shaping their identity, beliefs, behaviours, and social interactions within society.

vii. Implicit and Explicit Learning

Cultural learning occurs both implicitly and explicitly. Implicit learning involves absorbing cultural norms and behaviours unconsciously through observation, imitation, and everyday experiences within a cultural context²⁶. Explicit learning involves more formal teachings, explicit instructions, and deliberate educational efforts aimed at transmitting cultural knowledge and values.

vii.a Implicit Learning: Unconscious Absorption of Culture

Implicit learning involves the unconscious absorption of cultural norms and behaviours through observation, imitation, and everyday experiences within a cultural context. Individuals unconsciously pick up cultural practices, language nuances, social behaviours, and norms by being immersed in their cultural environment.

- Observation and Imitation: People observe and imitate the behaviours of others within their cultural setting without conscious intent, thereby internalizing societal norms and values.

- Everyday Experiences: Cultural learning occurs organically through daily interactions, experiences, and socialization within families, communities, and social groups, shaping individuals' understanding of their cultural identity.

Implicit learning operates beneath conscious awareness, allowing individuals to naturally assimilate cultural knowledge without explicit instruction.

vii.b. Explicit Learning: Deliberate Transmission of Culture

Explicit learning involves more formal and deliberate efforts aimed at transmitting cultural knowledge and values. It encompasses structured educational teachings, explicit instructions, and deliberate interventions intended to impart specific aspects of culture.

a. Formal Education: Educational institutions and curricula consciously teach cultural history, literature, language, and traditions, providing explicit knowledge about a society's customs, values, and norms.

b. Deliberate Cultural Instruction: Cultural ceremonies, workshops, or programs designed to educate individuals about specific cultural practices or traditions fall under explicit learning.

Explicit learning allows for directed cultural education, where individuals receive structured information about their culture, fostering a deeper understanding of traditions and customs.

vii.c. Synergy between Implicit and Explicit Learning

Implicit and explicit learning mechanisms often work synergistically. While implicit learning occurs naturally through immersion and everyday experiences, explicit learning complements this process by providing formalized knowledge and structured teachings. Both forms of learning intertwine, reinforcing and enriching individuals' understanding of their cultural identity.

2.1.4 Cultural Adaptation and Change

As individuals learn and transmit cultural knowledge, societies adapt to new circumstances, leading to cultural change and evolution²⁷. This adaptive nature allows cultures to incorporate novel ideas, technologies, and social practices while maintaining core cultural values.

i. Cultural Adaptation to New Circumstances

Cultural adaptation involves societies adjusting to new conditions, whether due to technological advancements, environmental changes, globalization, or intercultural interactions. It's a response to evolving circumstances that necessitate adjustments in cultural practices, beliefs, and behaviours.

- Incorporation of Novel Ideas and Technologies: Societies adapt by integrating innovations, such as technological advancements, scientific discoveries, or new ideologies, into their existing cultural frameworks. They adopt and incorporate these novelties while interpreting them within their own cultural contexts.

- Response to Social Changes: Cultural change occurs in response to social changes, such as shifts in demographics, migration, or economic transformations. Cultures evolve to accommodate diverse populations and changing societal structures.

ii. Preservation of Core Cultural Values

Amidst adaptation, cultures maintain their core values and identities. While embracing change, societies often safeguard fundamental beliefs, traditions, and practices that are integral to their cultural heritage. These core values act as anchors, providing continuity and stability amidst transformation.

- Adaptation Without Losing Identity: Cultures adapt to new influences without compromising their fundamental identity. They selectively incorporate external elements while safeguarding their unique customs, traditions, and values.

iii. Dynamic Evolution and Continuity

Cultural change represents a dynamic process of evolution rather than a static phenomenon. Societies continuously evolve, absorbing external influences, generating innovations, and adapting to new circumstances. However, this evolutionary process does not imply a complete departure from traditions; rather, it involves a balanced approach that fosters continuity while embracing change.

iv. Balancing Tradition and Innovation

Balancing tradition and innovation is crucial in cultural adaptation. Societies navigate this balance by preserving essential aspects of their heritage while adapting to contemporary demands. This equilibrium ensures cultural resilience, allowing societies to evolve without losing their distinct identities.

2.1.5. Dynamics of Cultural Adaptation

Cultures are continuously influenced by globalisation, technological advancements, migrations, and increased interconnectedness²⁸. All of these are done integrating novel elements while navigating the preservation of core values of that culture.

i. Integration of New Elements

Adaptability allows cultures to embrace and integrate new elements without compromising their essence²⁹. For instance, cuisines, music, fashion, or language may evolve by incorporating foreign influences while maintaining unique cultural identities. This integration process often leads to the creation of hybrid cultural forms.

ii. Evolution of Cuisine and Culinary Traditions

Culinary practices are highly adaptive and often reflect cultural integration. Food, recipes, and cooking methods evolve as cultures assimilate new ingredients, culinary techniques, and

flavours from diverse sources. For instance, fusion cuisine blends culinary traditions from different cultures, creating innovative dishes that combine various culinary elements while preserving unique savours and cooking styles.

iii. Influence on Music and Artistic Expression

In the realm of music and artistic expression, cultural adaptability fosters the evolution of diverse musical genres and art forms. Artists often blend traditional elements with modern influences, creating hybrid musical styles or art forms that reflect a fusion of cultural expressions. This fusion not only diversifies artistic creations but also facilitates cross-cultural appreciation and collaboration.

iv. Fashion and Cultural Exchange

Fashion and attire serve as visual representations of cultural identity. Cultural adaptability in fashion allows for the incorporation of diverse clothing styles, textiles, and design elements from different cultures. This integration often results in the creation of eclectic fashion trends that merge traditional and contemporary elements, reflecting the evolving tastes and preferences of diverse societies.

v. Language Evolution and Adaptation

Languages are dynamic entities that continuously evolve through cultural interaction. They absorb vocabulary, idioms, and linguistic influences from other languages, resulting in linguistic diversity and the creation of creole or hybrid languages. This linguistic integration preserves the essence of native languages while incorporating new linguistic elements.

vi. Hybrid Cultural Forms

The integration of new elements into existing cultural frameworks often leads to the emergence of hybrid cultural forms. These hybridizations retain elements of various cultures while fostering cross-cultural understanding, innovation, and creativity. Hybrid cultural expressions celebrate diversity and serve as platforms for cultural exchange and appreciation.

vii. Retention of Fundamental Values

While adapting to changes, cultures endeavour to preserve their fundamental values and traditions³⁰. This preservation maintains a sense of continuity and collective identity within the community. It involves a delicate balance between embracing novelty and safeguarding cultural heritage.

viii. Continuity and Identity

The preservation of fundamental values and traditions serves as a conduit for the transmission of cultural identity across generations. These core values encapsulate the essence of a culture, defining its beliefs, norms, rituals, and societal codes. They provide a shared framework that unites individuals within the community, fostering a sense of belonging and collective identity.

ix. Stability Amidst Change

Cultural values act as stabilizing forces amidst societal changes and external influences. They offer guidance and a moral compass, providing a sense of stability and direction during times of rapid transformation. This stability helps individuals navigate change while staying connected to their cultural roots.

x. Adaptation and Evolution

Cultures evolve through adaptation, incorporating new elements while maintaining their fundamental values. This evolutionary process involves selectively integrating external

influences that align with core cultural principles. It allows for innovation and growth while ensuring that the cultural essence remains intact.

xi. Intergenerational Transmission

Preserving fundamental values involves the intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge and heritage. Elders, community leaders, and families play crucial roles in imparting traditional values, rituals, stories, and practices to younger generations. This transmission ensures the continuity of cultural identity and fosters a sense of pride in cultural heritage.

xii. Balancing Novelty and Cultural Heritage

Cultural adaptation involves a delicate balancing act between embracing novelty and safeguarding cultural heritage. Embracing novelty allows cultures to evolve and remain relevant in a changing world. However, this evolution occurs while respecting and integrating new elements in ways that harmonize with existing traditions, thus ensuring continuity without compromising cultural identity.

xiii. Adaptation without Compromise

Cultures adapt by selectively incorporating external influences while safeguarding their fundamental values and traditions. This process involves critically evaluating and assimilating new elements that align with cultural values, ensuring that the essence of the culture remains intact even as it evolves.

xiv. Sense of Pride and Identity

The preservation of fundamental values fosters a sense of pride and identity within a community. It enables individuals to connect with their cultural heritage, fostering a sense of belonging and pride in their roots, traditions, and customs.

xv. Impact on Social Institutions

Adaptive cultures influence social institutions, such as family structures, education systems, governance, and religious practices³¹. Changes in societal norms, roles, and expectations reflect the evolving nature of cultures, accommodating modern needs while reverencing traditional customs.

xvi. Cultural Revitalisation and Innovation

Adaptability fosters cultural revitalisation and innovation³². Communities engage in efforts to revive traditional practices, languages, or art forms while creatively adapting them to contemporary contexts. This process rejuvenates cultural expressions and ensures their relevance in changing times.

2.1.6. Cultural Norms and Behavioural Patterns

Cultural norms serve as social scripts that dictate expected behaviours, roles, and interactions within a society³³. These norms encompass various aspects of life, including communication styles, etiquette, gender roles, and interpersonal relationships. They guide individuals on how to navigate social situations and fulfil societal expectations.

i. Reinforcement of Collective Identity

Cultural norms-based patterned conduct strengthens social cohesiveness and collective identity³⁴. They establish a common framework that helps members of a cultural group feel united and at home. For instance, certain rites or conventions may strengthen a community's sense of oneness and understanding.

ii. Shared Framework of Behaviours

Members of a community adhere to a set of shared behaviours, rituals, customs, and traditions that are established by cultural norms. These consistent patterns of behaviour

establish a unified framework that characterises how people behave, engage, and communicate within a given cultural setting. They act as a guide for proper behaviour and social customs.

iii. Fostering Sense of Belonging

Within a cultural group, people's sense of unity and belonging is strengthened by patterned behaviours. Participating in common rituals, ceremonies, or practices fosters a sense of connection, solidarity, and understanding among community members. By fortifying social ties, these group activities promote a sense of unity and shared identity.

iv. Rituals and Customs

Within a culture, certain rituals or customs frequently have deep symbolic importance. They reinforce societal ideals and legacy by acting as potent cultural identification markers. Ceremonies honouring cultural holidays, lifecycle events, or customs, for example, develop into group gatherings that fortify cultural identities and unite people.

v. Communication of Values

Cultural values and beliefs are passed down through generations through patterned behaviours. Social norms, ethical principles, and cultural knowledge are all upheld by these behaviours. They ensure the survival of cultural identity by instructing and upholding cultural norms.

vi. Strengthening Group Cohesion

In a cultural group, togetherness and cohesion are fostered by collective adherence to stereotyped behaviours. It fosters mutual understanding and a sense of purpose among

participants. Within the community, this cohesiveness enhances social solidarity, teamwork, and support systems.

2.1.7. Cultural Impact on Social Structures

Cultural norms and behavioural patterns contribute to the formation and maintenance of social structures within a society³⁵. They establish hierarchies, power dynamics, and systems of governance. For instance, respect for authority or familial hierarchies may heavily influence societal structures and individual conduct.

i. Transmission of Values

Behavioural patterns serve as a means of transmitting cultural values from one generation to the next³⁶. Through observing and participating in these patterns, individuals internalize and perpetuate societal norms, ensuring the continuity of cultural practices.

ii. Adaptation and Change

While cultural norms guide behaviour, they are not static and may evolve over time³⁷. Societal changes, exposure to diverse cultures, and generational shifts contribute to adaptations in behavioural patterns, reflecting the dynamism of cultures.

2.1.8. Cultural Impact on Perception and Cognition

Culture influences how individuals perceive and interpret sensory information³⁸. For instance, studies suggest that cultural backgrounds can affect visual perception, such as depth perception or attention to certain details in visual scenes. This cultural lens alters individuals' interpretations of what they see and experience.

i. Cognitive Processes and Interpretations

Cultural frameworks shape cognitive processes by influencing reasoning, problem-solving strategies, and interpretations of events³⁹. The values, norms, and language structures embedded in a culture impact how individuals process information and make judgments.

ii. Language and Thought Patterns

Language, being a product of culture, influences thought patterns and cognitive processes⁴⁰. Different languages encode concepts differently, which in turn influences how individuals categorize information or perceive abstract ideas. For instance, languages that use cardinal directions (north, south, east, and west) rather than egocentric directions (left, right) may affect spatial cognition among speakers.

iii. Social Cues and Emotional Responses

Cultural norms influence social cues and emotional expressions, which shape individuals' emotional responses and social interactions⁴¹. Cultural variations in emotional expressions and norms may impact how emotions are interpreted and expressed in different cultural contexts.

iv. Decision-Making and Problem-Solving

Cultural backgrounds influence decision-making processes and problem-solving strategies⁴². Cultural values and norms guide individuals' priorities, risk perceptions, and the strategies they employ when faced with dilemmas or decisions.

2.1.9. Ethnocentrism

Another concept of strong interest in this research is the concept of ethnocentrism. According to William Sumner, the term "ethnocentrism" refers to a worldview in which one's own group is central to everything and is used to measure and evaluate all others⁴³. More recently, Ting-

Toomey stated that our protective inclination to see our culture's norms and values as superior to those of other cultures – that is, to believe that our methods of living are the most rational and appropriate ones is known as ethnocentrism⁴⁴. Ethnocentrism can also be attributed to feelings of superiority, mistrust, avoiding, and not wanting to grant an ethnic group equal legal right above and above what is required to accomplish justifiable shared objectives⁴⁵. According to Edward Dutton, there are two perspectives on ethnocentrism. The first is known as "positive ethnocentrism," which denotes a willingness to give up one's own interests in order to further the interests of one's ethnic group or country. Conversely, "negative ethnocentrism" refers to bias and antagonistic behaviour directed towards members of different ethnic groups⁴⁶.

Ethnocentrism is the practice of judging other cultures, customs, behaviours, ideas, and individuals according to the customs of one's own culture or traditions rather than the standards of the particular culture in question. It is used in social science, anthropology, and ordinary English discourse. Since this judgement is typically unfavourable, some individuals also use the phrase to denote the conviction that one's culture is superior to, or more accurate or normal than, all others. This is particularly true with regard to the distinctions that characterise the cultural identities of various ethnic groups, such as language, behaviour, conventions, and religion⁴⁷. It can also refer to any biased judgement based on cultural background in ordinary speech. For example, the way the Global North and South are commonly portrayed is transparently ethnocentrism.

There are instances where racism, stereotyping, prejudice, or xenophobia are linked to the word ethnocentrism, but, the term "ethnocentrism" does not always imply or denote a bad opinion of the race of others as much as a focus on yours⁴⁸. Cultural relativism, which is the opposite of ethnocentrism, holds that understanding another culture is best achieved from their perspective as opposed to passing judgement on it based on one's own subjective

cultural norms. First used in the social sciences, the term "ethnocentrism" was coined by American sociologist William G. Sumner; although some scholars run contrast to this view⁴⁹. According to Sumner, "The technical name for the view of things in which one's own group is the centre of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it," is how Sumner defines ethnocentrism in his 1906 book *Folkways*^{50, 51}. He went on to say that ethnocentrism frequently results in arrogance, conceit, the conviction that one's own group is superior, and disdain for others⁵².

2.1.10 Ethnology

Adam Franz Kollár (1718–1783) is credited with coining and defining the term "ethnology" in his 1783 Vienna publication *Historiae ivrisque pvblici Regni Vngariae amoenitates*⁵³. In order to be better equipped to assess the nations and peoples of their own times, learned men study the origins, languages, customs, and institutions of different nations, and ultimately the fatherland and ancient seats. This study is known as the science of nations and peoples^{54 - 55}.

The study of people as cultural entities is known as ethnology. It investigates how cultural patterns are created, maintained, and altered in diverse locations, eras, and social settings. The examination of peoples' cultural behaviours and expressions involves both historical reconstruction and modern study. The Greek word ἔθνος (ethnos), which means people, is where the word "ethnology" originates. The field has evolved according to many definitions, following different lines of investigation and educational theories (folkloristics and social and cultural anthropology, for example). Since the late eighteenth century, ethnology, also known as folklife studies, has been regarded as an academic discipline⁵⁶.

The purpose of ethnology from the outset had been issues relating to reconstructing human history, formulating cultural invariants (e.g., the taboo against incest and cultural change), and drawing generalisations about "human nature" – a concept that has been contested since

the 19th century by a number of philosophers (Hegel, Marx, structuralism, etc.)⁵⁷. In several regions of the world, ethnology has grown along separate lines of inquiry and theoretical frameworks; in the United States, cultural anthropology has been particularly prominent, while in Great Britain, social anthropology has taken the lead. The three terms are becoming harder to distinguish from one another. Since the late 18th century, ethnology has been regarded as a legitimate academic discipline, particularly in Europe, where it is sometimes understood to encompass any comparative analysis of human populations.

Historical ethnology, comparative ethnology, and evolutionary ethnology are the three categories of ethnology. The earliest 19th-century anthropologists believed that cultures developed from more basic, rudimentary forms to more sophisticated, advanced forms⁵⁸. They created pictures that illustrated how societies changed throughout time, e.g., from magic to religion to science, or from pre-rational to scientific. Additionally, they ranked societies according to level of development. Then, a chart listing the following groups in order of development, from least to most developed: English, Chinese, Japanese, American Indians, African Americans, and Aborigines⁵⁹. Among the most significant evolutionary ethnologists were Lewis Henry Morgan (1818–1881) and Edward Tylor (1832–1917). Tylor discussed the religious transition from animism to polytheism to monotheism, but he also noted that more developed civilizations continued to exhibit vestiges of their earlier forms. He claimed that because of the mental unity of humanity, all societies may progress in the same way. This implied that everyone would independently arrive at the same solutions to challenges. Morgan discussed the shift in family dynamics from promiscuity to monogamy. Most anthropologists reject the theory of progressive evolution, which holds that societies evolve from inferior to superior ones. However, evolutionary ethnology, which examines typologies of cultural development like the band, tribe, chiefdom, and state example, is still widely used

in anthropology, especially in archaeology. It's been suggested that residents of bands might have certain advantages over residents of states.

Ruth Benedict's 1934 book *Patterns of Cultures* was one of the most significant early ethnologies. She discussed the psychological characteristics of the Zuni, Dobu, Kwakiutl, and American civilizations in her writing. In a similar vein, Margaret Mead examined Samoa and New Guinea in part to address US concerns. Malinowski demonstrated how Freud's oedipal complex may differ throughout cultures in his ethnographic work. Many anthropologists conducted "holocultural comparison" research in the 1950s using the Human Relations Area Files. Other approaches to ethnology included the structuralism popularised by Claude Levi-Strauss and the comparison of ethno-scientists, cultural ecologists, and some functionalists at the regional and local levels. Anthropologists have recently employed ethnology to address the question of how to comprehend "big men" in Melanesia.

Compared to ethnography, which is typically more descriptive, comparative ethnology leans more towards theory. Theory affects how anthropologists interpret specific cultural contexts. Two reports of the Mexican community of Tepotzlan and two accounts of Samoa help us understand this. Folk communities, according to Robert Redfield's 1926 research in the Mexican town of Tepotzlan, were more harmonious than cities. Tepotzlan, in his words, is a peaceful location. When Oscar Lewis travelled to Tepotzlan in 1943, he saw conflict. Because Lewis was searching for things Redfield was not, he was able to observe the strife in a comparatively tranquil village. Margaret Mead studied in Samoa in 1925 and found that adolescents there had far greater sexual freedom than teenagers in the West. The Samoans Mead had observed had lied to her, according to Derek Freeman, who conducted research in Western Samoa in 1940 and 1943 and where Mead had conducted research from 1963 to 1965. Although she had overstated certain points, Mead was essentially accurate, according to Lowell and Ellen Holmes, two other anthropologists who have done research in the area.

Mead and Freeman had differing beliefs, and those theories undoubtedly influenced what they claimed about this region of Samoa, even if the topic is still open. Whether anthropology is more of a humanities or scientific field is one of the most significant theoretical arguments in anthropology today. Diverse theories, such as cultural materialism and hermeneutics, offer distinct perspectives on these inquiries. Comparative ethnology has also occasionally been employed to refute theory, demonstrating the limitations of Wallerstein's world systems theory and Said's notion of orientalism.

Ethno-histories are the focus of historical ethnology. Ethno-histories examine the historical development of a given civilization. An anthropologist must examine written materials in order to attempt reconstructing the appearance of a specific civilization at various historical periods. In most cases, anthropologists must deal with the prejudices of individuals who recorded the tales and rely on records that were not created by anthropologists. Similar to historians, ethnologists work with written records about people rather than those that were written by the people themselves. Some historians of ethnography examined changes within a particular movement, such as the Native American Ghost Dance Movement. Anthropologists such as Clifford Geertz, Marshall Sahlins, and Eric Wolf have recently concentrated on the transformations that occur when societies interact with capitalism and Western culture.

2.1.11 People Groups and Culture

People groups are the main focus of any missional intercultural discourse. This is the core of missions and the ideology behind reaching the word Greek word Ethnos (nations). In missiological thinking Nigeria is not a nation but a country, or a geopolitical entity where several nations have been said to agree to co-habit under the Lugard's Amalgamation Rule of 1914, but actually was not true^{60, 61}. Nigeria is a country of over several hundreds of nations merged together to form what we have today⁶². This is evident from the exegesis of the word

ethnos which literally ‘nation’. Then from the common engagement of words the word nation implies ethnic relations and racial affiliation even though some scholars are proposing a transformational definition and expression for the word⁶³. Notwithstanding expansive definitions, the purpose of this study strictly sticks to the ethnic definition of the word ‘nation’. Hence, this understands asserts the relationship between people groups and culture has been fundamental in comprehending the diversity and dynamics that shape human societies.

2.1.11a. Unengaged People Groups and Culture

Certainly, unengaged people groups represent communities that exist in relative isolation from external influences, which can encompass religious, cultural, or broader societal changes. This isolation preserves their distinct cultural identities, traditions, languages, and belief systems, shaping their social cohesion and overall identity.

i. Unengaged People Groups and Cultural Attributes

Isolation and Cultural Preservation:

Unengaged people groups, due to their limited exposure to external influences, maintain deep-rooted cultural practices and beliefs⁶⁴. Their isolation acts as a safeguard, preserving their unique cultural heritage and traditions, often passed down through generations.

ii. Significance of Cultural Identity:

Cultural attributes form the cornerstone of these groups' social cohesion and identity⁶⁵. Their cultural practices, rituals, languages, and belief systems serve as defining elements that bind community members together, fostering a strong sense of belonging and unity.

iii. Sensitivity in Engagement:

Engaging with unengaged people groups requires a delicate and culturally sensitive approach⁶⁶. Introducing external ideas or attempting to engage without understanding and respecting their cultural practices can be met with resistance or scepticism, emphasizing the need for nuanced approaches.

iv. Preserving Traditions amid Change

Despite the broader societal changes occurring globally, unengaged groups often manage to preserve their traditions⁶⁷. Their cultural practices act as a foundation, offering stability amidst potential external pressures or changes in the surrounding world.

v. Unique Cultural Contexts

Each unengaged people group has its own distinct cultural context⁶⁸. Understanding the nuances of their traditions, languages, and belief systems is essential for any meaningful engagement, allowing for respectful interaction and avoiding cultural misunderstandings.

2.1.11.b Unreached People Groups

i. Cultural Sensitivity for Effective Engagement

Cultural nuances deeply influence the daily lives, social structures, and belief systems of unreached people groups⁶⁹. An in-depth understanding of their cultural norms, languages, rituals, and social hierarchies is fundamental for developing respectful and culturally sensitive approaches to engage with these communities.

ii. Tailoring Communication and Approaches

Cultural understanding allows for the adaptation of communication methods and engagement strategies that resonate with the values and traditions of the unreached groups⁷⁰. It enables the use of appropriate language, symbols, and methods of interaction that are familiar and relatable to the community, fostering a more receptive environment for information exchange.

iii. Respect for Traditions and Beliefs

Respecting the cultural heritage and beliefs of unreached groups is crucial for building trust and rapport⁷¹. Approaches that honour their traditions demonstrate a genuine interest in understanding and valuing their way of life, encouraging more open and meaningful exchanges.

iv. Facilitating Cross-Cultural Exchange

Cultural understanding creates a platform for meaningful cross-cultural exchange⁷². It enables mutual learning and the sharing of knowledge and experiences, allowing for a more balanced and respectful interaction that benefits both the external parties seeking engagement and the unreached community.

v. Establishing Long-Term Relationships

Efforts that consider and respect the cultural intricacies of unreached people groups contribute to the establishment of long-term relationships⁷³. Building trust and understanding through culturally sensitive engagement lays the groundwork for on-going interaction and potential collaborative endeavours in the future.

2.1.11c Reached People Groups and Culture

Reached people groups exhibit a blend of traditional practices and newly adopted beliefs or faith-based principles⁷⁴. This fusion results in a unique cultural amalgamation that reflects the interplay between pre-existing cultural norms and the influences of introduced beliefs or faith systems.

i. Dynamics of Cultural Fusion

The cultural dynamics within reached people groups represent an intricate fusion, where elements of traditional customs, rituals, languages, and societal structures intermingle with those influenced by newly embraced beliefs⁷⁵. This amalgamation creates a distinct cultural tapestry that shapes the community's worldview and behaviours.

ii. Interactions of Beliefs and Practices

Understanding the interactions between external beliefs and existing cultural frameworks sheds light on how these communities adapt, interpret, and incorporate new principles into their daily lives⁷⁶. It offers insights into the syncretism or adaptation processes, illustrating how certain beliefs harmonise or conflict with established cultural practices.

iii. Preservation and Transformation

Cultural amalgamation often involves a negotiation between preserving traditional elements and adopting new cultural aspects⁷⁷. Some traditions may undergo transformations, while others may be retained or reinterpreted to align with the newly integrated beliefs, leading to a dynamic evolution of cultural practices.

iv. Community Identity and Cohesion

The cultural amalgamation within reached people groups contributes to shaping their collective identity and fostering social cohesion⁷⁸. Understanding this amalgamation assists in comprehending the shared values, narratives, and rituals that bind the community together and influence their sense of belonging.

2.1.12 Language and Communication

Cultural diversity often involves linguistic diversity, impacting missionaries' ability to communicate effectively⁷⁹. Language barriers can hinder the spread of Christian teachings

and necessitate efforts to learn and adapt to local languages to convey religious messages accurately.

i. Hindrance to Effective Communication:

Linguistic diversity within culturally diverse communities presents a substantial obstacle for missionaries⁸⁰. Language barriers hinder clear and accurate communication, impeding the conveyance of Christian teachings and messages in a manner that is understandable and relatable to the local population.

ii. Importance of Local Language Proficiency

Efforts to learn and adapt to local languages are imperative for effective missionary work⁸¹. Proficiency in the local language enables missionaries to bridge communication gaps, establish rapport, and convey religious messages accurately, ensuring comprehension and resonance with the community.

iii. Enhancing Cultural Understanding:

Learning the local language facilitates deeper cultural understanding⁸². Language is intertwined with culture, and gaining proficiency in the local language allows missionaries to grasp cultural nuances, idioms, and context-specific meanings, fostering more culturally sensitive and relevant interactions.

iv. Building Trust and Rapport:

Proficiency in the local language demonstrates respect and commitment to the community⁸³. Missionaries who speak the local language engender trust and rapport, breaking down barriers and enhancing acceptance, ultimately facilitating more fruitful and impactful engagement.

v. Adapting Teaching Methods:

Language barriers necessitate creative teaching methods to overcome communication challenges⁸⁴. Visual aids, storytelling, and interactive sessions can supplement language-based teachings, enabling clearer comprehension and engagement with Christian teachings despite language differences.

vi. Translation and Interpretation:

Efforts to translate Christian texts and teachings into local languages are crucial⁸⁵. Utilizing translated materials ensures access to religious resources and teachings in languages understood by the local population, broadening the reach and impact of missionary efforts.

2.1.13 Studies on Christianity and Culture

Several studies have been conducted on religion and culture including the Christian religion. Some of these studies have found the impact of western culture on African society⁸⁶. For example, Muhammad examines naming practices of cultures and people in Northern Nigeria, particularly the Hausa, and their relation to cultural colonialism. He suggests de-colonial initiatives to restore buried value systems affected by colonial power relations⁸⁷. The work of Nolte et al., has described the relationship of the different cultural values and religions in Yoruba land⁸⁸. The dynamics of the Yoruba culture has been studied to see how it is either static or moving with the global trends of things⁸⁹. Studies have been made to investigate the use of language, religion and culture in generating a peaceful co-existence among the people of the south-western Nigeria⁹⁰⁻⁹¹.

Cases of acculturation have been conducted as found through socio-musical acculturation of Nigerian cultures⁹². There have been several clashes as par the missional activities of the Church and African traditional religion. Christianity and African traditional religion in context have described reasons for syncretism among Christians in Nigeria⁹³. Christianity has

been alleged to have kept maintaining that cultural practices as masquerading are pagan and fetish practices. Hence that attachment to Igbo culture of certain Christians for example would be contrary to the Christian faith. In this line of thought, there are predictions that Christianity would erode the Igbo⁹⁴. As observed by Anizoba and Johnson, in both positive and negative ways, Christianity had an indelible imprint on the cultural traditions of the Idoma people and Nigerian culture⁹⁵. Scholars such as Onuzulike have found that Nigerian movie industry had made attempts on several occasions to showcase the clash between African Traditional Religion and Christianity. He is of the opinion that Nigerian movies are deeply rooted in Nigerian cultural traditions and social texts⁹⁶. Asadu gave a historical account of the contributions of Christianity to the overall development of Nigeria. Inferring from the inception of Christianity in Nigeria, that the religion has been inculcating in its adherents' uncompromised moral values, respect for human life and dignity through adequate education and social tasks. Besides, pointing out that social critics have wrongly underestimated the influence of Christian missionary efforts in Nigeria⁹⁷.

The concept of assimilation within postcolonial theory on the history of the church/Christianity in Nigeria is the premise in which Iliya focused his argument. He emphasised that Christianity serves as an agent of transformation of the local cultures and practices. Such an approach helps in understanding how the church plays a vital role in stopping the evil practices within the Nigerian traditional religion and cultures. Church being an agent of transformation also helps in contextualizing and indigenizing the Christian message to respond to Nigeria's reality so that it will not be a stranger in the land.⁹⁸ In contemporary times, according to it is evident that the Yoruba are making desperate attempts to rescue and defend their cultural values, particularly their religious worship, from the dangers of other religions and modern-day challenges. Without succumbing to syncretism and apostasy, the gospel can be communicated using African idioms and practices.

African concepts offer alternative expressions for God beyond foreign perceptions that have been distorted by the tragic history of European exploitation over Africans. African churches are tapping into African interests to connect with the African population. The influence of Yoruba culture on Christian religious worship is reflected in the incorporation of African music, dance and dressing into church services⁹⁹. In the words of Kastfelt, the lived experience of African Christianity is expressed in the endless variety of forms in which biblical and other Christian texts are read, listened to, apprehended, and turned into ritual and social practice. For this researcher, one important but understudied is the means of communication and expression, that of sound, starting from the simple observation that African Christian practice, and a soundscape which cannot be destroyed by any religion either the Pentecostal churches or Islamic reformed movements else they have transformed the public soundscapes of Africa, and also made them a great deal louder¹⁰⁰. For Bachmann, her argument is the identification as "born again" which held almost no significance on its own and did thus not really distinguish groups from each other.

The emphasis on the "born again" experience, however, was widespread but also served to demarcate "real" or "committed" Christians from "corrupted" ones. She found this demarcation was upheld against mission churches, white garment churches and especially traditional healing practices as the source of the supposed "corruption". She thus contends that even the study of "born again" Christianity, though based on field observations more compelling than that of "Pentecostalism", needs to consider the concrete and contextual boundaries drawn to establish identities such as "born again" and/or "Pentecostal" in Nigerian Christianity.¹⁰¹

2.1.13a Culture and the Contextualisation of the Christian Message

Culture shapes the way Christian messages are perceived and interpreted within different communities¹⁰². Effective contextualisation involves presenting Christian teachings in ways that resonate with the cultural context, making the message more accessible and relevant to the local population.

i. Perceptions and Interpretations:

Culture greatly impacts the perceptions and interpretations of Christian messages¹⁰³. The same message might be understood differently across cultures due to varying cultural contexts, beliefs, and values held by each community.

ii. Accessibility and Relevance:

Effective contextualisation ensures that Christian teachings are accessible and relevant to the local population¹⁰⁴. By aligning the message with the cultural context, it becomes more relatable, understandable, and applicable to the daily lives of the community members.

iii. Respect for Cultural Values:

Contextualisation respects and integrates cultural values and norms¹⁰⁵. It acknowledges the significance of local traditions and beliefs, presenting Christian teachings in a manner that does not contradict or disrespect the cultural fabric of the community.

iv. Adaptation of Communication Styles:

Adapting communication styles aids in effective contextualization¹⁰⁶. Utilizing familiar idioms, metaphors, stories, or symbols within the Christian message bridges the gap between the message and the cultural understanding of the community, enhancing its impact.

v. Encouraging Relational Evangelism:

Contextualisation encourages relational evangelism¹⁰⁷. By understanding the cultural nuances and building relationships within the community, missionaries can effectively convey Christian messages in ways that resonate with the local worldview.

vi. Preservation of Christian Essence:

While adapting to the cultural context, contextualization aims to preserve the essence of Christian teachings¹⁰⁸. It ensures that the fundamental principles and core beliefs of Christianity remain intact while presenting them in culturally meaningful ways.

2.1.13b Cultural Receptivity and Resistance

Cultural factors influence the receptivity or resistance of communities to new religious beliefs¹⁰⁹. Some cultures may be more open to embracing new ideas, while others might be resistant, requiring missionaries to navigate cultural barriers and build trust gradually.

i. Openness to Change:

Some cultures exhibit openness and willingness to embrace new ideas¹¹⁰. They might be more receptive to exploring and adopting new religious beliefs, often valuing diversity and exhibiting a curiosity towards different perspectives.

ii. Resistance to External Influence:

Other cultures might display resistance, rooted in a desire to preserve traditional beliefs and practices¹¹¹. They may perceive external influences, including new religious teachings, as a threat to their cultural identity, leading to resistance and scepticism.

iii. Building Trust and Understanding

Navigating cultural barriers involves building trust and understanding within the community¹¹². Missionaries need to engage in respectful dialogue, actively listen to the

concerns of the community, and gradually build relationships based on mutual respect and trust.

iv. Cultural Sensitivity and Adaptation:

Cultural sensitivity and adaptation are essential in addressing resistance¹¹³. Missionaries who respect and understand the local culture can adapt their approach to present religious beliefs in ways that resonate with the cultural values and norms of the community.

v. Gradual Process of Engagement:

Engaging resistant cultures is often a gradual and patient process. It requires persistence, patience, and a long-term commitment to gradually break down cultural barriers and establish credibility within the community.

vi. Recognising Diversity in Cultural Responses:

Cultural responses to new beliefs vary within and across communities¹¹⁴. Even within a single culture, there can be varying degrees of receptivity or resistance based on factors such as age, social status, or personal experiences.

2.1.13c Impact of Mission on Indigenous Practices and Beliefs

Christian missions may influence or interact with indigenous practices and beliefs, leading to syncretism or the integration of Christian elements into existing cultural traditions¹¹⁵. This interaction between Christianity and indigenous cultural traditions can influence changes within the local culture and religious practices.

i. Syncretism and Integration:

Syncretism involves the blending or integration of Christian elements with existing indigenous cultural traditions¹¹⁶. This integration results in a hybridization of beliefs, practices, rituals, and symbols from both Christianity and the indigenous culture.

ii. Adaptation of Christian Teachings:

Missionaries may adapt Christian teachings to resonate with indigenous beliefs¹¹⁷. This adaptation aims to make Christianity more relatable by incorporating elements familiar to the local culture, allowing for easier acceptance and integration.

iii. Transformation of Religious Practices:

Interactions with Christian missions can lead to transformations in local religious practices.¹¹⁸ Some indigenous rituals or ceremonies may undergo alterations or adaptations influenced by Christian teachings or practices introduced by missionaries.

iv. Preservation and Evolution:

The impact of missions on indigenous practices can lead to a preservation of certain aspects while evolving others¹¹⁹. Some cultural elements may be preserved, while others may adapt or change over time due to the influence of Christian teachings.

v. Challenges of Cultural Change:

The interaction between Christianity and indigenous practices poses challenges in preserving cultural authenticity.¹²⁰ Balancing the preservation of cultural heritage with the integration of Christian elements can be complex and may lead to tensions within the community.

vi. Reinterpretation of Symbols and Rituals:

Christian missions may reinterpret indigenous symbols or rituals within a Christian framework.¹²¹ This reinterpretation can result in the adoption of new meanings or understandings of traditional practices within the context of Christian beliefs.

2.1.13d Effects of Culture on Christian Missions

The effects of culture on Christian missions are multifaceted and profound. Understanding these effects is crucial for effective engagement, communication, and the overall success of missionary endeavours.

i. Cultural Sensitivity in Missionary Approach

Cultural sensitivity plays a pivotal role in shaping the approach of missionaries when engaging with diverse communities. It involves a deep understanding and respectful consideration of the beliefs, practices, and values of the local culture, ultimately influencing the effectiveness and reception of missionary work.

ii. Respect for Local Beliefs and Practices:

Cultural sensitivity necessitates an approach that honours the existing beliefs and practices of the local community¹²². Missionaries who demonstrate respect towards the indigenous culture create an environment of openness, trust, and mutual understanding, which are crucial foundations for effective communication and engagement.

iii. Adaptation of Communication Styles:

A culturally sensitive approach involves adapting communication styles to align with the cultural context¹²³. It requires using language, symbols, and modes of interaction that are familiar and relatable to the local community, facilitating clearer and more meaningful exchanges of religious teachings and ideas.

iv. Embracing Diversity and Pluralism:

Missionaries demonstrating cultural sensitivity recognize and celebrate the diversity and pluralism within communities¹²⁴. Acknowledging and valuing diverse cultural expressions

foster an environment of inclusivity, enabling deeper connections and promoting a more harmonious relationship between missionaries and local populations.

v. Avoiding Cultural Imposition:

Cultural sensitivity emphasizes the avoidance of imposing external beliefs or practices on the local community¹²⁵. Instead, it encourages a collaborative approach where missionaries engage in dialogue, listen attentively, and work alongside community members, allowing for a mutual exchange of ideas and values.

vi. Building Relationships Based on Trust:

Cultural sensitivity fosters the building of relationships based on trust, mutual respect, and understanding¹²⁶. Missionaries who demonstrate cultural sensitivity are more likely to be accepted and welcomed within the community, paving the way for more effective and impactful engagement.

vii. Facilitating Sustainable Change:

A culturally sensitive approach aims not to impose change but rather to facilitate sustainable transformation from within the community¹²⁷. It encourages empowering local leadership, nurturing indigenous resources, and respecting the autonomy of the community to bring about change in accordance with its own cultural values and aspirations.

2.1.13e Community Integration and Long-Term Engagement

Understanding the local culture is vital for missionaries aiming for long-term engagement and community integration.¹²⁸ Cultural sensitivity enables missionaries to build trust, foster relationships, and work collaboratively with local communities for sustainable and impactful mission work.

i. Building Trust and Respect

Cultural understanding fosters trust and respect within the community¹²⁹. When missionaries demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of local customs, traditions, and values, it establishes a foundation for trust and mutual respect.

ii. Effective Communication and Engagement

Understanding the local culture enables effective communication¹³⁰. Missionaries who grasp cultural nuances can communicate in ways that resonate with the community, ensuring clarity of message and facilitating meaningful engagement.

iii. Relationship Building and Integration

Cultural sensitivity aids in building meaningful relationships¹³¹. By respecting and valuing the local culture, missionaries can integrate themselves into the community, becoming part of the social fabric and fostering a sense of belonging.

iv. Collaborative Approach

Cultural understanding encourages collaboration¹³². Missionaries who work collaboratively with local leaders and community members, respecting their insights and involving them in decision-making, promote sustainable initiatives that align with community needs.

v. Sustainability in Mission Work

Long-term engagement requires sustainability¹³³. Cultural sensitivity enables missionaries to develop strategies and initiatives that are culturally relevant, ensuring that mission work remains impactful and sustainable over time.

vi. Adapting Mission Approaches

Understanding local culture aids in adapting mission approaches¹³⁴. By acknowledging cultural differences, missionaries can tailor their methods to fit the cultural context, leading to more effective and accepted initiatives.

2.1.14 Missiology: Understanding Christian Mission(s)

Missiology is the academic and theological study of Christian mission, focusing on the principles and practices of spreading the Christian faith. It examines how the gospel is communicated across various cultures, languages, and religious contexts, aiming to understand the theology, history, and strategy behind missionary work^{135,136}. Understanding missiology and the history of the Church universal would take into account an expression of certain concepts which include: the theology of mission, historical development of mission, cultural anthropology, practical strategies embarked upon by the Church, interreligious dialogue, globalisation, and the place of ethics in missions.

- i. **Theology of Mission:** Missiology involves understanding the biblical foundation for missions, including themes like the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and God's redemptive purpose for all nations¹³⁷.
- ii. **History of Missions:** The historical development of Christian missions is a significant part of missiology. This includes studying the spread of Christianity from the early church through various missionary movements to contemporary global missions¹³⁸.
- iii. **Cultural Anthropology:** Understanding cultures is critical in missiology, particularly in contextualizing the gospel – communicating it in culturally relevant ways while remaining faithful to Christian doctrine¹³⁹.

- iv. **Practical Strategies:** Missiology also deals with the practical aspects of mission work, such as church planting, discipleship, Bible translation, and the role of education, healthcare, and social justice in missions^{140, 141}.
- v. **Interreligious Dialogue:** Engaging with people of different religious backgrounds requires studying and developing strategies for respectful and effective communication, ensuring the gospel is shared in an understandable and sensitive manner¹⁴².
- vi. **Globalisation and Missions:** The impact of globalisation on mission strategies is a growing area of study, including how modern technology, migration, and global interconnectedness influence missionary efforts¹⁴³.
- vii. **Ethics and Mission:** Missiology addresses the ethical challenges in missions, such as issues of colonialism, power dynamics, and the need for missions to promote justice and reconciliation rather than mere conversion.

Missiology is interdisciplinary, drawing from theology, history, anthropology, sociology, and linguistics. It equips missionaries, church leaders, and theologians to engage effectively and thoughtfully in the work of spreading the Christian faith across diverse contexts.

2.3.14a Understanding Christian Mission(s)

The terms "church" and "mission" carry equal significance. Despite not being found in most English Bibles, the word "mission" is found in the Bible. Eckhard Schnabel, perhaps the world's foremost authority on mission in the New Testament, argues this issue vehemently with his over two thousand pages on Early Christian Mission and his additional five hundred pages on Paul the Missionary. It is untrue to claim that the word "mission" is absent from the New Testament. The Greek verb *apostellein*, which appears 136 times in the New Testament (97 times in the Gospels) and is used to describe both Jesus's "sent" status by God and the Twelve's "sent" status by Jesus, is equivalent to the Latin term 'mittere'.

Those who had been sent out were the apostles in the widest meaning of the word. In regard to the term "missionary," this sent-outness is also the first item to remark. After all, Jesus mentions this as his first mission statement in Luke 4:18, saying that he was sent to bring good news to the impoverished. Being "on mission" or working towards a mission implies movement and intentionality. At the minimum, a mission entails being dispatched from one location to another.

Not every Christian is a missionary, yet all Christians must be involved in missions if we are to follow the Great Commission. While it is true that each of us should be prepared to defend our hope as described in 1 Peter 3:15, that each of us should adorn the gospel with our good deeds as found in Titus 2:1; and that each of us should contribute to the spread of the gospel as scripted in 1 Thess. 1:8; 2 Thess. 3:1. We should only refer to those who are purposefully sent out from one place to another as "missionaries." In actuality, the church sends out workers from within rather than being sent out. Our primary identity as the church, or *ekklesia*, is defined by being called out of darkness into his marvellous light, not by being sent forth into the world with a purpose (1 Peter 2:9).

The term "mission" was mostly associated with the Trinity up to the fifteenth century. Theologians discussed two instances of "sending": the Father sending the Son, and the Son and Father sending the Holy Spirit. This is an important fact. The belief that "the sending of Jesus by Father is still the essential mission" is a prerequisite for a proper understanding of the church's mission.

What kind of ministry did Jesus have? Jesus provided holistic ministry, attending to both physical and spiritual needs, but he prioritised preaching. He journeyed from town to town and entered public ministry because of his preaching (Mark 1:38–39). His ministry, inspired by the Spirit, was to bring good news to the impoverished (Luke 4:18-19). According to

Mark 1:15 and 2:17, He came to call sinners to faith and repentance. We do not know of a single instance where Jesus entered a town with the intention of curing or driving out demons, despite the fact that he often cared for the material needs of those around him. The Son of Man never went on an exorcism or healing tour. According to Luke 19:10 the message of this proclaimed goal was to “find and rescue the lost”.

Of course, linguistic declaration alone cannot sum up Jesus' message. Jesus's mission was to die vicariously for his people's sins, which was unique to his identity as the divine Messiah (Matthew 1:21–23). In keeping with this goal, Jesus's public ministry focused on bringing eternal life, which is only possible for sinners who place their confidence in Him (John 3:16–17; 14:6–20:21). This is seen, for instance, in Mark's Gospel, where the whole story leads to the centurion's confession in Mark 15:37, where the Roman soldier acknowledges, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" fulfilling the first line of the book (Mark 1:1). The goal of Jesus's ministry as outlined in the gospel of Mark is to lead people to this conviction conveyed by the Spirit. The Messiah prioritised teaching so that those with ears to hear may recognise his true nature and follow him in faith. He served both bodies and souls.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that the Great Commission is mentioned in some form in all four of the Gospels (Matt. 28:16–20; Mark 13:10–14:9; Luke 24:44–49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8). The foolish group of disciples were tasked with spreading the gospel, not changing society, though that would frequently follow from their teachings. God's cosmic mission is undoubtedly greater than the Great Commission, but it is noteworthy that, even though the church is not required to join God in the renewal of all things – which would likely involve both fiery judgement and re-creation – we are frequently instructed to bear witness to the one who will accomplish all of these things. In summary, although the disciples were never instructed to act as Christ's avatars, it is always stated – either directly or indirectly – that they were to serve as Christ's representatives.

The significance of Jesus' parting teachings to the disciples is acknowledged by all Christians. Nonetheless, there is disagreement among missiological scholars and practitioners over the centrality or governing significance of the Great Commission. In his defence of social action as evangelism's equal partner, John Stott, for instance, asserted that "we give the Great Commission too prominent a place in our Christian thinking." Likewise, Lesslie came to the conclusion that the "Christian mission is thus to act out the confession that Jesus is Lord in the whole life of the whole world." Put another way, the church's mission cannot be bored down to what we consider to be traditional missions.

We have witnessed "paradigm shifts in theology of mission" during the past fifty years, to borrow the title of one influential work. A far more expansive understanding of the church's purpose, one that recasts the church's identity as missional communities "called and sent to represent the reign of God" or as "communities of common people doing uncommon deeds," has been at the centre of this change. The church's function is no longer solely defined as that of a witness or an ambassador. Instead, we are collaborators with God in the *missio Dei* (mission of God), co-operators in the redemption and renewal of all things. In the words of Christopher Wright, "Our mission is, at its core, our faithful involvement as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's own mission within the history of God's world for the redemption of God's creation, provided that it is biblically informed and validated." The role of the church in the world is to collaborate with God in establishing shalom and imposing his rule and reign on the nations and regions of the planet.

The concept of mission and missions holds various interpretations and perspectives across religious, cultural, and academic realms. It encompasses the fundamental principles and practices of purposeful endeavours undertaken to spread specific beliefs, values, or ideologies which shall be criticised shortly. But mainly how does mission differ from missions if not the

pluralisation of the fore to show the context of multiples aspects of mission being engaged by an organisation to reach the unreached at every cost possible.

i. Religious and Spiritual Endeavours

In a religious context, mission refers to the deliberate efforts undertaken by individuals or organisations to propagate and disseminate religious beliefs¹⁴⁴. In this context the religious beliefs are fundamental beliefs of the gospel of redemption being emphasised in John 3.5 that except a man be born of water and spirit he will not be able enter the Kingdom of God¹⁴⁵. This often involves evangelism, humanitarian aid, and charitable activities aimed at sharing religious teachings or values.

ii. Cultural and Academic Interpretations

In a cultural or academic context, missions encompass broader endeavours beyond religious contexts.¹⁴⁶ It may include initiatives focused on cultural exchange, educational development, social justice, or humanitarian aid, aiming for global development and understanding.

iii. Historical Significance

The concept of missions has a historical background, particularly associated with the exploration and expansion of European powers during the colonial era¹⁴⁷. It reflects the efforts to spread Christianity, establish colonies, and exert influence across different regions globally.

iv. Contemporary Relevance

In contemporary times, missions continue to evolve with a diverse range of objectives¹⁴⁸. Missionary work includes activities aimed at societal transformation, poverty alleviation,

human rights advocacy, and environmental conservation, reflecting broader social and ethical concerns.

v. Multifaceted Nature

The concept of missions embodies a multifaceted nature with various approaches and methods¹⁴⁹. It involves diverse strategies such as cross-cultural engagement, indigenous empowerment, contextualization of teachings, and collaboration with local communities.

vi. Ethical Considerations

Missions also raise ethical considerations related to cultural sensitivity, respect for local traditions, and the impact of external influences on indigenous cultures¹⁵⁰. It prompts discussions on the balance between promoting beliefs and respecting autonomy within diverse cultural contexts.

2.1.14b Evangelism and Missions

Evangelism and missions are closely interrelated concepts within the context of spreading religious beliefs, especially within Christianity. While both share the common goal of sharing faith, they differ in their focus, scope, and methods. For instance, for Evangelism, Evangelism primarily centres on the proclamation of the Christian gospel or good news¹⁵¹. It emphasises individual conversion, inviting people to embrace faith in Jesus Christ as a means to salvation and spiritual transformation. By proxy, the concept of Personal Outreach (or, personal evangelism) is a subset of Evangelism which often involves personal interactions and direct communication¹⁵². It includes activities such as sharing testimonies, preaching, distributing religious literature, engaging in conversations, and inviting individuals to church or religious gatherings. There is a phenomenon of Spiritual Conversion in which the central aim is leading individuals to a personal commitment of faith in Christ, and which in most

cases come as personal experiences people had, with an evident of changed living¹⁵³. It basically focuses on bringing about a change in individuals' beliefs and lives through accepting Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. In all of these, relationship building is the hub of evangelism, especially the personal evangelism. This is because it involves building relationships and connecting with individuals on a personal level¹⁵⁴. The emphasis here include: empathy, understanding, and establishing connections to convey the Christian message effectively.

On the platform of missions, it differs from evangelism because it seems to encompass a broader and diverse set of activities beyond individual evangelistic efforts¹⁵⁵. Of course, there are aspects of evangelism in which a group could be involved¹⁵⁶. This idea here is a wide range of initiatives, such as church planting, humanitarian aid, educational programs, social justice advocacy, and cross-cultural engagement. Another point is contextual engagement which Missions is largely known for because contextualization addresses diverse cultural and societal contexts¹⁵⁷. It aims to adapt the message of the gospel and methods to resonate with different cultural norms, values, and practices. Collective Outreach is one of the challenges of the missionary work because it involves collective efforts by organisations, groups, or churches¹⁵⁸. Unfortunately, very few organisations are willing to collaborate on mission fields, or pull resources together to build a common Christian front. In any way, this idea of collective outreach emphasises collaborative endeavours whose main objective is often focusing on community development, societal transformation, and international development. Lastly, the holistic approach is an approach missions may adopt to addressing spiritual, social, and physical needs. This encompasses efforts to address poverty, injustice, healthcare, education, and environmental concerns alongside spiritual goals.

Conclusively, it is worth noting that Ayotunde Okelana conducted a study on the difference between Evangelism and Missions¹⁵⁹. In the publication "Doing a Functional-Semantic

Differentiation between Missions and Evangelism” he argued in contrast to the notion that evangelism and missions are same, or that evangelism connoted home missions and Missions foreign missions. He summarised his effort with a table exhibiting 10 parameters by which missions differ from evangelism.

No.	Parameter	Missions	Evangelism
1.	Personnel Involved	Mission is the arrowhead of the Church. But not every member gets involved as in going. It is either you are called to go; or you have definite passion for the call, so you still go.	Evangelism is a business of every believer in the Wesleyan soteriological model, so everyone in an evangelical, protestant, etc. can be involved, every must go!
2.	Duration of Engagement	Missionary Engagement most of the times run into several years ranging from one year to as much as 30, 40 year, or till death; e.g. as in the case of Mary Slessor in Calabar, Nigeria (1876 – 1915) ¹⁶⁰ [40 years of Active Service in Nigeria]; or Gladys Aylwards who worked in China (1930 – 1970) ¹⁶¹ .	The longest Evangelism outreach could be for about a month; or possibly for a whole year. Hardly do members who go on outreach stay on the field for more than this period.
3.	Localisation of the Personnel	No missionary would be living outside the domain of his or her field and be effective. Missionaries are rightly stationed and domicile on their fields. A missionary to Ife, or Mokwa would naturally live on his field among the people group is sent to ¹⁶² .	An evangelistic team does not have to live on the field the team is reaching out to. Soul-winners on evangelism tours come and go, even if they had intentions visiting and supporting missionaries for a long time.
4.	Cost Investment	The missionary enterprise is not an investment an agency or church organisation dabbles into without proper cost analysis – housing, health insurance of the missionary and his family, children education, travelling costs, personal development, pension, etc.	As expensive as any evangelism outreach could be, its cost would not match the expenses that would be incurred in a mission work considering the overhead involved.
5.	Population of Personnel Involved	Usually because of the duration of stay on a mission field and its cost implication, not so many missionaries are positioned on a single field. Most of the times, a single family (father, mother and their children) are placed on a field, or to a people group.	Depending on the form of Evangelism been embarked upon – personal, or a group; a large number of congregants usually get involved with evangelism. This may have to do with a special day in a city [independence Day], a holiday [as in RCCG Go-A-Fishing exercise], or festive period.
6.	Discipleship Mode	The mode of discipleship on a mission field cannot be compared to how it shall be done in a traditional church setting because every move of the missionary is a part of disciple-ing the	Discipleship under evangelism is usually done sharing the converts amongst those who went to evangelise them. This could be in the form of a one-on-one stuff; or as seem appropriate to the disciple, or

		people. He lives amongst them. They see him act in sorrow and joy, peace and conflict. Discipleship on the Mission field is habitual, continuous and unplanned.	church policy, until the disciples become workers too.
7.	Methodology of Reaching Out	The relational approach is the first and basic methodology of the missionary. He or she proves the Gospel by the life they live. Bible studies, Child christening, Weddings, Housewarming, etc., could also be engaged to reaching the people.	In most evangelism outreaches there are no prior relationship with the audience. In fact, the soul-winners are not sure of whom they shall be meeting today. So no relationship occurs until the soul-winner starts one and follows up if the prospective convert is interested in the relationship.
8.	Quality of Training of Personnel	Anybody who seems convinced of a call for Missions, or who is thought to be called must first be sent for training in a Missions College, before advancing into the field. This action is expected in order to reduce Missionale casualty on the field ¹⁶³ .	Evangelism training does not need a long duration, or a special training outside of the church walls.
9.	Need for Acculturation	Missions work is an intercultural enterprise since most of the times the missionary may have to cross-culture. If this is the case, then there shall be need for him to get immersed into the new culture starting with the dressing of the people, their language, food, housing style, naming some of his children in their language, etc. Acculturation is an indispensable baptism for the missionary.	A people on Evangelism do not need worry, to acculturate as it were since they shall be meeting souls they do not know at every point in time. At extreme cases, interpreters may be required.
10.	Risk Analysis	Performing a risk analysis includes considering the possibility of adverse events caused by either natural processes, like severe storms, earthquakes or floods, or adverse events caused by malicious or inadvertent human activities ¹⁶⁴ . The risks expected on mission fields cannot be compared to the challenges of Evangelism. For example, David Livingstone was attacked by a lion; Hudson Taylor lost his child; Jim Elliot lost his life ^{165,166,167} .	Street Evangelisms have hardly recorded a risk as high as the one described on Mission Fields. It is true Village Evangelism could have the risk of travelling on the sea, on the road; or even at the risk of attack by villagers [as experienced by members of Student Mission Club in Abeokuta, Nigeria]. But none can be compared to the risk of working and living among a hostile community.

Source: Okelana, 2018

2.1.14c Theology of Mission

The theology of mission delves into the understanding, principles, and beliefs underlying Christian mission, exploring its theological foundations, purposes, and implications. It shapes the perspectives and practices of missions within the Christian faith, encompassing various

theological concepts and frameworks. These key aspects of the theology of Mission highlighted below.

i. *Missio Dei*

At the core of the theology of mission lies the concept of *Missio Dei*, the mission of God¹⁶⁸. It emphasizes that mission originates from God, reflecting God's character and purpose to redeem, reconcile, and restore humanity. At its essence, *Missio Dei* reflects God's nature of love, compassion, and redemption. It highlights God's desire to reconcile humanity to Himself, bringing about restoration and transformation. *Missio Dei* encompasses the entirety of God's purposes for creation. It involves God's salvific work, reconciling individuals to Himself, but extends to the restoration of relationships, communities, and the entire cosmos.

While the mission originates from God, humans are invited to participate in God's mission¹⁶⁹. *Missio Dei* invites believers to join in God's work of redemption, partnering with God in sharing His love and reconciling humanity to Himself.

ii. Implications for Missionaries

Understanding *Missio Dei* influences the approach of missionaries¹⁷⁰. It encourages a posture of humility, acknowledging that mission work is an invitation to join in God's on-going work rather than a human-driven agenda.

iii. Incarnational Model

The theology of mission often adopts an incarnational model based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ¹⁷¹. It emphasizes embodying the love, compassion, and service demonstrated by Christ in engaging with communities.

iv. Kingdom of God

Central to the theology of mission is the Kingdom of God, reflecting God's reign and transformative work. It involves both the proclamation and demonstration of God's Kingdom values, emphasizing justice, peace, and righteousness.

v. Contextualisation and Cultural Engagement

Theology of mission underscores the importance of contextualisation. It advocates for adapting the Christian message to various cultural contexts while maintaining its core truths and relevance within diverse settings.

vi. Holistic Transformation

Theology of mission promotes holistic transformation encompassing spiritual, social, and physical dimensions. It seeks to address not only spiritual needs but also social justice, humanitarian aid, education, and healthcare.

vii. Partnership and Collaboration

It emphasizes partnership and collaboration in mission endeavours¹⁷². Theology of mission encourages cooperation among different churches, organizations, and local communities in advancing God's mission collectively.

2.1.14d The Church's Function in Mission

The Church plays a vital and diverse role in shaping global missions that are both spiritual and humanitarian in nature. The Church has always been essential to missions work, both in terms of evangelization and outreach activities. The following are some essential facets of the mission of the Church:

- i. Evangelization: The main goals of the Church are to spread the gospel and the teachings of Jesus Christ. To do this, one must evangelise, preach, and instruct others in order to win them to faith in Christ¹⁷³.
- ii. Missions and Outreach: To carry out their missionary work, churches sponsor missionaries locally and internationally who go out into various places to preach the gospel, offer relief to the needy, and work on community development¹⁷⁴.
- iii. Humanitarian Work: A large number of churches actively take part in community development, disaster assistance, healthcare, education, and food and shelter provision. These initiatives frequently target societal issues including inequality, poverty, and other problems¹⁷⁵.
- iv. Training and Discipleship: The Church uses training programmes, Bible studies, and discipleship programmes to focus on developing and empowering believers. This aids in bolstering people's faith and getting them ready to take an active role in missionary work¹⁷⁶.
- v. Engagement with Culture and Contextualization: Mission-oriented churches recognise the value of cultural adaptation. To successfully convey the Christian message, they work to contextualise the gospel while honouring and incorporating regional languages, customs, and traditions¹⁷⁷.
- vi. Prayer and Spiritual assistance: Through prayer networks, global concerns intercession, and the global dissemination of the Gospel, the Church provides spiritual assistance¹⁷⁸.
- vii. Cooperation and Partnerships: In order to maximise their impact in mission work, churches frequently partner with other organisations, both secular and religious. These collaborations may entail cooperative efforts on lobbying projects, disaster relief efforts, or community projects¹⁷⁹.

viii. Encouraging Justice and Peace: Certain religions take part in social justice advocacy and activism, supporting projects aimed at fostering peace, confronting human rights abuses, and supporting the downtrodden and marginalised¹⁸⁰.

ix. Taking Care of Spiritual necessities: In addition to providing for material necessities, the Church strives to take care of spiritual needs by providing communities and individuals with pastoral care, direction, and counselling¹⁸¹.

x. Long-Term Sustainable Development: The Church strives for long-term sustainable development in addition to immediate aid. This entails developing local leaders, empowering local communities, and encouraging self-sufficiency¹⁸².

2.1.14e Missiological History of the Church

The missiological history of the church refers to the study of how the Christian mission—spreading the Gospel and establishing the church—has been carried out throughout history. This history reflects the various approaches, strategies, theological understandings, and cultural interactions that have shaped Christian mission from the time of Jesus and the early apostles to the present day.

2.1.14f Mission in the Apostolic Era A.D. 30 – 100

From 30 to 100 A.D., the Apostolic Era was a critical time in the development of Christian missions. The Great Commission of Jesus Christ to "go and make disciples of all nations" was followed by the early Church embarked on spreading the Gospel message¹⁸³. This period saw the foundational groundwork laid for Christian mission, characterised by fervent evangelism, community-building, and the establishment of the early Christian communities.

At first, Jerusalem and the rescue of the Jewish people alone were at the core of the disciples' interpretation of the mission Dei. However, following Christ's pre-Pentecostal teachings

recorded in Acts 1.4–8, the disciples' perspectives were altered. They soon after received the Holy Spirit's empowerment on the Day of Pentecost. They started telling other Jews and others all across the world that Jesus Christ was the Messiah¹⁸⁴. The missionary trips of apostles like Peter and John, who preached everywhere they went and worked miracles to draw followers and found new Christian communities, are chronicled in the book of Acts¹⁸⁵.

Paul, who was once known as Saul, became a significant player in the Christian movement. His missionary travels, which are described in the Acts of the Apostles and his epistles, took him outside of Jewish borders and into Gentile areas. Paul's strategy involves modifying his teaching to fit various cultural settings, which was an important development in the early Christian missions.

There were many obstacles faced by missionaries during this time. Significant barriers included persecution, cultural differences, and opposition from religious authority. The early Christians persevered in sharing the Gospel and creating communities focused around their trust in Jesus Christ in spite of these obstacles.

The Apostolic Era played a fundamental role in developing the core of Christian mission, according to academics like David Bosch in his 1991 book "Transforming Mission." The International Bulletin of Mission Research of 1992 article "The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission" by Ralph D. Winter explores the variety of missionary endeavours at this time, emphasising the complex character of early Christian missions¹⁸⁶.

The foundation for the spread of Christianity outside of its Jewish roots was established during the Apostolic Era. By highlighting the universality of the Gospel message and the Church's commitment to reach individuals from all backgrounds and cultures, it established a precedent for future missionary initiatives.

2.1.14g Church Fathers' Era of Mission (AD 100–500)

The concept of mission underwent important developments and formed the groundwork for understandings that affected the spread of the Christian faith during the Church Fathers Era (AD 100 – 500). During this time, significant thinkers and leaders came to prominence, helping to define the Church's mission of evangelization.

i. Evangelization and Expansion: Early Church Fathers who stressed the value of sharing the gospel with those outside of the initial apostolic communities were Ignatius of Antioch, Clement of Rome, and Polycarp of Smyrna. They made evangelising and the founding of Christian communities in different areas their top priorities.

ii. Apologists and Defenders of religion: In their interactions with non-Christians, figures such as Tertullian and Justin Martyr defended and explained the Christian religion in opposition to paganism and the prevalent philosophical systems of the Roman Empire. By correcting misunderstandings about Christianity, their writings attempted to explain and uphold the Christian worldview in the face of opposition. This way, they indirectly supported the mission.

iii. Formation of Christian Doctrine: Theological concepts were formulated in large part by Church Fathers such as Augustine and Origen. Even though they were not actively engaged in missions, their writings and teachings established the theological foundation for subsequently carried out missions. Additionally, they emphasised that the Christian message was meant for everyone, emphasising its universality.

iv. Monastic Movements and Missions: The advent of monasticism, as demonstrated by the lives of saints like St. Benedict and St. Anthony of Egypt, had an impact on missionary effort. Monastic communities functioned as hubs for education and the study of the Bible. They also

frequently acted as the headquarters for missionary endeavours, sending monks and nuns to promote Christianity in far-off places.

v. Martyrdom and Witness: Several Church Fathers, including Ignatius of Antioch, chose to embrace martyrdom rather than abandon their beliefs in the face of persecution during the early Church. Their unwavering dedication to Christianity and courage in the face of persecution motivated others and provided a potent example of the faith they preached.

vi. Missionary Travels: A few Church Fathers, such as Methodius and Cyril, went on missions to evangelise different ethnic groups. They helped the faith become more indigenous by tailoring the Christian message to the regional tongues and customs.

vii. Councils and Church Unity: The Church Fathers addressed theological disputes that affected the unity of the Church by playing important roles in ecumenical councils. In addition to directly influencing Christian doctrine, the choices made in these councils had an indirect impact on missionary tactics and approaches.

All things considered, the Church's mission grew throughout the time of the Church Fathers in a number of ways, including evangelisation, doctrinal advancement, martyrdom, and interactions with other civilisations. Their contributions shaped the path of Christianity's expansion in the decades that followed by laying the foundation for the missionary efforts that came after.

2.1.14h Missions in the Medieval Age (500 – 1500 AD)

The functional space of Christian missions experienced a number of changes between 500 and 1500 AD as a result of political, social, and theological influences. During this time, Christianity spread to new areas, people interacted with people from other cultural backgrounds, and mission efforts combined religious and political goals.

The Renaissance period (1350 – 1650) saw the start of the world's evangelisation and the completion of Europe's nominal Christianisation. This process of evangelisation which had its roots in mediaeval thought developed to support European discovery and globalisation. Actually, it was during this time that the word "mission" began to replace the terms "evangelisation" and "propagation" as the preferred way to describe efforts to convert people to Christianity, or to a certain form of Christianity. Due to geographical and theological factors, the Latin Catholic Church predominated over these centuries. Missionary history makes up a large portion of the first documented histories of the illiterate converts. The missionaries' propensity to write extensively and in European languages has made them desirable sources for academics interested in the more comprehensive histories of those areas, even in societies where Christianity did not predominate¹⁸⁷.

i. Monastic Missions: Throughout the Middle Ages, monastic institutions were essential to missionary endeavours. As they travelled, monks and nuns from orders like the Benedictines, Franciscans, and Dominicans built schools and monasteries while evangelising new areas. Monastic missionaries frequently worked as teachers, fusing their religious teachings with academic and literacy training.

ii. Europe's conversion: During the Middle Ages, Christianity spread throughout much of Europe. These endeavours benefited greatly from the contributions of individuals like as St. Patrick in Ireland, St. Boniface in Germany, and Cyril and Methodius in Eastern Europe. They incorporated indigenous components into religious ceremonies and modified Christian teachings to fit local languages, customs, and traditions.

iii. Christianisation and Political Power: During this time, there was an increasing convergence of the Church's and political forces' relationship. Conversion efforts were frequently encouraged or mandated by rulers as a way to strengthen their hold on power and

unite their domains around Christianity. As a result, entire kingdoms and communities were converted to Christianity – sometimes violently.

iv. Crusades and Missionary Efforts: In an effort to free the Holy Land from Muslim rule, Western European Christians launched the Crusades, which combined military conquest with a fervent religious commitment. The main goal of the Crusades was to retake Jerusalem, but they also served as a platform for interactions between other cultures and religions, which resulted in some missionary work among non-Christian tribes in the Eastern Mediterranean.

v. Military Orders and Knightly Orders: During the Crusades, religious missions and military endeavours were united by orders like the Knights Hospitaller and Templar. They carried out missionary activity in the areas ruled by Christians in addition to guarding travellers.

vi. Encounters with Islam and Judaism: Judaism, Islam, and Christianity interacted and clashed during the Middle Ages. In addition to exchanges of ideas and cultural components that contributed to a wider awareness of religious diversity, there were also incidents of violence and religious strife.

vii. Theological and Philosophical Engagement: Christian thought during this time was affected by theological and philosophical debates between academics like as Thomas Aquinas and Anselm of Canterbury. Their writings offered conceptual frameworks for comprehending and defending Christianity, which had an indirect impact on missionary methods.

In conclusion, a variety of intricate interactions between political, religious, and cultural elements shaped missionary endeavours during the Middle Ages. The spread of Christianity, which was frequently linked to political authority, resulted in the Christianization of different

parts of Europe and interactions with other civilizations, setting the stage for the development of missionary tactics in later centuries.

2.1.14i Missions in the Reformation and Protestant Age (1500- 1700 AD)

During the Reformation and Protestant Age (1500-1700 AD), the landscape of missions underwent significant changes due to the religious reforms initiated by key figures like Martin Luther, John Calvin, and other reformers. This period marked a transition from the dominance of the Roman Catholic Church to the emergence of various Protestant denominations, each with its own perspectives on missionary endeavours.

i.) The Reformation and Missions: The Protestant Reformation challenged the authority of the Roman Catholic Church and led to the establishment of various Protestant denominations. Reformers emphasised the direct reading of Scripture and personal engagement with the teachings of Christianity. This emphasis on individual interpretation and personal faith had implications for missionary endeavours, encouraging a more direct and personal approach to spreading the Gospel. Alex Kocman in his “Reformation Day: 5 Ways the Reformation Gave Us Missions - Without the Reformation, the modern missions movement would never have been born” explained in five ways how the reformation birth the modern missions movement¹⁸⁸.

a. Recovery of the Gospel

Without the gospel, missions are pointless. And the Reformers risked their lives to spread the core message of the gospel, which is justification by faith. The saying that the gospel was "lost" before the Reformation would be untrue. In Matthew 16:18, the Lord Jesus made a vow to establish his church and to keep it safe from harm. But the biblical gospel had been marginalised within the organisation that called itself the church. A sacramental system had

developed that stifled grace by making parishioners fearful and putting them through a maze of actions they thought would be enough to appease the church and God. The biblical message that was restored during the Reformation is embodied in the five solas. These are: Only faith (sola fide). Just grace, no more. Christ alone – solus Christus. Just the Bible – sola scriptura. Glory to God alone, Soli Deo Gloria. But think about the missiological consequences of "faith alone," which is one of these catchphrases. When God makes a covenant with Abram in Genesis 12, he reveals his plan for the entire world: "...in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (v. 3). What is this blessing for the world? Wellness? Rich? Not at all. According to the apostle Paul, "the Scripture preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed,' foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith" (Galatians 3:8). Justification by faith is the blessing that God promised to all the nations in Genesis 12 and the pillar upon which the church is built or crumbles, according to Luther. Additionally, the article determines whether a mission succeeds or fails. The Reformation returned the good news to the people who could spread it throughout the world.

b. Rapid Development in Missionary Sending and Theological Education

The Reformation had a strongly missional bent, even if its primary goal was to convert Europe's nominal Christians rather than the unreached at this time. As it usually does, this resurgence of a robust, gospel-centred theology gave rise to a missions' movement. By 1562, Geneva, Switzerland, had developed into a thriving missionary-sending hub, sending up to 1,200 pastors to establish over 2,000 churches in Calvin's home France, thanks to the influential five sermons a week ministry of John Calvin. Additionally, Protestants in landlocked Geneva teamed up with French churches in the mid-1600s to send ministers to Brazil for the first time; this may have awakened Geneveses' interest in going on missions in the future. "A good missionary is a good theologian," said Calvin himself. An effective

missionary is a competent theologian. Beyond France, the missionary zeal also reached church leaders such as John Knox, who is renowned for his prayer, "Give me Scotland, or I die." If anything, it may be argued that the Reformation was a missionary movement in and of itself, one that was more concerned with reaching the masses of unconverted churchgoers in "Christianised" Europe than with engaging in cross-cultural evangelism.

c. Scripture Propagation

The gospel was multiplied by the combined influence of the Reformers' preaching and the translation of Scripture, like a lamp driving out darkness. The Reformation was sparked by John Wycliffe, the forerunner of the movement, who translated the Bible into the common tongue of the people. Eventually, Martin Luther and Jan Hus would be motivated by Wycliffe's legacy, leading Luther to translate the Bible into German. Not only did William Tyndale teach the Scriptures like the other Reformers did, but he also translated the Bible into English, which is why he became known as the father of the English Reformation in England. The Reformation stressed how important it is for people to hear the Word and personally respond in faith, in contrast to the Roman Catholic Church's conviction that the clergy must be the guardian of all doctrinal truth. Furthermore, the need to translate and spread the Bible grew as more people came into contact with it for the first time. Missions' specialists now hold that translating Scripture into an unreached people group's "heart language"—that is, the language in which they think—is one way to reach them. The Reformation is the wellspring of this impetus.

d. Geographical Extension

The church was founded on the blood of martyrs throughout its history. This held true during the Reformation and was also mentioned in Acts 8:1-4. While some Reformers paid a price in their lives, others were expelled from their homes and countries while fervently advancing Protestant doctrine. Calvin was forced to Geneva, where he set up his sending base, by

France's unwelcoming attitude towards the Protestants. Similar to this, the Anabaptists dispersed a missionary spirit as they escaped persecution, although having quite different theological views. Later, the Puritans – the intellectual progenitors of Reformed thought—were driven over the Atlantic to the newly found continent by persecution from the English church establishment. David Brainerd became a genuine missionary to the Native Americans in the northeast during the 16th century. He discovered that non-evangelised peoples may accept the gospel easily and directly without the missionary using the conventional apologetic approach that was common in Europe earlier. Not only was the renowned Jonathan Edwards, Brainerd's biographer, one of America's finest pastoral-theological thinkers, but he was also a missionary to the Mohican people. Furthermore, Edwards' Humble Attempt presented a ground-breaking argument that the Great Commission was a crucial component of God's purpose for the church before Christ's second coming. Today, the East and global South has become the centre of gravity for Christianity worldwide because of the massive gospel expansion that has occurred in Asia and Africa. It is hard to imagine history without the westward migration of baptised Christians, however, because the Reformation and the wave of mission-minded Protestant immigrants to the Americas drove that centre hard to the West.

e. The Modern Missions Movement's Inception

The history of Reformation missions begins with the Reformers and continues through the English Baptists, William Carey, the founder of the modern missionary movement, and beyond. Carey disregarded the objections of those around him, despite being notably reprimanded by a fellow Baptist pastor, saying, "When God pleases to convert the heathen, he will do it without you." As a cobbler by profession, Carey proudly showed off globe maps in his store and had demographic information on hand, utilising early mission mobilisation techniques on his gullible customers. One of Carey's biggest achievements, aside from his own missionary work in India, was his masterwork Enquiry, which was designed to disprove

the notion that the Great Commission was given to all believers and not only to the Apostles. Carey's Enquiry presented a compelling, scriptural argument for evangelism outside the boundaries of Christendom and, perhaps most impressively, made an effort to gather all the facts on world population and religions at the time in order to assess the magnitude of the task still before.

ii.) Print Revolution and Missionary Literature: The invention of the printing press played a crucial role in the spread of Protestant ideas and missionary efforts. Missionaries, such as William Tyndale and John Eliot, utilised the printing press to translate and distribute the Bible in local languages, making it accessible to a broader audience. What happened¹⁸⁹?

- a. The Revolution of Printing: When Gutenberg started printing the Bible in 1450, the era of moveable type printing officially began. The first copy of the Bible was published in 1455. Initially, printers mostly printed considerably larger copies of the texts that had already been distributed, frequently with cumulative faults. Later, humanism changed the calibre of books by insisting on using the original Latin, Greek, and Hebrew texts. Printers started using editors, proof-readers, and writers with specialised knowledge. With the integration of new techniques that allowed for huge gains in the range, speed, and dissemination of knowledge, a new breed of educated printer-publishers came into being. Additionally, printing sparked the growth of new readerships. Popular illustrated books greatly increased demand, affordability, and literacy. The supremacy of intellectual elites was challenged by this unregulated and chaotic printing revolution, which also aided in the "democratisation" of information.

- b. Renaissance Printing: The Renaissance did not begin with the printing revolution. During the "high Renaissance" of the mid-15th century, mass printing became possible. Before widespread printing, many Italian Renaissance cultural and artistic movements had already made their way to central and northern Europe (Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent, Paris, Nuremburg, Dresden, Cracow, etc.), mainly via writers, painters, scholars, students, and wandering priests. Though printing did not start the Renaissance, the two soon developed a mutual dependence. Printing made ideas more widely circulated, facilitating quicker, more varied exchanges and developments.
- c. The Reformation, the Counter-Reformation, and Printing Protestantism's growth and expansion: these were largely fuelled by printing, which was used to translate holy writings into everyday languages and to produce an endless supply of pamphlets and woodcuts that expressed reformer ideologies and criticised the practices and doctrines of the traditional church. However, the Catholic Church valued printing just as much as Protestantism did. The Catholic Church's rites and teachings were standardised through printing. Worship uniformity eclipsed the diversity of preaching styles. Afterwards, the Counter Reformation was strengthened by this cohesive style of worship.
- d. The Age of Enlightenment and Printing: The philosophes' writings were printed to guarantee that they were read by those outside of France. But also since all their works were put on the Catholic Index, banning them was probably the best publicity they could have for boosting sales. Enlightenment thinkers like Diderot, Rousseau, Helvetius and Voltaire, after experiencing censorship in France, got their books published by printers in towns and cities such as Geneva, Basle and Neuchâtel in Switzerland, and Amsterdam and

Rotterdam in the United Provinces. Often the printers, who had produced humanist and protestant books and pamphlets and now printed the works of the philosophes, were living in cities where they were free from prosecution or persecution by the Inquisition. The printed word was the battleground on which the Enlightenment fought against traditional elites.

iii.) Colonial Expansion and Missionary Activities: European colonial expansion during this period provided opportunities for missionary activities in newly discovered territories. Missionaries accompanied explorers and settlers to regions in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. They aimed to convert indigenous populations to Christianity, often with the backing of colonial powers, leading to the establishment of mission stations and Christian communities in these areas. The work of European colonialism was heavily reliant on Christian missionary activities, which gave British missionaries and those who supported them a sense of moral authority and fairness. Missionary proselytising turned imperial undertakings into moral allegories by providing the British people with a paradigm of "civilised" expansionism and colonial community management throughout the history of imperial expansion. Nonetheless, missionary work was always linked to implicit or overt cultural transformation. By reshaping the person, the society, and the state according to western, Christian ideologies, it aimed to turn native communities into imperial models of civility and modernity. Within the British Empire, missionary work was often associated with the first stages of imperial growth, especially during what is known historically as the 'second' era of British imperialism (1784 – 1867)¹⁹⁰. Christianisation was viewed as an essential component of the colonisation and civilisation efforts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries due to the increased sense of religiosity prevalent in Britain during this period. According to Jamie Scott, "by the middle of the nineteenth century, governments, merchants, explorers, and other adventurers were

exploiting the aura of ethical responsibility lent by religion to every effort to carry British civilisation to a benighted world," under the double aegis of "the bible and the flag."

a. Technique of Spread: How did Christianity spread throughout Africa to take the lead as the most popular religion there? We evaluate the causative impacts of malaria, railroads, and cash crops on mission location using annual panel census data on Christian missions from 1751 to 1932 in Ghana, and pre-1924 data on missions for 43 sub-Saharan African nations. We discover that missions were first founded in wealthier, healthier, and more accessible locations before spreading to less developed economies. We contend that the endogeneity of missionary expansion may have been overlooked, casting doubt on the relationship between missions and Africa's economic growth. We discover that the endogeneity issue is made worse when mission data is taken from Christian missionary atlases, which over-reported a number of well-known missions that were also founded in the early years.

b. Cultural Shift: The quick spread of Christianity outside of Europe has been one of the most significant cultural shifts in contemporary history. Sub-Saharan Africa has experienced a notably rapid conversion rate. Africa is the continent with the greatest percentage of Christians, from 304.3 (36.9%) million in 2001 to 657.3 (51.3%) million in 2020, Christians made up the majority of the African population. Although there were 553 million Muslims worldwide in 2020 as opposed to 371.5 million in 2001, their share of the population fell from 45.1% in 2001 to 43.1% in 2020¹⁹¹. By 2060, Africans will make up 42% of all Christians worldwide if current trends continue. Sub-Saharan Africa is also home to the world's most faithful Christians in terms of church attendance, according to the World Values Survey, which positions it as "the future of the world's most popular religion".

c. Missionaries supporting colonialists in Development: Massive Christian missionary efforts aided in the overwhelming conversion of Africans. The majority of formal education and

healthcare were given by missions during the colonial era^{192 - 193}. Other aspects of effort that demonstrate significant impacts includes: fertility, social mobility, and local economic development^{194, 195, 196}.

iv.) Denominational Missionary Societies: The formation of missionary societies, such as the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), and later on, the Moravian Church's missions, became prominent during this era. These societies were dedicated to sending missionaries to non-Christian regions and establishing schools, hospitals, and churches to promote Christianity.

v.) Different Approaches to Missions: Protestant denominations adopted diverse missionary approaches. Some focused on direct evangelization and preaching, while others emphasized educational and social work alongside spreading the Gospel. Missionaries often adapted their methods to the cultural contexts of the regions they aimed to reach.

vi. Persecution and Martyrdom: Missionaries faced challenges and persecution, especially in regions resistant to conversion. The willingness of missionaries to endure hardship and even martyrdom became a powerful testimony to their faith and dedication to spreading Christianity.

vii. Impact on Indigenous Cultures: The interaction between missionaries and indigenous cultures resulted in the exchange of ideas, cultural practices, and the integration of Christian beliefs with local customs. This sometimes led to syncretism – a blending of religious beliefs and practices.

In summary, the Reformation and Protestant Age witnessed a diversification of missionary activities, with various denominations and missionary societies actively engaged in spreading

Christianity across continents. The era marked the beginning of organised Protestant missions, setting the stage for the significant expansion of Christian missions in subsequent centuries.

2.1.14j Missions in the Modern Age (1800 – 2000 AD)

During the Modern Age (1800 – 2000 AD), missions underwent significant transformations due to technological advancements, globalisation, colonisation, and the rise of new religious movements. This period witnessed a surge in missionary activities, expanding the reach of Christianity to various corners of the world.

a.) Colonial Expansion and Missionary Endeavours: European colonialism reached its peak during the Modern Age, leading to the establishment of colonies across Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Missionaries often accompanied colonial powers, aiming to convert indigenous populations to Christianity. They set up schools, hospitals, and churches, intertwining religious efforts with colonial expansion.

b.) Missionary Societies and Movements: The Modern Age saw the rise of numerous missionary societies and movements dedicated to spreading Christianity globally. Groups like the London Missionary Society, the Methodist Missionary Society, and the China Inland Mission sent missionaries to previously unexplored territories, emphasizing evangelism, education, and medical missions.

c.) Industrial Revolution and Missionary Expansion: Technological advancements, including steamships and railways, facilitated missionary movements. Missionaries could travel more efficiently to distant regions, enabling broader outreach and establishing connections between different parts of the world.

d.) Theological and Educational Contributions: Missionaries during this era often contributed to the development of education and literacy in the regions they served. They founded

schools, translated the Bible into local languages, and introduced Western education systems, impacting indigenous cultures and societies.

v.) Challenges and Adaptations: Missionaries faced various challenges, including resistance from local populations, cultural barriers, and political instability. Some missionaries adapted their approaches by integrating indigenous customs and practices into Christian worship and establishing contextualised forms of Christianity.

vi.) Missionary Expansion in Asia and Africa: Significant missionary efforts were directed towards Asia and Africa during this period. Missionaries in Asia, such as Hudson Taylor in China and Ram Mohan Roy in India, played crucial roles in evangelism and cultural exchange. In Africa, missionaries worked to spread Christianity while engaging with local traditions and societal structures.

vii.) Pentecostal and Evangelical Movements: The Modern Age witnessed the emergence of Pentecostal and Evangelical movements, which often had a strong missionary focus. The emphasis of these movements include: personal conversion, spiritual experiences, and missionary zeal, leading to rapid growth and outreach in various parts of the world.

viii.) Post-Colonial Shifts and Indigenous Leadership: The latter half of the 20th century saw many countries gaining independence from colonial powers. This led to shifts in missionary approaches, with an increasing emphasis on indigenous leadership and the development of local churches that were less dependent on Western support.

In summary, the Modern Age witnessed an era of widespread missionary activity driven by technological advancements, colonial expansion, and the efforts of various missionary societies and movements. The period marked significant shifts in approaches to missions, the

spread of Christianity to diverse cultures, and the rise of indigenous leadership within the global Christian community.

2.1.14k Mission in the Contemporary Church

Mission in the contemporary Church, spanning from the late 20th century to the present day, has undergone notable shifts influenced by globalisation, technological advancements, changing social dynamics, and diverse cultural landscapes. Here are key aspects characterizing mission in the contemporary Church:

- a. Globalisation and Interconnectedness: The contemporary Church operates in an increasingly interconnected world. Globalisation has facilitated easier communication, travel, and exchange of ideas, enabling missionaries to reach remote areas and diverse cultures more efficiently. This interconnectedness has also brought cultural diversity to local congregations, necessitating cross-cultural understanding and adaptation in mission work.
- b. Mission Beyond Geographical Boundaries: Mission in the contemporary Church extends beyond traditional geographic boundaries. There's an increased focus on urban mission, diaspora communities, and digital missions. Churches engage in mission efforts within cities and among migrant populations, recognising the diversity of cultures within their own communities. Additionally, digital platforms and technology allow for innovative forms of evangelism and outreach to individuals across the globe.
- c. Holistic Mission and Social Engagement: There's a growing emphasis on holistic mission, integrating social justice, humanitarian aid, and community development alongside evangelism. Churches and missionary organisations often engage in initiatives addressing poverty, healthcare, education, and human rights issues, recognising the interconnected nature of spiritual and social needs.

d. Contextualisation and Indigenous Leadership: Missionaries increasingly emphasise contextualised approaches, respecting local cultures, languages, and customs. Indigenous leadership development is encouraged, empowering local believers to take ownership of mission work in their communities. This shift towards indigenisation fosters sustainable and culturally relevant expressions of Christianity.

e. Ecumenical Collaboration and Partnerships: Contemporary mission efforts often involve collaboration among different Christian denominations and organisations. Ecumenical partnerships allow for shared resources, expertise, and a unified approach to addressing global challenges, promoting unity within the Body of Christ for effective mission work.

f. Cross-Cultural Communication and Training: Training in cross-cultural communication, contextual theology, and sensitivity to diverse worldviews has become essential for missionaries. Churches and organisations invest in equipping missionaries with the skills necessary for effective engagement with diverse cultural and religious contexts.

g. Challenges and Opportunities: Contemporary mission faces challenges such as religious pluralism, secularism, political unrest, and restrictions on religious freedom in some regions. However, technological advancements, increased awareness of global issues, and opportunities for collaboration present new avenues for mission work.

h. Environmental and Creation Care: There's a growing recognition within the Church of the importance of environmental stewardship and creation care as integral aspects of mission and Christian responsibility.

In conclusion, the contemporary Church's mission is characterised by adaptability, diversity, and a holistic approach that seeks to address spiritual, social, and cultural needs within a

globalised world. The focus on contextualisation, collaboration, and responding to changing societal dynamics defines the contemporary Church's engagement in mission endeavours.

2.1.14I Mission of Redeemed Christian Church of God

The mission of the Redeemed Christian of God (RCCG) is a global Pentecostal and evangelical mission which started in Nigeria with the vision of the General Superintendent – Reverend Josiah Akindayomi in 1952, and has developed into a momentous Christian denomination with an extensive international presence. Outlined below is an abridgment of the history of RCCG:

a. The RCCG was established in 1952 in Nigeria by Rev. Josiah Akindayomi, a former member of the Anglican Church, who had a series of visions and dreams from God. The church was founded in a modest house in Ebute Meta, Lagos, Nigeria, by Baba Alákòóso, as he was affectionately known, who had a longing for a more intimate and experiential contact with God. Under his direction, the congregation, first known as "Ìjọ Ògo Olúwa" in Yoruba, or "the Glory of God Parish," developed over time.

b. Growth and Transition in Leadership: After Akindayomi's passing into glory in 1973, Dr. Enoch Adeboye, a professor of Mathematics at the University of Lagos, took over as the church's leader. Under Adeboye's direction, the RCCG saw a period of fast growth and monumental expansion. He oversaw the church's outreach expansion, with evangelism, prayer, with the holiness teachings taking the centre stage.

c. Global Expansion: The RCCG has since established branches and mission fields in other nations as it saw tremendous growth both domestically in Nigeria and abroad. Numerous parishes and continental and regional institutions have been formed throughout Africa, Europe, the Americas, Asia, and the Middle East as a result of the church's international

mission initiatives. Some of these included initiatives are: Africa Missions, Holy Ghost Service, Festival of Life, Wholistic Mission, Christ Against Drugs Ministry (CADAM), Go-A-Fishing Outreach, Light Up, and so on.

d. Distinctive Beliefs and Practices: The RCCG places a heavy emphasis on Prayer, Personal Salvation, Evangelism, Missions, Sanctification, Baptism in the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, Divine healing, Laying-on of hands, Holy Matrimony, Church discipline, Lord's Supper, Great Tribulation, Second Coming of Christ, Eternal Judgement and other evangelical teachings. It also emphasises charismatic practices such as speaking in tongues. Millions of people worldwide attend the church's regular prayer and fasting sessions, conventions, and revivals.

e. Mission and Vision¹⁹⁷:

- i. To make heaven.
- ii. To take as many people with us.
- iii. To have a member of RCCG in every family of all nations.
- iv. To accomplish No. 1 above, holiness will be our lifestyle.
- v. To accomplish No. 2 and 3 above, we will plant churches within five minutes walking distance in every city and town of developing countries and within five minutes driving distance in every city and town of developed countries.
- vi. We will pursue these objectives until every Nation in the world is reached for the Lord Jesus Christ

f. Structural Development: The RCCG is organised hierarchically, with the General Overseer in charge of the organization's global operations. The church offers a number of evangelism-related departments, ministries, and initiatives.

In summary, the Redeemed Christian Church of God has evolved from its humble beginnings in Nigeria to become a global denomination with a significant presence and influence, emphasising evangelism, charismatic practices, and a strong commitment to spiritual growth and community development.

2.1.14m Mission Ministries of the RCCG

a. Africa Missions

The origins of Africa Missions may be traced back to Pastor (Mrs.) Folu Adeboye, the organisation's visionary, who visited mission fields in West Africa in 1996. She returned bearing a load and the urgent message that support was vitally needed for the missions. As a result, the "West Africa Missions Committee," as it was originally called, was established. Its primary objective was to support mission fields located only in the West African sub-region. The committee's purview was broadened to encompass community development initiatives for the host communities of the mission areas as well as the remainder of Africa. This evolution resulted from her going on a second missionary tour to the Central, Eastern, and Southern regions of Africa in 1997. Currently, the Africa Missions Organisation is a fully functional faith-based non-profit organisation dedicated to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and appropriate community development and empowerment programmes with underprivileged people in Africa and around the world¹⁹⁸.

b. Wholistic Mission

Wholistic Outreach is a rehabilitation home, providing emergency safe family atmosphere for unwed mothers. Wholistic Outreach has taken it upon itself, to attack this menace and rescue these young ladies from the harmful practice of prostitution in the society, thus supporting them to refocus towards adding value to the humanity. Her efforts has yielded fruitful results

as over 100 commercial sex workers had undergone rehabilitation in the home and long reintegrated to the society in the over 17 years the home has been in existence. It is a bit strange to see a ministry whose function is majorly to rehabilitate ladies of easy virtue. Wholistic Outreach Ministry was established in 2002 by Pastor Mrs Folu Adeboye, wife of Pastor Enoch Adeboye, the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. This is a home that provides shelter for victims of sex-trafficked girls, stranded teenage girls and deserted single mothers. In the home, their lives are restored with capacity building and educational opportunities through the carefully packed rehabilitation programmes aimed at re-establishing them to becoming resourceful members of the community.

The approach adopted to get these girls change their minds is simple. First of all, the outreach team do go to brothels on weekly basis to meet spotted girls. They are ministered to and if the brothel manager permits, after some time, meetings are held in the premises. While going for the outreach, the team are armed with a medical team, food supplies and the word of God, aside informing them that there is a better place where they can lay their heads than where they were. After some time, some of them will indicate interest to come out of the brothel. So, when they come to the home, we take them to police station to have their proper documentation. Once they come out, they spend minimum of three months and maximum of six months in the home. We use that period to nurture them in the word of God, they fast, pray and go for deliverance sessions. After that, we reconcile them back to their family members. Some will go back to their family while some others, their family may release them back to the home. More so, when they are going back, they are certainly signed out of the rehabilitation centre in the police station that they are no longer in the home.

When the team move out to fish for these girls, they go with the backing of God Almighty, with the help of Holy Spirit. It often surprising that there are least resistance from the brothel managers whom most of the times also surrender their lives to Christ. The last one we had at

Sagamu, Ogun State, the manager who is male, said he does not want to be involved with the job any longer. Unfortunately, there are thousands of people that want to take over the bed. It is also surprising that even if all of them leave that place in a week, the place will still be filled up by the following week. That is the world we are now.

Since inception, Wholistic Outreach has been able to rehabilitate more than one hundred (100) girls of these categories. There are some that have been with the home for a long time and because they are yet to be passable they are still within, hence such people are not counted among the one hundred. For instance, there is a girl who started JSS 1 from the home, now she is in the university. She comes back to us whenever she is on holiday. As it is, more than fifty (50) girls are in the home.

In spite of all of these efforts there are situations when some feel they cannot cope and want to go back. Yes, there are times some will complain of sex urges; or that they feel like sleeping with a man whether he wants to pay or not. This is why the home is staffed with counsellors, and 'mothers' that stay with them. You know habitual sex is not something that they can just stop all of a sudden but their will-power is also important, more importantly to understand that at this time they are already sexually active, or even hyperactive. Notwithstanding, it should be understood that for some of them, it is not that they really want to go into that business, but circumstances had led them into that.

It has not been all rosy rehabilitating these girls, the challenges are numerous. The challenge sometimes is that when they come; because there are rules and regulations in the home, and for someone that has been free all along, it is not easy for some of them. But, they are made to know and understand the regulations because the objective is for them to be focused. But, before they are brought into the home, they must be willing to come out of their old lives and

be strongly willing to embrace the new life style. In fact, Wholistic Outreach does not tell them to come to the home immediately; they are made come out of their own volition.

So many reasons have been given by several people why young girls go into prostitution. Based on the interactions had with these girls, it is majorly the economy that makes some of them do what they were doing. Some of them left their homes because someone from the city told them to come to the town for a better job. Most of times, their parents permit them without knowing the nature of the work they were opting for. The reason is that most parents have so many children they cannot take care of. Some even go as far as taking them abroad. There are some of the girls in Wholistic who came from the abroad. Also, some mothers are rich but lack the time for the family and the children. Some are also from broken homes. Others are led by peer pressure. They just want to party and feel a sense of belonging.

Aside the small skill jobs, there are some of the rehabilitated girls that have taken up professional careers. To the glory of God, the home has produced lawyers among them. Some of them have passed through the university and are working. A lot of them are even married ceremoniously. With this we are proud of them.

They are not age limits to any commercial sex worker willing to come into the home for a change of life. Every soul is important. So there is no emphasis on age. As a matter of fact, the youngest among the people the home now is 11 years old. She was brought from a village. Some of the girls already had children in the brothel and the children were brought up there. There is one who was not up to 13 when she was brought to Wholistic, but they had already destroyed her private part. She was rescued by the doctors, counsellors, psychiatrists and psychologist who work on her. She is now in JSS1. They are called 'daughters' in the home, hence, the title 'mothers'. So the home is a home, a family where people sit together, gist

together just as normal for every home. By design family settings are created where everyone flows and pray together.

It is a bit difficult to estimate the monthly expenditure and income of the home; but an average of two million Naira is spent on monthly basis. Aside from this, food stuffs of various kinds are supplied by the founder, Pastor Mrs Adeboye. The Mission also gives fund the home on quarterly basis as the founder gives also every month. Much of the money received and spent are expended on the education of these girls. As a matter of principle, the daughters are enrolled in quality schools¹⁹⁹.

c. CADAM

CADAM, Christ Against Drugs is a religious organisation under the Redeemed Christian Church of God. It was essentially established in 1991 by Pastor Ezekiel Odeyemi, a Special Assistant to the General Overseer of RCCG started as a department in the RCCG to visit homes of addiction victims and hospitals to pray and minister to their physical needs. The name was changed in 1996 to enable a wider dimension as well as to remove the stigma associated with addiction. Her programme is divided into two parts and runs for a full year. Treatment is the main focus of the first phase, while rehabilitation comes in second. The participants attend classes on the rehab and perform various tasks independently, such as cooking. In January 2016, when Mummy GO visited the place, there were two blocks. She subsequently made the decision to contribute additional funds, and the management of the rehabilitation centre hired an architect to design the space²⁰⁰. By 2017, the Enoch & Folu Adeboye Rehabilitation Centre was set up as a modern CADAM centre²⁰¹.

While the male participants are here, the females remain in Gboka. However, they gather here each morning for their devotion and training before going back to their locations. The burden of relocating beneficiaries from Èpé to Lagos to finish their second phase in Àkútè,

Onígbongbò, has been alleviated with the creation of CADAM Centre. At the Centre today, all of the recipients are together and all training done in situ. In addition to employees from the RCCG, the institution also hires outside facilitators to instruct clients in a variety of careers. The management was grateful to Pastor Enoch Adeboye for lending CADAM the area meant for a camp.

Pastor Adedeji who is Director-General concluded by saying, "We teach them how to be human beings again, because many have lost their sense of discipline." They get up at five in the morning to perform individual and group devotions, clean their rooms, make their beds, and straighten up their surroundings. They have breakfast and then head to class after that. The course is spiritual as well as secular. They are so instructed on how to be responsible students and citizens. They are trained on how to be good spouses (husband or wife), and how to lead a normal life free from narcotics and such drugs. Prayer is a key factor in the training; because we have found this could free them from their drug-related attachment and such relationships. They are informed that drugs are not the path; instead, Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life; and if they can cling to Him and decide to follow Him, He will provide them with sustenance for the duration of their lives. In addition to all of these, we teach the participants across various careers so that they will have something to rely on, when they graduate. Some of them who completed their JAMB (Joint Admission Matriculation Board exam) while here, are also strongly encouraged to attend and complete their university education.

d. Habitation of Hope

The story of the Habitation Hope is the story of passion, and revelation. In 2005, a minister of the Redeemed Christian Church of God had a leading to go to a place called Kuramo. She did not know the place, or ever heard of that place before. She consulted with a friend who led her to

this island of Lagos. It was tough starting and getting the children to church. At some point in time adults in the RCCG Ikoyi church where the founder worshipped could not stand the stinking of these street children. A year she had the opportunity to get them to the Redemption Camp. With the unflinching support of the mother-in-Israel the vision became established²⁰².

As the coordinator of Habitation of Hope, a ministry of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Grace Balogun works to reduce the high rate of crime in the community by rescuing homeless and sad youths from the streets. The charity helps the rescued boys, who range in age from 7 to 17, become self-sufficient. The organisation has rescued more than 2000 boys off the streets and helped many of them make amends with their parents since 2005 when it was founded.

the mother-in-Israel Pastor (Mrs.) Folu Adeboye who was moved with compassion as she always sees Lagos street children popularly known as "Area boys" determined to give as many of them a home, good shelter, food, healthcare, education, and vocational training so that they will not continue to instruments of delinquencies. This is hope alive in transforming the lives of destitute, lost, and abandoned children who roam the streets of South-West and South-East Nigeria, particularly in Lagos and Ogun States, and to give them hope and enable them to become what God has planned for them to become²⁰³.

They strive for radical transformation in Africa – Nigeria, specifically – that would eradicate the root causes of poverty and grant everyone freedom, equality, and dignity – regardless of gender, culture, or religious affiliation. When there is a great need, we offer immediate, useful, and effective support, addressing both the symptoms and underlying causes of poverty. We are a coalition of individuals, local organisations, and churches dedicated to eradicating poverty everywhere, particularly in Africa. We think that education has the ability to reduce

poverty. We strive to combat the injustices that obstruct children's access to an education and to provide them with it. .

No child was intended to be impoverished, a prostitute, a criminal, or a drug addict from birth. What people become is shaped by society. Over 100,000 boys and girls – known as street children but more commonly called area boys and girls – live on the streets in Lagos alone. They endure extremely poor living conditions and are essentially confined to slums and marketplaces. With this solitary aim of reaching out to hopeless and despondent boys and girls from the streets, transforming and empowering them, and providing them with the chance to grow into independent adults and responsible members of society, certain goals are attached²⁰⁴.

- i. Bring these street children back to Christ
 - ii. Enhance the lives of the lost boys and street boys around the country.
 - iii. To support the care, development, and well-being of street boys across the country.
 - iv. To offer housing, healthcare, and education to underprivileged, poor, and homeless children and young adults aged 7 to 18.
 - v. To completely eradicate the street children from Nigeria by reuniting the children with their families and assisting them in settling into their homes.
 - vi. To provide a comprehensive range of vocational training, such as painting, carpentry, shoemaking, decorating, block making, and sewing, to help the boys develop self-confidence.
- e. RAPAC

The RCCG established the Redeemed AIDS Programme Action Committee (RAPAC) to provide substantial support and information to persons who may be living with the burden of

HIV in 1998. From its inception it was directed by a qualified nurse and pastor in the Mission. In actual sense, RAPAC was RCCG's response to the inflow of people into the church who were looking for miraculous cure for HIV/AIDS. This RCCG ministry is the mind of Pastor E.A. Adeboye in bringing support to people living with the deadly and dreaded virus. Through this programme, RAPAC manages the church's determinations to care for people who are living with HIV and for anyone who is yet be down with the virus. RAPAC was organised to bring to the church the teeming message of HIV/AIDS and to let members know that the human immunodeficiency viruses (HIV) is so real and does not respect anybody whether you are a Christian or non-Christian.

This social service collaborates with foreign non-governmental groups including the US Agency for foreign Development (USAID), Family Health International (FHI), and the International Red Cross. RAPAC obtains money for its church-related activities and programming through these organisations. These programmes are available to everybody who is in need of support, not just churchgoers. The church supports RAPAC's initiatives administratively and with extra funds via the General Overseer's office. Apart from the director, RAPAC employs seven other people. These employees' payments are not under the control of the RCCG. RAPAC is able to maintain its operations, pay personnel, and manage its office thanks to funds it receives from other agencies. Among all of RAPAC's various initiatives, its commitment to training peer health educators (PHE) is arguably the most significant. These are individuals who have been trained to instruct others in their own group after being chosen from their native groups. The RCCG acknowledges that there are five distinct natural groups within the church: (i) the elders; (ii) married men and women; (iii) youth and singles; (iv) teenagers; and (v) children. RAPAC chooses individuals from these various groups, trains them in HIV/AIDS awareness, and then returns the trained individuals to their group so they can impart the knowledge they have gained from RAPAC courses and

workshops to others. RAPAC has already trained and released over two thousand PHEs back into their native group. The main topics of instruction are caring for HIV/AIDS patients, living a morally upright Christian life, and general AIDS education. Additionally, as part of the training programme for church pastors, RAPAC has created an AIDS education curriculum that will be integrated into the Bible school's teaching plan. Pastors must now be prepared to manage HIV/AIDS cases that are brought to them in the course of their pastoral duties.

f. Education

A lot of world renowned educational institutions in the West today were started by the Church. The likes of Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard universities were once theological educational colleges stemming from the understanding of the Church of the importance of education. Being in conformity with the injunction of the Bible, church leadership at various points in time have seen education as a tool to empower the members as well as every other interested others in knowledge as tool to move the world forward. The Redeemed Christian of God as a global church is not left behind in this quest for knowledge and transferring of knowledge.

a. Theological Education

i. The Redeemed Christian Bible College (RCBC)

The RCCG has several institutions that support the spiritual growth of both laypeople and clergy as has been discussed so far. The Redeemed Christian Bible College is one of these several and its focus is spiritual and theological. This is obvious because the RCCG operates the Every believer priesthood model of discipleship. By implication, every member is a potential member of the clergy if they are so willing. Of course, this is different from the

model of the founder in whose days there was a clear distinction between the pew and the pulpit. The clergy receives training for pastoral work; same are the laity who has started off from the point of the Discipleship Class and Workers' Training programme as they join a parish. The RCBC was founded in June 1980 and its first campus was located at the church's national headquarters in Ebute Metta, Lagos. Pastor Samuel Adetunji Awobajo served as the school's first principal. Even though RCBC was founded under Josiah's leadership, Adeboye was the driving force behind the changes even before he was named the church's leader. His height of education and purpose for him being chosen is becoming obvious gradually, even if some critics still doubted the sincerity of the founder. As explained earlier, the RCBC was originally established "to train the existing pastors who rose through the rank and file of the church hierarchy without theological grounding". The Bible school was initially a sort of spiritual training facility rather than a theological college, concentrating on Sunday school organisation, spirituality and preaching. The first sets of students were drawn from the rank of full pastors of the RCCG. The early pastors of the church had no formal theological training before their ordination as pastors. When Adeboye became the leader of the church he further redesigned the institution to offer courses in Yoruba for the sole aim of senior pastors who were not properly grounded in English. Teaching theology and other Bible courses in Yoruba was one of the strategies through which Adeboye demonstrated a general tolerance of the less educated cadre of pastors in the church. "This was a way of identifying with them and showing to them that the authority of the church was not interested in sacking them [the uneducated pastors] but wanted to carry them along". Through the same scheme, he sought and achieved acceptance from those pastors who were apprehensive of this elevation as head of the church. With time the curriculum of the school was expanded to reflect more theological courses such as Christology, Comparative Religion and Pastoral Theology. According to the Vice Principal (academic) of the RCBC, these courses are taught more as

spirituality than pure academic disciplines. This expansion of teaching courses also involved an expansion of the school. With the acquisition of the Redemption Camp in Ogun state, the school was relocated to this venue in 1983. At the moment, the school teaches about forty-five courses for diploma and certificate programmes. Some of the courses are in Women in Leadership, Vision and Mandate, Authority and Submission. To stress its sectarian foundation, non-graduates of the school cannot become lecturers in the school, although it is in principle open to non-RCCG candidates. In light of the expansion that the church is experiencing, the school's goals have been modified to include the training of "ministers all over the world to cope with the Redeemed Christian Church of God's global spread".

Although efforts are made to keep up with the influx of candidates, since going through the school's programme is now a prerequisite for ordination in the church, standards are difficult to sustain. The sceptical attitude of some old pastors still persists, while the school shuns scholars trained in secular institutions. Thus, the curriculum of the school consists of sixty per cent spirituality and forty per cent academic learning; its orientation remains "devotional, functional and utilitarian". The objective of the school to supply spiritual and leadership work force for the church to sustain its rapid expansion has necessitated the decentralisation of its facilities, with more than 200 campuses in Nigeria alone, and in such countries as Israel, Zambia, Kenya, Cote D'Ivoire, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Ghana and Togo.¹²⁰ Such expansion has helped to consolidate the church's presence and influence in far-flung areas as well as form a secure financial base for the administration of the church.¹²¹ On 8 August 2001, during the church's annual convention, 3,664 students were turned out as graduates by the RCBC.

The school also runs what it calls post-graduate programmes that involve more advanced form of bible studies. Affiliate institutes or campuses outside the camp run some of these programmes. The Apapa model family under Pastor Tony Rapu established the first of such

postgraduate campus in 1994. Consistent with the intra-church competition among different parishes and para-church groups in the RCCG that has marked the development of certain programmes in the church, in 1995 the Ikeja model family also established a campus of RCBC for postgraduate programmes. These first campuses sparked off a rash of postgraduate campuses in other parts of the country. Graduates of these postgraduate campuses of RCBC are the arrowhead for the establishment of RCCG parishes in different parts of the country and the world.

ii. RECSOM

With the establishment of the Directorate of Missions in 1992, the RECSOM was established in 1993 through the initial efforts of Christ the Redeemer's Welfare Services (CRWS).¹²⁸ RECSOM took off with an initial in-take of three candidates, according to Pastor J. A. Adebisi, the Principal of the school and an Area pastor.¹²⁹ Before the founding of RESCOM, the church only had mission agencies, which were responsible for training missionaries for mission work. Establishing RECSOM was designed to define and prioritise missionary work within and outside the country. Its focus is to train candidates for trans-cultural missionary activities. The school had its temporary campus at the International Headquarters of the church and only moved to its permanent campus in 2000. The school now shares the same site as the church's proposed Redeemer's University for all Nations at Ede in Osun State. It is an interdenominational school, which admits any adult Christian (not less than eighteen years of age) who "is born again with evidence of speaking in tongues and accepts the standard biblical doctrines".¹³⁰ Other criteria for admission include two years' experience as a church worker, recommendations from candidate's pastor or head of department in the church and a preadmission test. Located at Ede, in Osun state of Nigeria, RESCOM has slightly more than 500 student missionaries. The RESCOM's programmes last for one year, leading to the award of a diploma.¹³¹ However, some short course of three months duration are often

organised for church leaders, pastors and church-workers that lead to the award of a Certificate in Missions. These categories of church leaders need thorough grounding in spiritual development, acquisition of cross-cultural skills necessary for the missionary enterprise as well as living in unfamiliar environment.¹³² In this respect, Pastor Adebisi summarises the primary objective of RECSOM thus: the “major aim of all the courses is to inculcate into the students a deep mission orientation and an adequate understanding of the nature of the work ahead of them.”¹³³

g. Secular Education

On October 1st, 1996, the Redeemed Christian Church of God opened Christ Redeemer's College, Sagamu, Ogun State, as their first secondary school. Folu Adeboye charged the founding Board members of CRSM, chaired by the late Prof. (Mrs.) J. I. Macauley, in February 1996 that she wanted a high-standard secondary school with an international flavour, demonstrating the uniqueness of RCCG's aspirations. (Christ the Redeemer's College 2022). As the General Superintendent (now General Overseer) of the RCCG, Pastor Enoch Adejare Adeboye made a prophecy upon taking office that "he (Pastor E. A. Adeboye) was one to do with education." This aspirational charge to the pioneer Board of Governors of CRC was indicative of one of his early predictions. Pastor E. A. Adeboye spoke of a fully Christian school system, founded on the Bible, administered by Spirit-filled Christians, and grounded in Christian values²⁰⁵. Furthermore, the RCCG founded Redeemer's University in Ede, Nigeria in 2005. Redeemer's University is presently a centre of expertise for the study of genetics and has received numerous accolades both domestically and internationally. Redeemer's University was the top-ranked university out of fifteen highly regarded universities. In 2018, Redeemer's College of Technology and Management (RECTEM) was established as a result of RCCG's dedication to the Nigerian educational system in the areas of science, management, and technological education. In addition to these establishments, the

RCCG founded its preeminent theological colleges, the Redeemed Christian Bible College (RCBC) in 1980 and the Redeemed College of Missions in 1995. Both of these colleges are currently affiliated with Redeemer's University, Ede's Department of Christian Religious Studies and Philosophy²⁰⁶. The RCCG built several institutions, which have a major impact on national development and human capacity building.

2.1.14n Synopsis of the RCCG in North Central Nigeria

The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in North Central Nigeria plays a significant role in the religious landscape of the region, contributing to spiritual growth, community development, and societal impact. Here is a synopsis of RCCG's presence and influence in North Central Nigeria:

a.) Establishment and Growth: RCCG has established a notable presence in the North Central region of Nigeria, with numerous parishes, worship centres, and missions spread across States such as Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, and Plateau as well as the Federal Capital Territory. Over the years, the church has experienced substantial growth, attracting members from various backgrounds and communities²⁰⁷. As at 2024 Convention, the total number of membership of RCCG North-Central is 168,374.

b.) Spiritual Impact: The RCCG in North Central Nigeria places a strong emphasis on evangelism, prayer, and spiritual growth. The church conducts regular services, prayer meetings, Bible study groups, and evangelistic outreaches aimed at nurturing the faith of its members and reaching out to the wider community. Reaching the indigenous ethnic groups with spiritual support has been the pre-occupation of the church. Hundreds of hours of Bible Study and sermons have been sunk into this effort. The philosophy behind this is the second mission statement of this mission which states that: "To take as many people to Heaven"²⁰⁸.

The vision of the Redeemed Christian Church of God is to have a member of every family of

men on the Earth represented within her community. This is the initial drive that took the RCCG to the North of Nigeria in the first place.

c.) Community Development: Beyond its religious activities, RCCG in North Central Nigeria is actively involved in community development initiatives. The church engages in social welfare programmes, including healthcare outreach, educational support, skill acquisition programmes, and humanitarian aid to address the needs of underprivileged communities. This social dimension of Missions has further strengthened the spiritual dimension of RCCG impact in the North. The church's mission was significantly impacted by the social component of Christian missionary work. This relates to improving the lot of the underprivileged, eliminating social evil, bringing social justice, bringing fraternity, witnessing the advancement of a better humanity, peace, harmony, etc.²⁰⁹. As at the period of this study, schools, intensive care centres and even a dialysis centre in Abuja, (a part of the 1200 functioning dialysis machines provided by the Mission in Nigeria) has been added to the development of the North-Central of Nigeria²¹⁰.

d.) Educational Initiatives: RCCG in the North Central region also invests in educational initiatives. The church has established schools, vocational training centres, and scholarship programmes to provide access to quality education for children and youths within the communities it serves. As at the period of this documentation, a segment of the Redeemed College of Missions has been opened in the North-Central, Abuja to be specific. This educational initiative is not without future plan of learning centres such as a primary school, secondary on the massive piece of land. By principle, wherever the RCCG starts a church, educational platforms are opened up to children to learn whether they are of the staff from the neighbouring communities. Philosophically, the Redeemed Christian Church of God sees education as light to the world of darkness and a long held method of by the earlier missionary effort of Nigeria mission pioneers in bringing younger people closer to the

knowledge of God²¹¹. It is believed that when they read and write they can read the Word of God and have a deeper understanding of the Cross.

e.) Youth Empowerment and Outreach: Recognising the importance of engaging young people, RCCG in North Central Nigeria organizes youth-focused programs, seminars, and empowerment initiatives. These efforts aim to equip young individuals with skills, mentorship, and spiritual guidance to navigate life challenges and contribute positively to society.

f.) Cultural Relevance and Adaptation: RCCG in the North Central region often adapts its approach to align with local cultures and customs. While maintaining its core Christian beliefs and practices, the Redeemed Christian Church of God incorporates indigenous elements and contextualises its outreach strategies to effectively communicate the gospel message. These notwithstanding, issues bordering on ministerial dressing remained out of touch with the cultures within the North-Central. The ministers still put on suit and tie which is synonymous with colonialism and how the people simultaneously perceive the Yoruba which they consider to be very close to civilisation²¹².

g.) Leadership and Structure: The RCCG in North Central Nigeria operates within the framework of the church's hierarchical structure, with regional and local leaders overseeing the administration and pastoral care of congregations. These leaders provide spiritual guidance and support for the growth and development of the church in the region.

In summary, the Redeemed Christian Church of God in North Central Nigeria plays a vital role in spiritual, social, and educational spheres. Through its widespread presence, spiritual activities, community development initiatives, and commitment to empowering individuals, RCCG contributes significantly to the overall well-being and advancement of communities within the North Central region of Nigeria.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Cultural Dimension Theory (Hofstede)

Geert Hofstede established cultural dimension theory as a framework for intercultural communication. It uses a structure developed from component analysis to demonstrate the influence of a society's culture on its members' values and how these values connect to behaviour²¹³. In his research was successful in identifying six typical models for measuring culture in cross-national society. The cultural component represents a distinct preference for one of the aforementioned circumstances in other countries that distinguishes countries (rather than people) from one another²¹⁴.

Hofstede developed his original model as a result of using factor analysis to examine the results of a worldwide survey of employee values by IBM between 1967 and 1973. It has been refined since. Individualism-collectivism; uncertainty avoidance; power distance (strength of social hierarchy); and masculinity-femininity (task-orientation against person-orientation) were the four dimensions given by Hofstede's original thesis along which cultural values may be analysed²¹⁵. An independent study in Hong Kong prompted Hofstede to introduce a fifth dimension, long-term orientation, to address issues of values not covered in the original paradigm; and this has been critiqued²¹⁶. In the year 2010, Hofstede added a sixth component to the model which he tagged "indulgence versus self-restraint"²¹⁷. Hofstede's work established a significant study tradition in cross-cultural psychology and has been cited by researchers and consultants in a variety of sectors related to international commerce and communication. These six dimensions to measuring cultural influence are thus explained below:

- ii. Power distance index (PDI): The power distance index is defined as "the degree to which less powerful members of organisations and institutions (such as families) accept and expect unequal power distribution."
- iii. Individualism vs. collectivism (IDV): The "degree to which people in a society are assimilated into groups" is investigated by this indicator.
- iv. Uncertainty avoidance (UAI): The uncertainty avoidance index is characterised as "a society's tolerance for ambiguity," in which people embrace or shun an unexpected, unknown, or out of the ordinary event.
- v. Masculinity vs. femininity (MAS): Masculinity is characterised as "a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material rewards for success" in this dimension. Its polar opposite symbolises "a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak, and quality of life."
- vi. Long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation (LTO): This dimension associates the link between the past and current and future actions/challenges. Short-term oriented poor countries typically have little to no economic development, but long-term oriented countries continue to develop to a level of wealth.
- vii. Indulgence vs. restraint (IND): This dimension relates to the degree of freedom that citizens have in fulfilling their human desires as a result of society norms. Indulgence has been characterised as a culture that allows comparatively unrestricted gratification of elementary and natural human cravings related to enjoying life pleurably. Its polar opposite is characterised as "a society that controls and regulates gratification of needs through strict social norms."

The main message of the 1980 book was that scores on the dimensions correlated significantly with conceptually related external data. Thus Power Distance scores correlated with a dimension from Gregg and Banks' 1965 analysis of political systems

and also with a dimension from Adelman and Morris' 1967 study of economic development; Uncertainty Avoidance correlated with a dimension from Lynn and Hampson in the 1975 study of mental health; Individualism correlated strongly with national wealth (Gross National Product per capita) and Femininity with the percentage of national income spent on development aid. The number of external validations kept expanding, and the second edition of *Culture's Consequences* lists more than 400 significant correlations between the IBM-based scores and results of other studies. Recent validations show no loss of validity, indicating that the country differences these dimensions describe are, indeed, basic and enduring. In the 1980s, on the basis of research by Canadian psychologist Michael Harris Bond centred in the Far East, a fifth dimension 'Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation' was added. In the 2000s, research by Bulgarian scholar Michael Minkov using data from the World Values Survey allowed a new calculation of the fifth, and the addition of a sixth dimension. The six dimensions are labelled:

- i. Power Distance, related to the different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality
- ii. Uncertainty Avoidance, related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future
- iii. Individualism versus Collectivism, related to the integration of individuals into primary groups
- iv. Masculinity versus Femininity, related to the division of emotional roles between women and men
- v. Long Term versus Short Term Orientation, related to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present and past

vi. Indulgence versus Restraint, related to the gratification versus control of basic human desires related to enjoying life.

Each country has been positioned relative to other countries through a score on each dimension. The dimensions are statistically distinct and do occur in all possible combinations, although some combinations are more frequent than others. After the initial confirmation of the country differences in IBM in data from management trainees elsewhere, the Hofstede dimensions and country scores were validated through replications by others, using the same or similar questions with other cross-national populations. Between 1990 and 2002 six major replications (14 or more countries) used populations of country elites, employees and managers of other corporations and organizations, airline pilots, consumers and civil servants. In correlating the dimensions with other data, the influence of national wealth (Gross National Product per capita) should always be taken into account. Two of the dimensions, Individualism and small Power Distance, are significantly correlated with wealth. This means that all wealth-related phenomena tend to correlate with both these dimensions. Differences in national wealth can be considered a more parsimonious explanation of these other phenomena than differences in culture. In correlating with the culture dimensions, it is therefore advisable to always include the wealth variable. After controlling for national wealth correlations with culture usually disappear. Of particular interest is a link that was found between culture according to the Hofstede dimensions and personality dimensions according to the empirically based Big Five personality test. After this test had been used in over 30 countries, significant correlations were found between country norms on the five personality dimensions (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness) and national culture dimension scores. For example, 55% of country differences on Neuroticism can be explained by a combination of Uncertainty Avoidance and Masculinity, and 39% of country differences on Extraversion by Individualism alone. So

culture and personality are linked but the link is statistical; there is a wide variety of individual personalities within each national culture, and national culture scores should not be used for stereotyping individuals.

Considering the theoretical structure of Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Theory gives a better understanding into the ideology of this study. To start with, cultural relativism is a theory that strongly condemns the negative mind-set of ethnocentrism. It is acceptable to be loyal to your culture, your nation, but not to the detriment of output of other people, or how you see them, or how you relate with them, or how you address them or the manner at which you provide your kind of support as found in Missionary support given to Nigerians by the British Christian missionary societies.

Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Theory complements this framework in the sense that it presents culture as a dimension to life being defined by six parameters: (i.) Power Distance Index (ii.) Collectivism vs. Individualism (iii.) Uncertainty Avoidance Index iv.) Femininity vs. Masculinity (v.) Short-Term vs. Long-Term Orientation, and vi.) Restraint vs. Indulgence

The degree to which inequality and power are accepted is taken into account by the power distance index. A culture that values rank and authority highly, tolerates injustice and power imbalances, and promotes bureaucracy is indicated by a high power distance score. The Yoruba culture is a good example of this. This mentality coupled with the biblical injunction 'to wholly obey the leaders'; makes some people from culture feel threatened. A low power distance score is indicative of a culture that supports flat organisational structures with a focus on power distribution, participative management, and decentralised decision-making authority. For instance, parents may expect their children to submit to their authority without challenging it in nations with significant power distance.

The degree, to which societies are integrated into groups, as well as their perceived obligations and dependence on groupings, are taken into account in the individualism vs. collectivism component. In civilisations that value individualism, the focus is on the rights and accomplishments of the individual, with the needs of the self and the immediate family coming first. Collectivism suggests that the objectives and welfare of the group are given more weight. In this category, a person's self-image is defined as "We," and people from collectivist backgrounds tend to value loyalty and relationships more than people from individualistic cultures. The Yoruba is never individualistic – they will say: “eni kan i je awa de” meaning “An individual does not say “we have come””. The uncertainty dimension takes into account how unexpected events, ambiguity, and unknown situations are handled. A limited tolerance for risk-taking, ambiguity, and uncertainty is indicated by a high uncertainty avoidance score. Strict laws and regulations, among other measures, reduce the unknown. This is the Yoruba culture. This is also the Bible. These cultures use strict laws, rules, and other similar measures as a means of reducing uncertainty for both individuals and organisations. This forms come up in the case of dressing (especially for the workers), taking of alcohol, the use of earrings and chains (which is gradually disappearing in the RCCG, especially among the model parishes; but which was taken with strict measure at the beginning of the Church and which some members who are called “Classical” still hold in high esteem). Generally, a high level of tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty is indicated by a low uncertainty avoidance score. More people are willing to face the unknown, and there are fewer restrictions. People and societies with low uncertainty avoidance accept and are comfortable in unstructured settings and in dynamic environments. The gender role differentiation dimension, also known as the masculinity vs. femininity dimension, looks at how much a society values traditional male and feminine roles. Interestingly the Yoruba culture celebrates masculinity above femininity, although when it comes ministering both

genders are considered equal before God, hence as a man, a woman can become a pastor, or even a pastor of senior cadre in the church. Distinct gender roles, an appreciation of assertiveness, courage, strength, and rivalry are some traits associated with masculinity. Qualities that define femininity include being modest, nurturing, gender-neutral, and life-quality-focused. A nation with a high femininity score, for instance, is likely to provide better maternity benefits and more easily available childcare services. This indicates that traditional feminine gender roles are highly valued in that community. Conversely, a nation with a lower femininity score is probably going to emphasise more women in leadership positions and more women who start their own businesses.

The degree to which a society views its time horizon is taken into account in the long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation component. Long-term oriented societies put an emphasis on the future, delaying short-term gains for long-term accomplishments. Values like tenacity, endurance, thrift, savings, steady growth, and adaptation are highly valued in these societies. This is typical of the Yoruba culture, but with the advent of technology, there is a blend between these two extremes to achieve the vision of the church. Delivering short-term success or satisfaction, focusing on the immediate future, and emphasising the present over the future are characteristics of short-term orientation. Respect for tradition and speedy outcomes are the main goals of short-term orientation.

The indulgence vs. restraint component takes into account how much a society tends to indulge its desires. Stated differently, the focus of this dimension is on how cultures manage their urges and wants. Indulgence is a sign that society permits comparatively unrestricted enjoyment of life and recreation. The act of exercising restraint is a sign that society suppresses and controls needs through social standards. The Yoruba culture is definitely not permissive when it comes to restraints. Unfortunately, societies who live in a high-indulgence culture might spend more money on luxuries and enjoy more freedom in their leisure

activities. On the other hand, in a conservative society, the tendency is towards frugality, savings, and pragmatic needs.

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies: Culture as a Connect in Christian Missions

The interaction between culture and Christian missions is a critical area of study for understanding the effectiveness and impact of missionary efforts. Empirical studies explore how cultural factors either facilitate or hinder the spread of Christian faith and the establishment of mission efforts. This review synthesizes findings from various empirical studies to understand better how culture functions as both a connect and disconnect in Christian missions.

2.3.1 Cultural Adaptation and Contextualisation

- i. **Study by Robert Schreiter:** Schreiter's work on "Constructing Local Theologies" emphasizes the importance of contextualizing the gospel message to fit the local cultural context. Empirical data suggest that missions that adapt their message and methods to local cultures see higher rates of acceptance and integration. Schreiter emphasizes the need for creating local theologies that resonate with indigenous cultural contexts. Empirical evidence suggests that missions contextualizing their message to local traditions and values see higher acceptance rates and deeper integration of the Christian faith²¹⁸.
- ii. **Paul G. Hiebert's Critical Contextualisation:** Paul G. Hiebert's approach, which involves critically examining cultural practices and integrating beneficial aspects into Christian teachings, has shown positive results. Field studies highlight that missions' employing this strategy experience less resistance and more profound cultural integration. Hiebert advocates for a method of contextualizing the gospel that involves understanding and incorporating local

cultural practices while critiquing and transforming them in light of the gospel. Studies indicate that missions using this approach experience reduced resistance and greater cultural integration²¹⁹.

2.3.2 Cultural Bridges in Indigenous Practices

- i. **Research by Charles H. Kraft:** Kraft's studies indicate that using indigenous cultural symbols, music, and art in worship can bridge gaps and create a sense of familiarity and acceptance among local populations. These forms of engagement are effective bridges for connecting local populations with Christian teachings. This approach reduces cultural alienation and fosters deeper engagement with the mission's message because the field studies show that this approach reduces cultural disaffection and increases cultural engagement^{220, 221}.

2.3.3 Intercultural Competence of Missionaries

- i. **Findings in Lingenfelter and Mayers' Ministering Cross-Culturally:** This study underscores the importance of missionaries' intercultural competence. Missionaries who respect and understand host cultures tend to establish better relationships and achieve more successful mission outcomes. Research on intercultural competence among missionaries demonstrates that those with a deep understanding and respect for the host culture tend to be more effective. Empirical evidence shows that training in intercultural communication and sensitivity leads to better relational outcomes and mission success^{222, 223}.

2.3.4 Culture as a Disconnect in Christian Missions

Cultural Imperialism and Ethnocentrism

- i. **Case Studies by Bosch: Cultural Imperialism and Ethnocentrism:** Bosch's analysis of historical mission efforts reveals that missions often fail when perceived as cultural imperialism. In his findings, the imposition of Western cultural norms and practices lead to resistance and rejection by local communities. Empirical data from various regions confirm that ethnocentric approaches are counterproductive and that this has cost the Church the loss of lives and several resources²²⁴.
- ii. **Recognition of Second Vatican Council:** The Catholic Church in the Second Vatican Council recognised that missions among indigenous people must respect and engage with local cultures rather than impose foreign ones. Post-Vatican II studies indicate that missions adopting this paradigm experience greater success as such this ideology becomes an ideal to be applied in the global missions' enterprise^{225, 226}.

2.3.5 Cultural Misunderstandings and Conflicts

- i. **Sanneh's Research: Whose Religion is Christianity?:** Lamin Sanneh's work highlights how misunderstandings about local customs and values can lead to conflicts and rejection of missionary efforts. Empirical studies in Africa and Asia indicate that missions often falter when cultural nuances are not adequately understood or respected²²⁷.
- ii. **Case Study from Papua New Guinea:** Studies on missions in Papua New Guinea reveal that failure to understand local kinship systems and social structures led to significant barriers

in missionary efforts²²⁸. Respecting these systems and incorporating them into the mission strategy showed improved outcomes²²⁹.

iii. Hwa Yung's Mangoes or Bananas?: Hwa Yung's empirical research in Asia explores how cultural misunderstandings can lead to conflicts and rejection of missionary efforts²³⁰. His studies indicate that missions that fail to understand local customs and values struggle with acceptance. He posited the place of the six themes characterising Asian theological concerns, and argues that very few scholars have been able to clearly speak to these in relation to the mission to the Asians²³¹.

2.3.6 Resistance to Change and Syncretism

i. Observations by Walls: Andrew Walls' studies on the history of Christian missions suggest that resistance often arises when missions confront deeply entrenched cultural and religious practices. Instances of syncretism, where local beliefs are blended with Christian teachings, often lead to theological conflicts and hinder mission efforts²³².

ii. Studies in Latin America: Research in Latin American contexts shows that blending traditional religious practices with Christianity can lead to both positive and negative outcomes²³³. While some syncretism facilitates acceptance, it can also dilute the core Christian message and create doctrinal ambiguities²³⁴.

iii. Empirical Study in China: The study by Yang Yi illustrates the dynamic struggles of identity and values between these two cultural and religious traditions by looking at a few of Xu Dishan and Chen Zanyi's works. These literary works show how local customs and world faiths may meld and change one another, illuminating the complexity of cultural hybridity as well as the dynamic character of cultural identity in Hong Kong²³⁵. However, instances where missions imposed Western practices often led to resistance.

iv. Martin's Tongues of Fire: David Martin's research on Pentecostalism in Latin America highlights how syncretism can both aid and hinder missions. While syncretism can make Christianity more relatable, it can also lead to theological conflicts and dilution of core Christian messages²³⁶.

2.3.7 Culture as a Connect in Christian Missions

A. Cultural Adaptation and Contextualization

i. Winter's The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission: Ralph D. Winter's research emphasizes the need for mission structures that are culturally adaptable. His empirical studies highlight the success of "sodalities" or mission structures that are flexible and culturally sensitive compared to traditional "modalities" or church structures²³⁷.

ii. Stott's The Lausanne Covenant: John Stott's work, especially in crafting the Lausanne Covenant, showcases the importance of contextualizing the Christian message. Empirical evidence from missions aligned with the Lausanne Movement indicates higher success rates due to their emphasis on cultural relevance²³⁸.

B. Cultural Bridges in Indigenous Practices

i. Bediako's Theology and Identity: Kwame Bediako's empirical research in Africa illustrates how integrating African cultural elements with Christian teachings creates a more relatable and accepted faith experience. His studies show that acknowledging and incorporating African religious and cultural identities enhances mission effectiveness²³⁹.

ii. Shenk's Anabaptism and Mission: Wilbert R. Shenk's work on Anabaptist missions demonstrates that using indigenous forms of community and worship strengthens mission

outcomes. Empirical data from Anabaptist missions reveal higher levels of local engagement and conversion²⁴⁰.

2.3.8 Intercultural Competence of Missionaries

i. Studies on Cross-Cultural Connections: This study by Yoonsik Lee includes a section on the outcomes of the cultural sensitivity training given to the church employees selected by Delhi Disciples Church. This research underscores the critical role of intercultural competence²⁴¹. Elmer's studies specifically reveal that missionaries trained in cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural communication achieves better relational and mission success²⁴².

ii. Competence on Cultural Intelligence: David Livermore's concept of cultural intelligence (CQ) has been empirically tested across various mission contexts. Missions with high CQ exhibit more effective ministry and stronger relationships with local communities²⁴³. Another study investigates the experiences of Ethiopian Evangelical immigrant church leaders and their families in the Washington metropolitan region, which includes Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, in terms of cultural intelligence (CQ). Data collected were through Questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. The inquiry showed the real-life experiences of church families and immigrant leaders through these studies²⁴⁴.

2.3.9 Culture as a Disconnect in Christian Missions

a. Cultural Imperialism and Ethnocentrism

i. Impact of Imperialism on the Pacific: research on missions in the Pacific highlights the detrimental effects of cultural imperialism. His empirical studies show that missions perceived as imposing Western values face significant resistance and lower success rates. The first section of Lawson's book introduces the ideas of colonialism and imperialism, their

ideological underpinnings, and their relationships to dominance and subordination, power and control, and a "civilising process." After looking at early (European) colonisation efforts in Oceania, which have all had an impact on the region in one way or another, it continues with the pursuit of a "British Oceania," primarily by colonists in Australia and New Zealand²⁴⁵. This scholarship is similar to the study conducted and documented by Vaidyanathan in India²⁴⁶.

ii. **African Christianity:** Angus Crichton provides a critical analysis of CMS's mission legacy, emphasising the Ugandan experience in particular. He looks at how European colonialism and Christian mission intersected in a complicated and sometimes contradictory way, as well as how a church movement emerged to manage the tension between indigenisation and assimilation²⁴⁷. Another scholar from the Western part of Nigeria added that Christianity is a remnant and reminder of the British colonialism²⁴⁸.

2.3.10 Global Intercultural Connects

a. Pentecostal Missions in Africa

i. **Research by Anderson:** Allan Anderson's studies on Pentecostal missions in Africa emphasise the role of indigenous leadership and cultural adaptation. His empirical findings suggest that missions, empowering local leaders and adapting to African cultural contexts see greater success²⁴⁹.

ii. **Case Study in Nigeria:** Empirical research in Nigeria, such as by Asonzeh Ukah, shows that Pentecostal missions that incorporate local music, dance, and social structures experience rapid growth and deep community integration. He also emphasised the excesses indulgent of religious leaders in the process of evangelisation²⁵⁰.

b. Orthodox Missions in Alaska

Empirical Study by Oleksa: Michael Oleksa's research on Orthodox missions in Alaska highlights the importance of respecting and incorporating indigenous Alaskan cultures. His studies reveal that missions aligning with local traditions and practices achieve better acceptance and integration²⁵¹.

c. Catholic Missions in Asia

- i. **Research by Bevans, Schroeder and Schroeder:** Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder's empirical research on Catholic missions in Asia underscores the significance of cultural adaptation. Their findings indicate that missions engaging with Asian cultural and religious traditions see higher levels of acceptance²⁵².
- ii. **Case Study in the Philippines:** Empirical studies in the Philippines show that Catholic missions that respect and integrate Filipino cultural practices, such as festivals and communal activities, experience higher engagement and success.

d. Protestant Missions in the Pacific Islands

i. Research by Garrett: John Garrett's empirical research on Protestant missions in the Pacific Islands highlights the challenges and successes of cultural adaptation. His studies indicate that missions respecting local traditions and social structures achieve better outcomes²⁵³. His narrative presents missionaries and Islanders and demonstrates how Christianity was incorporated into regional customs and interactions with traders and colonial officials. This book—a follow-up to "To Live Among the Stars: Christian Origins in Oceania" by the same author—also examines the role of women, both islanders and foreigners.

- ii. **Case Study in Fiji:** Empirical research in Fiji shows that Protestant missions integrating Fijian cultural practices, such as communal decision-making and traditional ceremonies, experience greater acceptance and integration. For instance, in addition to attending Christian church services, modern Fijian ceremonial life includes kava-drinking events that have their roots in the native religion. The results of observational data show that the age and perceived status differences of participants have a substantial impact on each ritual format's performance, and that low-ranking men are more likely to attend kava rituals while high-ranking men are more likely to attend church services²⁵⁴.

e. Evangelical Missions in the Middle East

- i. **Empirical Study by Miller:** Duane Miller's research on evangelical missions in the Middle East emphasizes the importance of understanding and engaging with Islamic culture. His findings indicate that missions adopting culture ally sensitive approaches see better relational and mission outcomes.
- ii. **Case Study in Egypt:** Empirical studies in Egypt reveal that evangelical missions respecting Islamic cultural practices and engaging in interfaith dialogue experience higher levels of acceptance and success.

From the foregoing, empirical studies have underscored that culture can act as both a connect and disconnect in Christian missions. Successful missions tend to be those that adapt to and respect local cultures, using cultural elements as bridges for the gospel message. Conversely, missions that impose foreign cultural norms or fail to understand and respect local practices often face resistance and failure. The critical lesson from these studies is the necessity of a culturally sensitive and contextually aware approach to missions.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Every research is being described and appreciated through the lens of its conceptual framework. More so, the theoretical foundations upon which a particular study is framed are the concepts. Then, a well-defined conceptual framework naturally situates a study within the premise of the framework of accepted models and theories that academics in that discipline have long employed²⁵⁵. For this reason the conceptual framework of this study on the Yoruba culture as a connect or disconnect to the RCCG intercultural missions in North-Central Nigeria is situated within the understanding of the Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Theory. This theory has been of immense strength and application to numerous studies that are related to national and international cultural issues with profound solutions.

For the purpose of this research, working on Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Theory has birth a conceptual framework model termed **Intercultural Balancing Model** (Fig. 2.4). This model perceives every culture as has having every right to be treated with equity in spite of seeming religio-cultural orientations considering the possibility of secession, or breakaway if there is no perceived mutual respect from the high culture, no minding the possibility of power transfer because the force of collectivism naturally gives power to a new emerging leader. Kingdoms rise and wane. History has repeated conquest of the once dominating cultures from the Mesopotamian culture to the Indus Valley civilization, Egyptian development, Ancient Greek sophistication, Chinese culture, Persian advancement, Roman Cultural domination, Maya cultivation, Incan civilisation, and the Aztec society²⁵⁶. All of these were once in power until power changed hands. In modern times it was English, today there is already shift to Asiatic cultures, especially the Chinese. The world is now wanting more of their language, arts, healing apothecary, sculpture, cuisines and what have you? In this same vein, by the principles of culture balancing the once revered Yoruba language will no longer be 'intimidating'; but inviting. The English as a classic high culture had begun to

share power globally. They began this through equity, mutual respect, cultural adaptation, and acculturation of other cultures. For instance the addition of Nigerian or Arabic words to the English dictionary has only made the English lexicology expansive and consequently making the language indispensable in almost area of human subsistence.

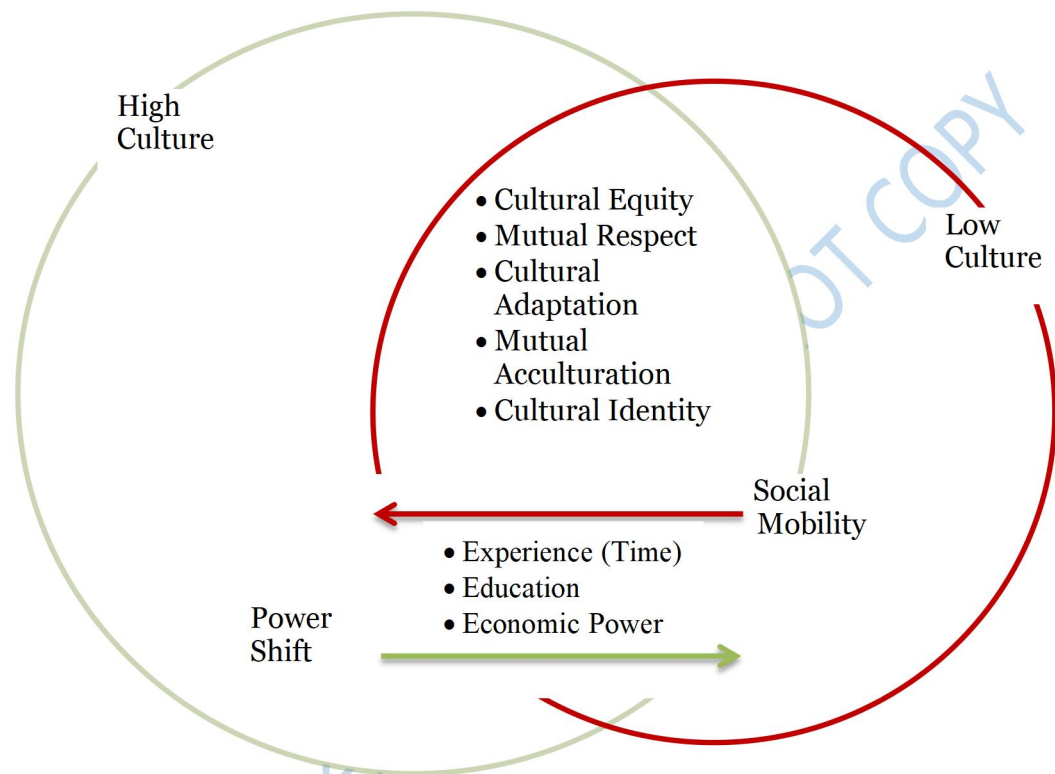


Fig.2.4: Intercultural Balancing Model

(Source: Field Survey, 2024)

The intercultural balancing model is a research model based on the principle of cultural power²⁵⁷. Cultural power is that control that cultures and cultural entities such as the media, the arts, customs, and ideologies have on themselves and other cultures in any given society²⁵⁸. Social norms, behaviours, perceptions, and minority cultures are shaped by this influence. Cultural power affects both the culture in question and surrounding cultures and communities on a conscious and subconscious level^{259, 260}. This influence can take many different forms, including fashion, music, films, books, social media, and educational systems²⁶¹. This influencing power logically classifies cultures into either the low class or the high class²⁶². The high as the name suggests are usually the affluent cultures while the low

are the minority cultures. In every given human society, there is always a low and high culture. For any low culture to migrate to the status of a high status certain factors are inevitable. These factors are time, education, and the acquisition of economic power. With these factors in place, every low culture will migrate into the high class at a sequence that depends on the velocity of their cultural awakening. But before this attainment, there would be a lot of struggles for balancing as their awakening widens through time (experience), education, economic proficiency. In essence, for any society to experience cultural balancing among the cultures represented, there the high culture needs to understand the politics of equality, the intricacies of mutual respect, and the sense in adaptation, relationship built through mutual respect in acculturation and before anything the knowledge of itself.

2.5 Summary of Gaps in Literature Reviewed

Certainly, summarizing gaps in the literature reviewed involves identifying areas within existing research where there are limitations, unanswered questions, or areas that require further investigation. Here's a general overview of potential gaps in the literature concerning the Church's role in mission:

- i. Limited Focus on Non-Western Perspectives: Much of the literature might predominantly concentrate on Western-centric views or historical contexts, potentially neglecting the diverse mission activities and contributions from non-Western regions or indigenous communities.
- ii. Contemporary Mission Challenges: There might be a lack of updated research addressing contemporary challenges faced by the Church in its mission, such as adapting to a digital era, engaging with postmodern societies, or addressing global issues like climate change and globalisation

- iii. Insufficient Exploration of Interfaith Engagement: Studies may lack in-depth exploration of how the Church engages with people of other faiths in the context of mission, fostering understanding, dialogue, and cooperative efforts.
- iv. Evaluating Long-Term Impact and Sustainability: Some literature might not sufficiently address the long-term sustainability and impact of mission efforts, including the evaluation of community development, discipleship programmes, and social justice initiatives.
- v. Inclusivity and Diversity in Mission Approaches: There might be a need for more research on inclusive mission approaches that address diverse cultural, social, and economic contexts, ensuring the inclusion and empowerment of marginalised groups.
- vi. Integration of Technology in Mission: Limited exploration of how technological advancements impact or aid mission work, such as utilizing social media, digital platforms, or innovative tools for evangelism, discipleship, and community engagement.
- vii. Ethical Considerations and Mission Practices: The literature might lack comprehensive discussions on ethical considerations related to mission practices, including potential conflicts in cultural adaptation, power dynamics, or unintended consequences of missionary activities.
- viii. Gender and Mission Studies: There could be a gap in exploring the roles of gender within mission activities, including the empowerment of women in leadership positions, challenges faced by female missionaries, or gender dynamics in cross-cultural contexts.
- ix. Empirical Studies and Quantitative Analysis: A scarcity of empirical studies or quantitative analysis examining specific metrics, outcomes, or data-driven evaluations of mission activities and their measurable impact on communities.

x. Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Approaches: A need for more collaborative research involving interdisciplinary perspectives, such as sociology, anthropology, or psychology, to enrich understanding and strategies in mission work.

By pinpointing these gaps, future research can aim to address these areas, contributing to a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of the Church's role in mission, its challenges, and opportunities for growth and impact.

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Endnote

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The expression of Jesus in John 3.5 connotes the severity of the Kingdom and prerequisite for its entry. Yet, it should be understood that a closer look at the passage presents another worldview. Traditionally, the early church declared baptism to be a sacrament because of this viewpoint, which raised baptism to the status of a conversion and made it a requirement for joining God's kingdom. Following a brief discussion of several perspectives regarding the meaning of the phrase "water" in John 3:5, this article looks at the organisation of John 3:3, 5-7. As a result, the article concludes that the water in John 3:5 may relate to the fluid that surrounds the developing embryo in the womb and is still there at birth. In light of this, it is stated that in order to see and enter the kingdom of God, a person must be born of the body first, and then of the Spirit.

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Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

For the purpose of a research that is considering the behaviour of cultural contacts across a few cultures within a geographical entity, the descriptive research design is adopted. This is applicable because the objective of the descriptive research is to precisely and methodically characterise a population which can respond to inquiries about what, where, when, and how, certain behaviours occurred. This form of research design is significant as we examine the impact of the Yoruba culture on the growth of the Redeemed Christian Church of God and her intercultural missions in the North-Central of Nigeria.

3.2 Population of the Study

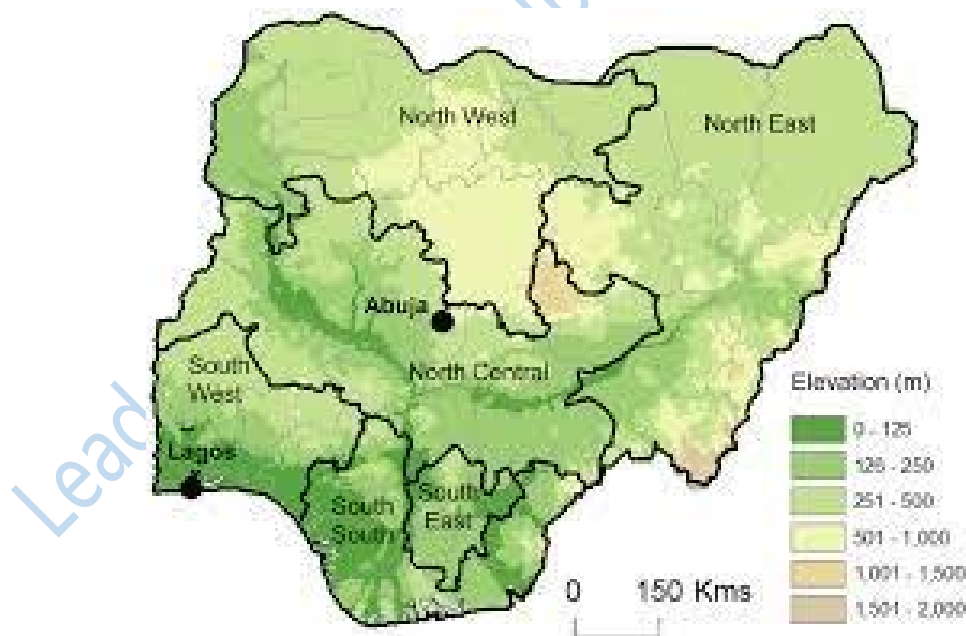


Fig. 3.1: Map of Nigeria Showing the Six Geopolitical Zones



Fig.3.2: Map of North-Central Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria showing the States

The population for this study are the members of the Redeemed Christian Church of God worshipping within the North-Central geopolitical Zone of Nigeria comprising of six States (Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau) and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja making them seven (7). While the States have one hundred and fourteen (114) Local Government Areas with a total population of over 20 million, the FCT has six (6) council areas with a population of about 1.41 million. The population of the regions within RCCG in the Federal Capital Territory as provided in the 2023 Annual report is 168,374²⁶³.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Sampling hundreds of thousands of congregational members of the RCCG would be a waste of limited resources if everyone were to be respondents. For this reason, the simple purposive and voluntary sampling methods have been selected to carve out a researchable sample size for this work. The Purposive sampling method is used because it is widely applied in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest²⁶⁴. In this process, individuals or groups of individuals that are proficient and well-informed with the phenomenon of interest are identified and selected²⁶⁵. Added to these advantages are: availability, willingness to participate and the ability to

communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner²⁶⁶. As for the volunteer sampling method, prospective respondents have plenty of time to consider whether or not to volunteer for selection to participate²⁶⁷. This goal is in line with the purpose of conducting a pilot sampling which is to ascertain how quickly potential respondents are willing to engage in the survey. In achieving this, the target population is split into strata by volunteers and non-volunteers according to the suggested sample design.

3.4 Description of the Research Instruments

The instruments constructed for this research are two due the nature of data to be collected. The first instrument is meant for the non-Yoruba members within the RCCG in Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The second is designed for non-Yoruba leaders in the same location. These primary data sources shall be both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative sources include field observation, interview, words, sounds, feelings, emotion and informal discussions²⁶⁸. The quantitative data sources are data expressions in numeric terms such as percentages, averages and such statistics from survey questionnaires and interview questions²⁶⁹.

Working within this premise, the two different instruments engaged in this study are:

- i. the survey main instrument (i.e. Influence of Yoruba Culture on RCCG North-Central Nigeria Intercultural Missions: A Survey (ICIM); and
- ii. the Key Informant Interview (KII) – the structured interview designed for non-Yoruba pastors and leaders among the congregations.

“Influence of Yoruba Culture on RCCG North-Central Nigeria Intercultural Missions: A Survey (ICIM)” is a research instrument meant for non-Yoruba people groups worshipping in the Redeemed Christian Church of God parishes in the Federal Capital Territory as

mentioned earlier. It consists of 53 items of enquiry segmented into five sections as described below:

- i. 7 items in section A feature demographic profile
- ii. 12 items in section B present issues on people's perspective of the Yoruba culture in relation to RCCG intercultural missions in North-Central Nigeria
- iii. 12 items in section C inquire into possible ways the Yoruba culture may be posing threat to intercultural missions in Nigeria
- iv. 10 items in section D search for answers on Yoruba cultural values that has been positive to intercultural mission in North-Central Nigeria
- v. 12 items in section E probe for methods of balancing the use of Yoruba cultures in promoting intercultural missions in Nigeria

All of these are based on the five point Likert type scale that varied from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

The Key Informant Interview instrument known as "Influence of Yoruba Culture on RCCG North-Central Nigeria Intercultural Missions" (ICIM) is a research instrument consisting of sixteen (16) items of interview content for non-Yoruba members of the leadership of the Church²⁷⁰. Qualitative in-depth interviews with individuals who are aware of community issues are known as key informant interviews²⁷¹. Key informant interviews are intended to gather information from a broad spectrum of individuals with first-hand experience of the community, such as professionals, residents, and leaders²⁷². For this reason, non-Yoruba leaders of the RCCG shall be interviewed to ask their view of the subject matter.

3.5 Validity of the Research Instruments

The degree to which an instrument measures what it was designed to measure is referred to as its validity. Consequently, if an instrument measures what it was intended to measure, it is

said to be "valid"²⁷³. In order to present research instruments that are considered to be valid for the purpose of this research, a total of 48 items have been identified based on the interviews and the literature review conducted. These items are consequently deployed as statement/questions on the research instruments to find out the extent to which the Yoruba culture has and is positively or negatively affecting the RCCG intercultural missionary enterprise in the North-Central of Nigeria. Experts with strong backgrounds in culturally-based research have been consulted as regards this. They have evaluated the face validity, and content validity of the items and certified them satisfactory^{274 - 275}.

3.6 Reliability of the Research Instruments

The term "reliability" describes a measure's consistency. Psychometrics takes into account three sorts of consistency: consistency between items (internal consistency), consistency throughout time (test-retest reliability), and consistency across researchers (inter-rater reliability)²⁷⁶. In order to measure the reliability of this instruments, small group of individuals who were comparable to the target population were made to take part in a pilot study to evaluate the questionnaire's suitability, relevance, and clarity. After completing the questionnaire, participants from this same sample were asked to comment on its overall comprehensibility, item phrasing, and instructions. The input from the pilot participants is thoroughly examined to identify any possible problems, including unclear or confusing questions, and the instrument will be improved by making the required adjustments and improvements²⁷⁷. In order to identify potential issues and improve the questionnaire, pilot testing is an essential stage in the instrument development process. It assists in making sure the tool is understandable, relevant, and easy for users to use, which promotes better data collecting and more precise outcomes²⁷⁸.

For the purpose of reliability, one hundred (100) electronic copies of the main survey instrument “Influence of Yoruba Culture on RCCG North-Central Nigeria Intercultural Missions: A Survey” were distributed; as well as twenty (20) Key Informant Interviews (KII) were conducted among members of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria for a pilot study. At the end of this pilot survey, the reliability of the research tools was confirmed by means of an analysis conducted on the administered questionnaire and interview guide.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

Data collection is basically the process of acquiring and assessing data on relevant variables in a predetermined, methodical manner so as to address research questions, and evaluate outcomes²⁷⁹. Data collected for this study are sourced from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were obtained from the respondents through the use of the main research instrument – “Influence of Yoruba Culture on RCCG North-Central Nigeria Intercultural Missions: A Survey”; and the interview sessions using the KII instrument – “Influence of Yoruba Culture on RCCG North-Central Nigeria Intercultural Missions” (IYCM). The secondary data came from relevant books, journals, magazines, mission reports, and online resources.

In this study, the prepared research instruments were doggedly engaged in the data collection. For proper organisation, two (2) research assistants were engaged to work with this student in the Federal Capital Territory. For speed and acceptability, electronic version of the survey instrument was shared among the assistants. This was done to encourage environmental sustainability of the use of paper. It is a fact that paper is made out of wood and that cutting down of more trees is not sustainable to the planet. Secondly, some respondents during the pre-test complained of having to write on paper to administer the questionnaire. They seem

not to be comfortable writing on paper; but having a preference for ticking off (☑) their responses on the phones. This actually increased their mobility and enhanced their smartness in conducting the survey.

Three hundred (300) participants were sampled alongside thirty (30) Key Informant interviewees. The expected participants were three hundred and thirty (330) in all. But due to challenges which include time constraint, electricity and internet connectivity in submitting the electronic form, responses of only 280 of participants were available as at the time of data collation of the survey. At the end of the day, three hundred and ten (310) respondents participated in the research. As responsibly expected for ethical consideration of such a sensitive work, it is worthy to note that before the commencement of the survey, the researcher took appropriate permission from the authority of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in the North-Central Nigeria in person of Pastor (Dr.) Ezekiel Odeyemi^{280 - 281}. He is the Assistant General Overseer and Continental 2 Overseer for West Coast as well as the Pastor-in-charge of North-Central Region²⁸².

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The collected data were examined through the application of suitable statistical techniques in order to investigate the goals and inquiries of the study. This is the essence of data analysis, because this provides a method to arranging, condensing, and interpreting the data collected from the structured questionnaire and conducted interviews²⁸³. In order to achieve this, an overview of the responses and a summary of the data are provided through the use of descriptive statistics. In order to determine the distribution of categorical variables and provide insights into the prevalence and patterns of different responses, frequencies and percentages will be computed. Concise and relevant data interpretation and presentation are made possible by descriptive statistics²⁸⁴. They offer a thorough picture of the study results,

allowing investigators and interested parties to understand the salient features and patterns in the gathered data. The central tendency, dispersion, and distribution of variables are summarised by descriptive statistics, which offer important details about the study sample and the variables being studied.

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Endnote

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Chapter Four

Result and Discussion of Findings

This chapter presents results and discussions of the interpretation of data collected on the field. They include demographic data of the respondents (age range, gender, ethnicity, etc.); the perception of the Yoruba influence on the RCCG North-Central; Perceived threat-posture of Yoruba to RCCG North-Central (NC) intercultural missions; Yoruba positive values to intercultural missions in North-Central; and cultural best Practices in promoting intercultural missions in Nigeria.

4.1 Data Presentation

4.1.1 Demographical Overview of Respondents

Table 4.1.1: Demographical Overview of Respondents

Items	Frequency	Percentages
Gender:		
Female	109	43.6%
Male	133	53.2%
Neuter	8	3.2%
Age Range:		
18 – 28	37	14.8%
29 – 39	100	40.0%
40 – 50	82	32.8%
51 & Above	31	12.4%
Ethnicity	20	100%
Functions of Respondents:		
Pastors-in-charge		
Ministers/HoDs	44	17.6%
Workers	55	22.0%
Members	101	40.4%
	50	20.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

4.1.2 Gender Distribution of the Respondents

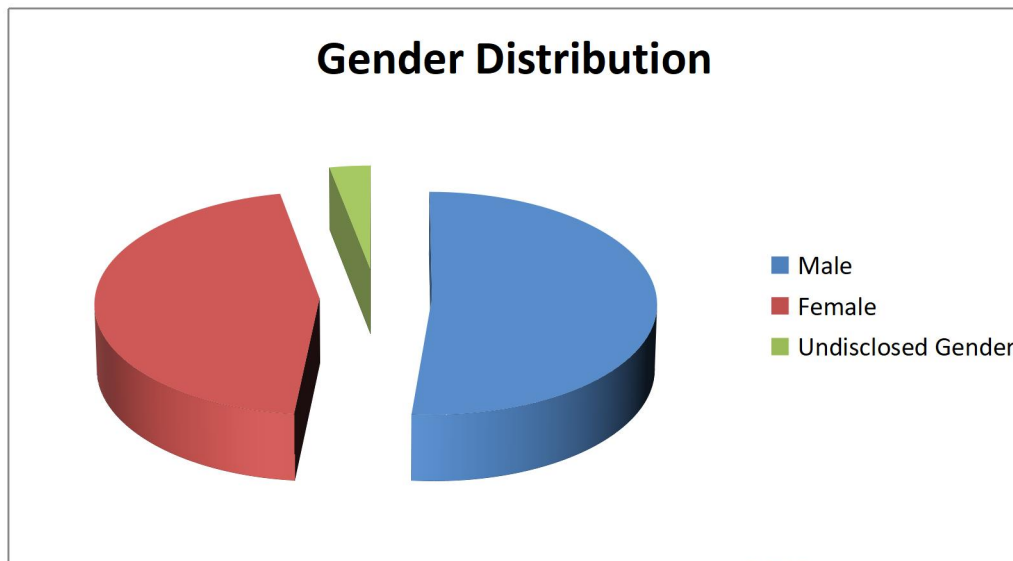


Fig. 4.1.2: Gender Distribution

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Of the total of 250 respondents who partook in the survey, as expected in every patriarchal society the male members are mostly available, or permitted to relate on external discussions²⁸⁵. So in this study 53.2% (133) of the respondents are male. Most times the female gender is often reserved to responding to discussions men are involved, even when asked to contribute on issues relating to comparative culture²⁸⁶. Over the years, female cultural subjugation has seemed to have been passed down the line such that their voices are hardly heard²⁸⁷. This survey is not an exemption to this experience, although the female did turn out to add their voice this time at 43.6% (109) which is highly commendable. On a closer look at the statistics, young women seem to be speaking up alongside their male counterparts²⁸⁸. This is an improvement over related surveys in recent times. The 5% (8) of the respondents who declined to identify with the two gender options provided may not be counted as they being in the LGBTQ category. At the same time, this view may not be underestimated in a country where non-straight members are also pushing the limits of the general cultural boundaries for legal acceptance²⁸⁹.

4.1.3 Age Distribution of Respondents

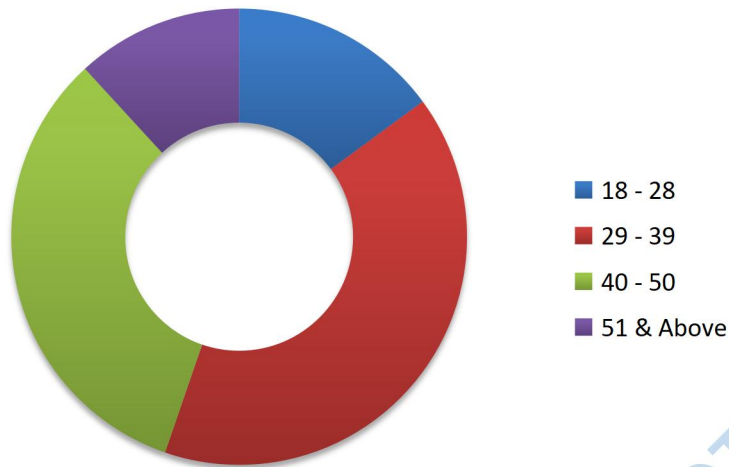


Fig. 4.1.3: Age Distribution of Respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The age representation of the respondents in this research is a presentation of members, workers and ministers who volunteered to be a part of the survey. This is also taken as the true representation of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in North-Central Nigeria given the statistics of the denomination²⁹⁰. From Fig. 4.1.3, it could be deducible that respondents between ages 18 and 28 are about 15% of the research sample. This age group represents the range combining what is known as the Teens and Young Adults' Church in the RCCG. Their contribution to this survey is commendable and indicating the inclusive nature of this research. The representation of ages 29 to 39 are 40% of the total sample. This age group are the largest volunteers in the study and their effort portends their position in the setting of any organisation as a life wire²⁹¹. Excerpts from the interviews further informs the importance of this group and how they may their voice heard as regards the Yoruba culture and its relationship with other cultures represented in the North-Central of Nigeria. Volunteers between ages 40 – 50 has 33% of the study sample. They form the second largest set of volunteers in the study. The ages between 50 and above were 12% of the respondents. In the course of this research this age group seem to be reluctant to be a part of the study. This is

quite understandable because the question being examined is a sensitive issue which many of this age dread to add their voice. Instead they seem to be speaking through their children.

4.1.4 Ethnic group representations

Table 4.1.4: Ethnic group representations

	Ethnic Groups	States	Frequency
i.	Gbagyi	FCT	8%
ii.	Gwari	FCT	10%
iii.	Igala	Kogi	6%
iv.	Idoma	Benue	10%
v.	Bassa	Plateau	3%
vi.	Tiv	Benue	8%
vii.	Okun	Kogi	10%
viii.	Ebira	Kogi	10%
ix.	Rukuba	Plateau	4%
x.	Bajju	FCT	4%
xi.	Berom	Plateau	5%
xii.	Koro	Plateau	5%
xiii.	Etulo	Benue	4%
xiv.	Adara	Benue	6%
xv.	Igede	Benue	2%
xvi.	Ekoi	Cross Rivers	2%
xvii.	Hoba	Adamawa	2%
xviii.	Urhobo	Delta	5%
xix.	Etsako	Edo	2%
xx.	Mambilla	Adamawa	5%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Twenty different ethnic groups were represented as volunteers in this study. While the more than 70% of them are indigenes of the North-Central (Gbagyi (plural –Agbari/Agbagyi), Gwari, Igala, Tiv, Idoma, Bassa, Okun, Ebira, Rukuba, Bajju (a short for "Banyet Jju"), Birom (Berom), Koro, Etulo, Adara,), a few others who are there by birth or business also partook in the survey (Margi, Bachama, Hoba, Damti, Urhobo, Igbo). This statistics indicates covers two separate ‘other cultures’ but who are all members of the RCCG and willing to participate in the research. These form the remaining approximately 30% of the participants. These people were included because they have been living in the region for quite a while and are leaders from other ethnic groups and stakeholders. Their views in the interviews have been very informative as much as this study is concern²⁹².

4.2 Perception of the Yoruba culture in RCCG North-Central (NC)

Table 4.2: Perception of Yoruba culture in RCCG North-Central (NC)

	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.2a.	The Yoruba language is prominent in the RCCG worship.	38.6%	47.6%	7.2%	6%	0.6%
4.2b.	All the pastors are Yoruba.	1.8%	16.9%	18.7%	45.2%	18.1%
4.2c.	Most leaders of the RCCG in North-Central Nigeria are Yoruba.	32.7%	40.0%	12.1%	13.9%	1.2%
4.2d.	The use of Yoruba language in services is a denial of the right of other cultures.	14.5%	35.8%	20.6%	26.7%	2.4%
4.2e.	Non-Yoruba publics complain about the use of Yoruba in Praise and worship sessions.	10.9%	31.5%	28.5%	26.7%	2.4%
4.2f.	There has being misunderstandings between non-Yoruba and Yoruba speakers due to cultural issues like greetings, respect, food, etc. in the RCCG.	12.7%	15.8%	34.5%	30.3%	6.7%
4.2g.	People see the RCCG as a Yoruba church.	43.9%	30.5%	7.3%	14.6%	4.3%
4.2h.	Church leaders want people to behave like Yoruba e.g. you must prostrate, or kneel down to greet them.	14.5%	21.2%	21.8%	35.2%	7.3%
4.2i.	These leaders do not care about other cultures but make jest of them.	5.4%	15.1%	23.1%	38%	18.1%

4.2j.	The non-Yoruba public hate this attitude and sends them away from our church.	6.1%	17.1%	26.8%	38.4%	11.6%
4.2k.	The leaders want us to think and do things like the Yoruba.	7.9%	19.4%	20%	41.2%	12.1%
4.2l.	It is difficult for members who are not Yoruba to become leaders in the church.	19.4%	20.6%	17.6%	34.5%	7.9%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The response of the participants as regards the prominence of the Yoruba language in their worship programmes is not different from the identified research problem. In fact, 38.6% affirmed as 'Strongly Agreed', 47.6% indicated 'Agreed' 7.2% were neutral while 6% and 0.6% Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed respectively. These figures strongly connote a seemingly coercive presence of the Yoruba language in the weekly meetings which most of the interviewees protested against even though they appreciate the said language²⁹³. Tamar Herzog discusses a similar situation in Iberians activities in Latin America, although their case was subtly executed through the instrumentation of a so-called consent from their colonies²⁹⁴. In the minds of members who are of other cultures in the church are a variant of uncomfortable questions when a minister stands behind the rostrum and speaks in an unknown tongue. One of the interviewees alluded to Paul at this juncture that even the Bible says if any man speaks in an unknown tongue he should interpret, or get an interpreter to do so. This is also the opinion of Solomon Ademiluka, in the absence of an interpreter, there ought to be no speaking in tongues and that in contrast to Paul's directive, the majority of glossolalia in Nigerian neo-Pentecostal churches is incomprehensible and typically used without explanation²⁹⁵. The sincere truth is that a lot of the times these listeners said they are lost when the Yoruba enthusiasts begin to sing or allude to Yoruba in their teaching or preaching sessions.

As far as whether all the pastors are Yoruba 45.2% disagreed while 18.5% strongly disagreed. This naturally indicates that this statement is not true, although in some instances during the KII, some of the respondents corrected the notion that while not all of the North-Central

leadership is Yoruba, majority of them are of the Yoruba stock. This is further clarified by the next statement where 32.7% strongly agreed that most of the leaders are Yoruba supported by 40.0% who also agreed.

The use of Yoruba language in services has been found to usher in the vocalisation of the concept of human right. While 14.5% strongly agreed that rights of other cultures are been violated by the use of Yoruba expressions in services; 35.5% agreed to this; 20.6% were neutral; 26.7% and 2.4% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. It can be seriously to think an aggregate of over 50% affirmed that the use of Yoruba could be a right issue. According to the United Nations, the free expressions of indigenous peoples' languages are a matter of human basic rights²⁹⁶. This therefore informs the logic reasoning that a denial of a people's languages or a preference of a language over another is a denial of the oppressed human right.

As if this is not sufficient, 31.5% agreed that non-Yoruba publics complain about the use of Yoruba in Praise and worship sessions in the Redeemed Christian Church of God as 10.9% of the respondents strongly agreed to this assertion, 28.5% decided to be neutral, 26.7% rejected the claim and only 2.4% strongly supported the rejection. This calls for a concern of acceptance among the publics among whom evangelism and several good works of corporate social responsibilities are done. If they keep complaining about the manner the Yoruba language is used, they might one day also reject the Good News the church is making frantic effort to propagate.

Misunderstanding is inevitable among a people of various reasoning and cultural orientation. Yumeng Wu of the University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, Shanghai, China explained this in his study of the cultural conflict as regards time among the China and German populace in intercultural communication²⁹⁷. He found that knowing how

Chinese and German perspectives differ on issues such as ‘time’ can help us communicate more effectively and foster positive interpersonal relationships by enabling us to modify our behaviour and language and to better understand and accept one another. This is the case of several misunderstandings between non-Yoruba and Yoruba speakers on cultural issues like greetings, respect, food, etc. These misapprehensions have caused a lot of havoc within the church and made some to go back to their vomit²⁹⁸. In this aspect of the survey and considering the sensitivity of the statement under review, if 34.5% were neutral, this response calls for concern²⁹⁹. This could suggest an unwillingness to divulge a large volume of information.

Statement 4.2g ‘People see the RCCG as a Yoruba church’ is a follow-up statement to the above paragraph. Quite interestingly, 43.9% strongly agreed that people see the RCCG as a Yoruba church. 30.5% agreed to this observation. 7.3% were neutral on this. 14.6% disagreed while 4.3% strongly disagreed. There is a Yoruba saying, that ‘if a child suddenly died a day before and a witch confessed a day following, who does not know that it was the witch who confessed that killed the baby’³⁰⁰. This Statement 4.2g on Table 4.2 has vocalised the neutral position taken by the respondents in Statement 4.2f. For the fact that almost 75.0% of the respondents attested that they people tagged the Redeemed Christian Church of God as the Yoruba church shows that there would be constant misunderstandings among the cultures who feel oppressed and in the ‘minority’.

Statement 4.2h is another cultural issue describing how church leaders were alleged of wanting members to either prostrate or kneel down for them involuntarily in order to greet them. To start with, greeting is an aspect of the Yoruba culture that is very vivid and conspicuously executed³⁰¹. Any child who does not greet is tagged as being uncultured and lack home training. Yoruba have a greeting for everything they see you do whether you sit, stand, eat, drink, write or sleep. This attitude has informed their hospitality and affectionate

relations. For this reason, the Yoruba people group are referred to as ‘*Ọmọ káà áró òjì ire*’ (transliterated as: ‘child of good morning, hope you slept well’; or translated as: ‘children of those who greet’)³⁰². Considering the lifestyle of the Yoruba and how they perceive greeting, a few questions come to mind: i.) could Yoruba leaders actually be forcing their members to greet them, or these members felt obliged to greet them? ii.) Are these members unwilling to be courteous to their spiritual leaders? iii.) Are these members ashamed or afraid to greet in their own cultural manners? iv.) Has anyone being reprimanded for greeting in his own cultural mode? While these questions are begging for answers 14.5% strongly agreed that their leaders want them to prostrate or kneel to greet. 21.2% supported by agreeing to this statement. 21.8% as usual remained neutral and maintaining silence on the matter. 35.2% disagreed alongside 7.3% who strongly disagreed.

Statement 4.2i on Table 4.2 emphasises the claim that leaders do not care about other cultures have been grossly flawed. Only 5.4% of the respondents strongly agreed to this assertion. 15.1% said they are also in agreement. 23.1% remained neutral. 38.0% disagreed while 18.1% strongly disagreed. From these indicators and reports from the KII, it could be inferred that while a situation might exists in some people’s experiences, it is not a common practice among the leaders of the Redeemed Christian Church of God to make jest of other cultures under their leadership domain.

Responses to Statement 4.2j presents shows 6.1% representation for those who strongly agreed that non-Yoruba publics hate the attitude described in Statement 4.2i above – that these leaders do not care about other cultures but make jest of them. 17.1% agreed with them. 26.8% are neutral as usual. 38.4% disagreed and 11.6% strongly disagreeing. Having less than 20% who said people leave the church for the Yoruba attitude mentioned in Statement 4.2i above shows that despite the fact that the people are not happy with the situation; they are not leaving the church. This shows a sense of deep commitment on the part

of the non-Yoruba members of the RCCG North-Central Region. This is a commendable act depicting that the non-Yoruba are not distracted by any perceived negative attitude from their Yoruba counterparts; instead, they are bound on sticking all the same.

Statement 4.2k is focused on leadership, just as Statement 4.2j. The content of this aspect borders on forceful or subtle coercion to 'Think, or Act as Yoruba'. 7.9% strongly agreed to this statement. 19.9% merely agreed. 20.0% are neutral. 41.2% disagreed. 12.1% strongly disagreed. These responses look similar to the responses for Statement 4.2j. From all inferences, it is deducible that the numbers of respondents who have had this bitter experience are not as much as those who have not. Secondly, from the interviews conducted the perception that 'someone wants you to be to be like them could just be an action not meant by the leader but which was misunderstood by the member. None of the interviewed persons said a leader ever vocalised, or wrote somewhere that members of their Parish, Area or Zone, or Province should become Yoruba because they are Yoruba. This brings up the notion of perception. Perception is a complex cognitive process through which individuals interpret sensory information to give meaning to their environment. It involves not only the raw data received by sensory organs but also the brain's ability to organize and interpret this data based on past experiences, expectations, and knowledge³⁰³.

Still on the issue of leadership and politics in the church, 19.4% of the respondents are of the view that it is difficult for non-Yoruba descent to become leaders in the Redeemed Christian Church of God. 20.6% of them also agreed that this declaration is true. As always found in this survey, 17.6% of the participants are neutral on the point in view. 34.5% disagreed while 7.9% strongly disagreed. This notion of ethnocentric leadership selection is a strongly debatable objection even as we consider the margin between the sum of those who agreed with the notion $(19.4\% + 20.6\%) = 40.0\%$ compared to the summation of those who disagreed $(34.5\% + 7.9\%) = 42.4\%$ without belabouring the middle ground effort of the

neutral group. It is herculean a task to bend to either of the sides except to understand that this ‘almost-tie’ is a pointer to accepting that within the RCCG, some leaders are keen on making their ‘blood brothers’ leaders over others. The subject of qualification for the leadership position is a discourse for further discussion. But on this note, it is obvious that leadership is being politicised along the line of ethnicity. Church politics along the lines of ethnocentrism has been discussed by Lyle Notice³⁰⁴. This actually supports the view that most African Indigenous Churches are enmeshed in indigenous languages³⁰⁵.

4.3 Perceived Threat-Posture of Yoruba to RCCG N-C intercultural missions

Table 4.3: Perceived Threat-Posture of Yoruba to RCCG N-C intercultural missions

	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3a.	Yoruba culture dominates other cultures in our Parish	20.5%	33.1%	15.1%	26.5%	4.8%
4.3b.	They preach from the pulpit in Yoruba while someone interpret in English.	2.4%	6.0%	16.3%	56.0%	19.3%
4.3c.	They preach from the pulpit in English while someone interpret in Yoruba.	3.6%	14.5%	16.3%	50.6%	15.1%
4.3d.	No other languages are interpreted in English preaching services.	7.9%	20.1%	23.2%	39.0%	9.8%
4.3e.	The pastor often burst into Yoruba language in the midst of the message.	0.6%	11.5%	9.7%	44.2%	33.9%
4.3f.	Yoruba is used to conduct house fellowship.	0.6%	6.7%	9.2%	47.2%	36.2%
4.3g.	Yoruba songs dominate our singing sessions in church.	20.0%	44.8%	11.5%	16.4%	7.5%
4.3h.	Prayers are done in Yoruba, or mixed with Yoruba.	3.0%	17.5%	21.1%	38.6%	19.9%
4.3i.	Bible reading is done in Yoruba.	0.6%	1.8%	9.0%	44.0%	44.6%
4.3j.	Yoruba foods are mostly cooked during Church programmes.	3.6%	13.9%	16.9%	46.4%	19.3%
4.3k.	They want us to dress like Yoruba people.	2.4%	9.0%	17.5%	50.6%	20.5%
4.3l.	As a non-Yoruba I feel uncomfortable when worship is done in Yoruba.	6.6%	14.5%	25.9%	40.4%	12.7%
4.3m.	Despite all odds, the Yoruba language has some positive influence on the church.	27.1%	48.2%	13.3%	6.6%	4.8%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.3 presents 13 statements that were agreed to or disagreed upon by the different participants of the survey as regards their perception of ‘threat posture’ of Yoruba to North-Central Nigeria intercultural missions of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. In as much as some of the survey respondents gave their views, the participants of the Key Informant Interview (KII) also lent their voices.

Statement 4.3a describes a situation in which the Yoruba culture dominates other culture in their parishes. In response to this statement 20.5% strongly agreed. 33.1% agreed. 15.1% were neutral in choice. 26.5 disagreed while 4.8% strongly disagreed. The inference here is that over 50% of the respondents affirmed that Yoruba dominates other cultures in their parish. The dimension of domination is another point worth considering. But from the KII, the dominance of the Yoruba culture was usually obvious during the Praise and Worship session because the worship leaders always sang Yoruba songs at the exclusion of other languages. Reasons for this some of the interviewees related to such songs being highly inspirational, connecting them to the heights. Certain of the interviewees also attributed the use of the Yoruba language to either incompetence in English language at some point in the process of leading prayers in the congregation; or could be as the minister was led by the Spirit of God.

Table 4.3b: Yoruba Pulpit Preaching & English Interpretation

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3b.	They preach from the pulpit in Yoruba while someone interpret in English.	2.4%	6.0%	16.3%	56.0%	19.3%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Statement 4.3b dwells on Yoruba preaching and English interpretation. On this 2.4% strongly agreed it happens. 6.0% agreed to this as well. 16.3% said they were neutral on making comments. 56.0% said this does not happen, and their views were shared by 19.3% who

strongly disagreed with the statement. Those who said this happens also felt it should not be done, arguing that English is the lingua franca and not Yoruba.

Table 4.3c: Preaching in English with Yoruba Interpretation

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3c.	They preach from the pulpit in English while someone interpret in Yoruba.	3.6%	14.5%	16.3%	50.6%	15.1%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Statement 4.3c is similar to Statement 4.3b being that they are both focused on preaching. 3.6% strongly agreed that in some parishes the preaching conducted in English is further interpreted into Yoruba. 14.5% affirmed this happens. 16.3% are neutral on the statement. 50.6% disagreed and 15.1% further strongly disagreed. This implies that there are mission fields where English messages are being interpreted into Yoruba. But the question always remain why Only Yoruba, why not other languages alongside?

Table 4.3d: Zero Indigenous Language Interpretation

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3d.	No other languages are interpreted in English preaching services.	7.9%	20.1%	23.2%	39.0%	9.8%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

As presented on Table 4.3d, 7.9% respondents strongly agreed that there is zero indigenous language interpretation in the RCCG parishes in North-Central Nigeria. 20.1% agreed with them. 23.2% are neutral on the subject. 39.0% disagreed while 9.8% strongly disagreed. This means indigenous language interpretations are done in the North-Central region.

Table 4.3e: Preachers Code-mixing with Yoruba while Preaching

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3e.	The pastor often burst into Yoruba language in the midst of the message.	0.6%	11.5%	9.7%	44.2%	33.9%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

In their response to code-switching into Yoruba while preaching, 0.6% of the respondents strong agreed with the statement. 11.5% agreed that this sometimes occur. 9.7% of the participants were neutral. 44.2% disagreed with 33.9% strongly in disagreement. This sustains the view that bursting into Yoruba in the midst of a preaching exercise is not a common occurrence among pastors of the RCCG in North-Central Nigeria.

Table 4.3f: Conducting House Fellowship in Yoruba

	Statement	SA	A	N	A	SD
4.3f.	Yoruba is used to conduct house fellowship.	0.6%	6.7%	9.2%	47.2%	36.2%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The House fellowship system is a church growth strategy of the RCCG. Usually the House fellowship programme holds after church every Sunday evening in a member's house. 0.6% of the respondents strongly agreed. 6.7% agreed that Hose fellowship is conducted in Yoruba. 9.2% were neutral. 47.2% disagreed with the notion. 36.2% strongly disagreed.

Table 4.3g: Yoruba Songs Domination in RCCG N-C

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3g.	Yoruba songs dominate our singing sessions in church.	20.0%	44.8%	11.5%	16.4%	7.5%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

From Table 4.3g, the presentation shows that 20.0% of the respondents affirmed that Yoruba songs dominate their singing sessions in the parishes. 44.8% also supported this view. 11.5% were neutral. 16.4% disagreed. 7.5% strongly disagreed. This is an issue according to this data and many of the views of the interviews.

Table 4.3h: Prayers Done in Yoruba or Code-mixed

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3h.	Prayers are done in Yoruba, or mixed with Yoruba.	3.0%	17.5%	21.1%	38.6%	19.9%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

As regards prayers, 3.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that prayers are done in Yoruba, or code-mixed with Yoruba. 17.5% agreed to this assertion. 21.1% were neutral. 38.6% disagreed while 19.9% strongly disagreed.

Table 4.3i: Bible Reading in Yoruba

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3i.	Bible reading is done in Yoruba.	0.6%	1.8%	9.0%	44.0%	44.6%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

44.6% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that bible reading is done in Yoruba as presented on Table 4.3i. This same notion is followed by 44.0% of the respondents. 9.0% of them form neutral. 1.8% agreed while 0.6% strongly agreed.

Table 4.3j: Yoruba Food & RCCG Programmes

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3j.	Yoruba foods are mostly served during Church programmes.	3.6%	13.9%	16.9%	46.4%	19.3%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

From Table 4.3j the highest percentage of respondents 46.4% represents a disagreed perception to Statement 4.3j that Yoruba foods are mostly served during RCCG programmes in the North-Central. This is followed by the strongly disagreed group having 19.3% of the respondents and the neutral group 16.9%. All of these points to the fact that majority of the respondents have been witnesses of RCCG programmes in the North-Central and could attest that the menu of the foods served is a variety of meals from various cultures.

Table 4.3k: Compulsory Yoruba Dress Patterning

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3k.	They want us to dress like Yoruba people.	2.4%	9.0%	17.5%	50.6%	20.5%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.3k presents data that are similar to Table 4.3j bringing to life the cultural dimension of dressing. Dressing serves not only as a practical necessity but also as a powerful form of cultural expression and communication, reflecting the multifaceted nature of human societies³⁰⁶. Hence, both 50.6% and 20.5% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that the church wants them to compulsorily dress in the Yoruba manner. 17.5% of the survey participants remained neutral while 2.4% and 9.0% strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the assertion. This was found to be a misunderstanding of the thoughts of some leaders especially when they teach on modest dressing which is a hallmark of the Yoruba culture³⁰⁷.

Table 4.3l: Feeling of Discomfort During Worship in Yoruba

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3l.	As a non-Yoruba I feel discomfort when worship is done in Yoruba.	6.6%	14.5%	25.9%	40.4%	12.7%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The word discomfort has been expressed a mental or physical disturbance as a result of an event or an embarrassment. Data from Table 4.3l describe 40.4% disagreeing with the assertion of discomfort when worship is done in Yoruba. Respondent HB in one of the KII affirmed that he does not actually like the Yoruba language, but when worship is done in Yoruba, he cannot but connect to the heavens. 25.9% remained neutral on this issue while 14.5% of the respondents said they feel discomfort when Yoruba songs are played for worship.

Table 4.3m: Positive Influence of the Yoruba language in the Church

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.3m.	Despite all odds, the Yoruba language has some positive influence on the church.	27.1%	48.2%	13.3%	6.6%	4.8%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Even though this study has done a lot of critic the Yoruba culture, Table 4.3m displays 48.2% and 27.1% of the respondents showing some admiration for the Yoruba language. These groups both agreed and strongly agreed respectively to the statement that the Yoruba language has some positive influence on the Redeemed Christian of God. There is no culture in the global space that has nothing positive to offer the world. For instance, Emmanuel Olawale in their research on conflict resolution brought the Yoruba language to the forefront as having traditional conflict resolution. They said the Yoruba indigenous system has reconciliatory mechanisms that contribute to conflict resolution through traditional reconciliation processes for healing emotional wounds³⁰⁸.

4.4 Positive Influences of the Yoruba Culture on North-Central intercultural mission

Table 4.4: Positive Influences of the Yoruba Culture on N-C intercultural mission

	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.4a.	Some good practices can be learnt from Yoruba people in the church.	18.7%	63.3%	13.3%	3.0%	1.8%
4.4b.	There are some moral behaviour which are absent in my culture that are in Yoruba culture.	13.3%	39.2%	27.1%	14.5%	6.6%
4.4c.	Based on my interaction with Yoruba members, the Yoruba language is worth learning.	11.4%	56.0%	27.1%	4.8%	1.2%
4.4d.	Based on my interaction with Yoruba members, I can marry a Yoruba.	12.2%	33.5%	20.7%	15.2%	18.4%
4.4e.	Yoruba foods are delicious.	12.0%	42.2%	38.6%	5.4%	1.8%
4.4f.	Suppose I have a new baby I can give a Yoruba name to my child.	12.0%	20.5%	19.3%	22.3%	25.9%
4.4g.	I prefer the Yoruba culture to my culture.	1.2%	4.2%	12.7%	36.7%	45.2%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Culture is the accumulation of the customs of a people over time. Since people invented culture there would always be a positive and negative aspect of every culture. In the course of this study, the participants have been objective enough to speak to the survey and made their voices known. In Table 4.4 for instance, in responding to Statement 4.4a, 63.3% of the participants agreed to the fact that some good practices can be learnt from the Yoruba people. As a follow-up to this statement volunteers to the KII have made a long list of good practices. These include: Greeting, Respect, Praising and eulogising God, hospitality, worship, giving, good behaviour, humility, God-seeking, Availability for the work of God, strong articulation in resounding “Amen” to prayers, show of love, dance, respect for elders, prayer life-style, modest dressing, morality, obedience, helping people, advanced culture, good relationship, being nice, determination, grateful, accommodating to other cultures, great social life, inclusivity, and integrity.

Table 4.4b: Morality Present in Yoruba but Absent in Other Cultures

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.4b.	There are some moral behaviour which are absent in my culture that are in Yoruba culture.	13.3%	39.2%	27.1%	14.5%	6.6%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Considering some of the great virtues present in the Yoruba culture, some participants have attested to this reality that some of these ‘beatitudes’ are absent in their own cultures. From Table 4.4b, 39.2% of the respondents agreed to this fact, while 13.3% strongly agreed. 27.1% were neutral. 14.5% and 6.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively inferring that if given the same opportunity their cultures have all of what the Yoruba culture possesses. The position is acceptable considering the theory of cultural relativity which posits the equality of every culture and the non-superiority of none.

Table 4.4c: Desire to Learning Yoruba Language

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.4c.	Based on my interaction with Yoruba members of the RCCG, the Yoruba language is worth learning.	11.4%	56.0%	27.1%	4.8%	1.2%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

56.0% of the respondent on Table 4.4c agreed that based on their interactions with Yoruba members in the RCCG in the North-Central, their interests in the language has been fuelled. Emmanuel Lukong and Faizefu Ruhama explained that the Yoruba language is a florid language that packed with rhetorics, anecdotes, and incredible figures of speech. The Yoruba language is a Niger-Congo language by classification³⁰⁹. It is a living language and its speakers cut across 20 countries of the world including: Benin, Brazil, Cuba, and others³¹⁰. On the native land, the speakers are so creative with words such that new words are formed on regular basis in accordance with advancement in technology (as in *redio*, *telefison*, *bibeli*, *komputa*, *foonu*, *laptopu*, etc.)

Table 4.4d: Interaction with Yoruba & Inter-ethnic Marriages

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.4d.	Based on my interaction with Yoruba members, I can marry a Yoruba.	12.2%	33.5%	20.7%	15.2%	18.4%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Marriage just as dressing or food is a critical element of culture because every marriage leads to the formation of a family which is the unit of every society. Table 4.4d presents an array of data in which 33.5% of the respondents agree to join in matrimony with anyone from the Yoruba ethnic group. 12.2% of them also signal a strong agreement to this statement. 20.7% were neutral about this proposition. 15.2% disagreed while 18.4% strongly disagreed. This set of data informs that interacting with people of other ethnic groups could engender marital relationships, or intercultural marriages.

Table 4.4e: Yoruba Food

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.4e.	Yoruba foods are delicious.	12.0%	42.2%	38.6%	5.4%	1.8%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Inference from a Yoruba adage asserts that the way to a man's heart is his stomach. This implies that in order to befriend a person, or get closer to an individual, offering them food, or something to eat or drink is one of the quickest methods. Food is not just delicious to the sight; it is mostly felt in the mouth before transferring it to the stomach where it commences its journey back to the soil. From Table 4.4e, 42.2% respondents indicated that Yoruba meals are delicious. This view is further supported by 12.0% who strongly agreed. 38.6% were neutral. 5.4% disagreed and 1.8% strongly disagreed. The implication of these information is that other sociological people groups are aware of the cooking prowess of the Yoruba and could a long way to taste the Yoruba *Amala, Eba, fufu, Iyan, Obe Egusi, abula, efo riro*, etc.

Table 4.4f: Giving a Child a Yoruba Name

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.4f.	Suppose I have a new baby I can give a Yoruba name to my child.	12.0%	20.5%	19.3%	22.3%	25.9%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

A name is a major mark of identification for any person in any space. Before the technology of biometrics one major technique of identifying people is their names. When the attention of an individual is needed what people call is their names. So names become very important in the life of any entity, whether civil or corporate. For the Table 4.4f above, an aggregate of 32.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed to the statement on the table that they can name their children Yoruba names. This is an indication that while many of the Church members are opposed to having Yoruba names for their children, some still showed their interest. 19.3% of the volunteers were neutral. 22.3%. 22.3% disagreed while 25.9% strongly

disagreed with the notion. This is tantamount to the understanding that even though more people want to give their children Yoruba names; much more are not interested in Yoruba names.

Table 4.4g: Preference of Yoruba Culture

	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.4g.	I prefer the Yoruba culture to my culture.	1.2%	4.2%	12.7%	36.7%	45.2%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Even though as much as 32.5% agreed to give their children Yoruba names as found on Table 4.4f, less than 6.0% said they prefer their culture to the Yoruba way of life on Table 4.4g. In fact, 45.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the idea while an additional 36.7% followed suit by simply disagreeing. This could be supported by the Yoruba saying which says: “*oun teni n teni; takisan n taa tan*” (interpretation: whatever is your own is your own, the rag belongs to the dumpsite). In spite of these people’s interest in the Yoruba culture, they cannot dump their own culture, or relegate its value for the Yoruba culture. This statistics differ from what is observed in relation to Western culture versus African culture. A lot of Africans want to become western by all means. Some women want to have their hairs stretched to be western. Others want to add additional attachment, even as far as buying natural hair donated by worshippers at the Indian temple. When it comes to the use of ethnic language, some families prefer to groom their children through the English as compared to their mother tongue. This further explains that the much impact colonial imperialism still has on the African mind rebuilding effects of inferiority and xenocentrism, though several decades have past and colonialism seems to have ended³¹¹.

4.5 Cultural Best Practices in Promoting Intercultural Missions in Nigeria

Table 4.5: Cultural Best Practices in Promoting Intercultural Missions in Nigeria

	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.5a.	Our Church leaders are willing to listen to stories from our cultures.	12.7%	46.3%	31.1%	6.0%	1.2%
4.5b.	The RCCG is interested in our cultural wears and dresses.	15.1%	55.4%	21.7%	6.0%	1.8%
4.5c.	The church encourages our cultural dances and plays.	21.1%	60.8%	13.9%	2.4%	1.8%
4.5d.	The church appreciates our cultural foods.	17.5%	56.6%	22.9%	2.4%	0.6%
4.5e.	The church wants to learn about our cultural values.	14.5%	48.2%	27.7%	8.4%	1.2%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The data presented in this section of the results on Table 4.5 indicates that church leaders are quite willing to listen to their congregation especially when it comes to artefacts from their cultural past and present. While 12.7% strongly agreed that the pastors do have the patience to acculturate with them; 46.3% supported this same position. Unfortunately, 31.1% showed neutrality or indifference as if they are not concerned. This large percentage of indifference calls for concern importantly because it is a trend in this section of the data presentation. For instance in the data about ‘interest in cultural wears and dresses’ the response for neutrality is 21.7% which is close to ‘appreciation for cultural foods’ (22.9%); and cultural values at 27.7%. Karen Sweeting and Brie Brittany criticise neutrality as a barrier to equity in outcomes in organisations because of its hidden drawbacks and uneven results, which neglect to place the human experience at the centre and treat people according to their circumstances³¹². This act in Table 4.5 is a show of individual neglect and a deliberate act to hide something from the public view due to fear or trepidation as found from the beginning of this discussion. In the Key Informant interview sessions held, some of the interviewees

alluded to the fact that they cannot talk (A male worker)³¹³. Another lady said even if they try to complain their voices would not get to the authority would can take or make decisions to turn things around³¹⁴.

Statement 4.5b on Table 4.5 presents a statistics 6.0% disagreed and only 1.2% strongly disagreed. This data is very clear that several cultures on the RCCG mission field in North-Central Nigeria are willing to showcase what their cultures can offer; and as it were the leaders are clearly willing to learn from these people groups as 55.4% agreed to this statement with 15.1% also agreeing so strongly. With this data, it is clear that what remains is action from members from the various ethnic groups to show their different codes and colours because the process of acculturation has begun. This runs is complimentary to the findings of Alec LeMay in her work among Filipino-Japanese international families. Their conclusions indicate that religion is a vehicle for acculturation³¹⁵. Amanah Nurish also observed that religion was a means of acculturation among the people groups in Osing and the Islamic religion in Indonesia³¹⁶. She even emphasised the use of food, dressing, music among other elements of culture that have enhanced this occurrence.

The focus of the statistics for Statement 4.5c is on cultural dance. The presentation is so similar to that of the presentation for Statement 4.5b. It is attention-drawing to have a whole lot of 60.8% agreed on a subject as this. The unanimous strong agreement of an additional 21.1% is a pointer to view that the Redeemed Christian church of God encourages the cultural dances and plays of other cultures aside the Yoruba styles. Dance which is a function of music is a universal language³¹⁷. It is an art that has supported music in winning souls³¹⁸. West Africa dances specifically have been attested to by Cruz-Banks and Jeanette Jackson. African dancing has the potential to be a crucial form of self-affirmation, resistance, and cultural restoration. The writers support the theory put forth by African dance expert Thomas DeFrantz, which holds that dance and rhythm are observable indicators of an

African people's spirituality and ancestry, which can support a strong sense of identity. Their study essentially emphasises West African dancing as a spiritual well-being activity³¹⁹.

Statement 4.5d presents data on the appreciation of cultural foods from the cultures in the North-Central region of Nigeria. In a familiar format, 56.6% agreed that the RCCG appreciates cultural foods from the mission fields. 17.5% supported this assertion by strongly agreeing. 22.9% remained neutral while 2.4% and 0.6% were on the negative end of the spectrum. This statistics affirms that other people's food is considered as every body's food. Food in the manner of dance and music is universal. This consciousness of the universality of food and its intercultural relatedness has made Hailey West and several other scholars to engage the COIL project using food to increase the cultural competence of tertiary institution students in Ecuador and USA, California^{320, 321}. Food has also been a source of bonding and socialisation between different cultures³²². A further encouragement of this form of culture is a deliberation effort in church growth.

Cultural values are the essence of the various forms of culture because each cultural form or traditional cultural expressions teach a value³²³. Statement 4.5e displays this expression with figures as 48.2% agreed with the statement and 14.5% strongly agreed with the same. 27.7% were neutral. 8.4% disagreed and 1.2% strongly disagreed. From the Key Informant Interview conducted some of the participants attested that there are days you are informed to wear to Church your traditional attires. This informs the important the church sees cultural values through clothing and such artefacts and ornaments as beads and various necklaces and hand bands.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

This study on the Yoruba Culture as a Connect and Disconnect to the Redeemed Christian Church of God Intercultural Missions in North-Central Nigeria has brought forth several

findings as regards the perspectives of sister cultures. These findings are the results collated from the questionnaire “Influence of Yoruba Culture on RCCG North-Central Nigeria Intercultural Missions: A Survey (ICIM)” and the Key Informant Interview titled sessions conducted among non-Yoruba membership of the church. In order to make a better presentation of findings, the objectives set to be achieved at the beginning of the study shall be reviewed alongside the findings highlighted above in this chapter. There are four objectives set to achieve at the completion of this study. They are:

- i. Evaluating opinions of RCCG non-Yoruba members and leaders in North-Central Nigeria as regards the Yoruba culture in relation to the church’s intercultural missions in the region.
- ii. Highlighting different dimensions the Yoruba culture has been a disconnect to RCCG intercultural missions in North-Central Nigeria.
- iii. Discussing Yoruba cultural values has a connect of the RCCG to intercultural mission in North-Central Nigeria.
- iv. Proffering an intercultural balancing model for positive cultural interaction to enhance RCCG missions in North-Central Nigeria.

4.6.1: Evaluating opinions of non-Yoruba members and leaders in North-Central on Yoruba culture in achieving the intercultural missions of the RCCG

Evaluating opinions of non-Yoruba members and leaders in North-Central RCCG as regards the Yoruba culture in achieving the intercultural missions of the RCCG was achievable when the politics behind certain dynamics of culture were assessed. As found Table 4.3, which focuses on perceived threat-posture of the Yoruba to North-Central intercultural missions; the statements from 4.3a – 4.3m seek to understand the position of the leaders from the members’ perspective. This is where the politics of religion and culture interplays in African religiosity. Sometimes certain philosophies are converted to religious doctrines for religious political reasons. For instance, there are churches that would not put on foot-wears once they are in

their religious garment. The leadership have made effort to make a doctrine out of this for reasons best known to them, not necessarily because the Bible commands this. On this occasion the study sought to know if leaders coerce their members to either wear Yoruba clothes, or eat their food, or greet in their way. The general response is that there is no direct coercion or persuasion in this regard, except on greeting. The Yoruba value greetings as their lives. The Yoruba culture has greetings for typically every action you undertake whether you are sleeping, waking, eating or even went to the bathroom. Hence, greetings form an essential part of the Yoruba culture. Not being able to greet as expected from an elder grieves his heart and he will thus demand that the custom be performed. Looking at the role congruity theory, it does not matter whether the second party is willing or not; just because there is a cultural expectation, the cultural jealousy gets aroused and the expected must be performed for such cultural wrath to be dissipated³²⁴. Consequently, it could be said that such leaders who display actions of displeasure against members would do not greet as expected are only inclining towards the role congruity theory. On the other hand, this attitude may not be cultural but a show of ‘headship’, or a demanding of respect as the Yoruba culture deems it fit. Actually, greeting is a ritual in Yoruba culture. They will say “*Eni tí kò kínni kú ilé, yìò pàdànú ẹ káà bọ*” (translated as: he that does not greet loses being greeted). Some Yoruba leaders feel you accord them the honour of being in-charge when you submit to the “greeting right” as a rite. They will say: “*Baba ni baba yóò máa jẹ, ẹni a bá lábà ni bàbá*”. Greeting as a right is a headship expectation in Yoruba culture. But when a follower does not comply they also feel their legitimacy has been questioned covertly. Hence, such a follower is perceived as planning insurrection, or being a rebel. As a result, such a fellow might be diplomatically persecuted and technically ostracised from the leader’s circle of “faithfuls”. Such a member or sub-leader himself is as such related with at arm’s length. In any congregation this occurs, the non-Yoruba membership would naturally conclude that their

ethnic group is discriminated against, or that non-Yoruba are not always allowed into the leadership, as some interviewees disclosed. They do this not understanding the dynamics of power in politics. That once the leader senses a threat, he braces up his guard and sometimes strikes as many times as possible in order to crush the victim. The concept of threat is a human right concern in organisations wherever it is identified whether within the secular or sacred space³²⁵. Secondly, culture has been classified as one of the defined broad categorised aspects of human rights³²⁶. Considering a culture being a threat to other cultures therefore calls for a closer attention. Critically this could be seen as a form of cancel culture in which the majority decides to shame another individual or culture for what they stand for, or belief³²⁷. From the accounts reported from key informant interviews and survey, there was no record of such a situation as cancelled culture in the Redeemed Christian Church of God. No pastor or leader has been heard of, to have shamed anyone for not conforming to Yoruba lifestyle. Data on Table 4.3 speak to the issue of threat which mostly bore down to cultural dominance in worship (in Yoruba) at the detriment of others 53.6% saying 'Yes' in Statement 4.3a, and 64.8% in 4.3g.

4.6.b Highlight of certain methods the Yoruba culture is a disconnect to intercultural missions in North-Central Nigeria

The idea of being a disconnect is based on the philosophy of cognitive dissonance³²⁸. Cultural differences in communication styles can influence how individuals express and resolve cognitive dissonance. In cultures that value direct communication, individuals may openly acknowledge and address discrepancies between beliefs and behaviours. In contrast, in cultures like Yoruba that favour indirect communication or saving face, individuals may use subtle strategies to mitigate cognitive dissonance without directly confronting the inconsistency. From the Key Informant Interview (KII), some participants have responded that the Yoruba culture has been a source of disconnect to intercultural missions in the sense

that the people of the culture have persistently engaged in negative attitude towards other culture. Examples given include:

- i. Lousiness, jesting, gossiping, segregation, etc.
- ii. Honouring leaders without sincerity
- iii. Discriminating against other cultures
- iv. Pretending to be humble before leaders
- v. Over greeting
- vi. Making you respect them even against your will

These are the seven (7) highlights extracted from the KII recordings. Different cultures have distinct value systems and norms that influence what is considered acceptable behaviour or belief. Individuals in collectivist cultures, where group harmony and conformity are valued such as a church, may experience cognitive dissonance more intensely when their beliefs or behaviours conflict with societal expectations. The participants who highlighted these disconnecting points have generally spoken from their own perspectives. None of them confirmed they have challenged a Yoruba why they do what they do.

4.6.c Discussing Yoruba cultural values has a connect of the RCCG to intercultural mission in North-Central Nigeria

There is no how bad a culture can be perceived to be, there would still be some virtues in it. Table 4.3 on statement 4.3m displays a support for this objective. It is observable that 48.2% of the respondents affirmed that despite all odds, the Yoruba/culture has some positive influences on the church. These were strongly supported by 27.1% to make a sum of 75.3%. This further affirms that Yoruba cultural values is a connect to RCCG intercultural mission in North-Central Nigeria. Evidences from the Key Informal Interview (KII) additionally sustain the view with practical behaviours exhibited by Yoruba members of the RCCG in the North-Central Nigeria.

4.6.d Proffering an intercultural balancing model for positive cultural interaction to enhance RCCG missions in North-Central Nigeria

Proffering a solution to cultural imbalance in the Redeemed Christian Church of God mission fields in the North-Central of Nigeria is inevitable if there would be the desired results from the effort exerted so far. The intercultural balancing model (Fig. 2.4) has been evolved in the course of this study as a solution to this imbalance phenomenon.

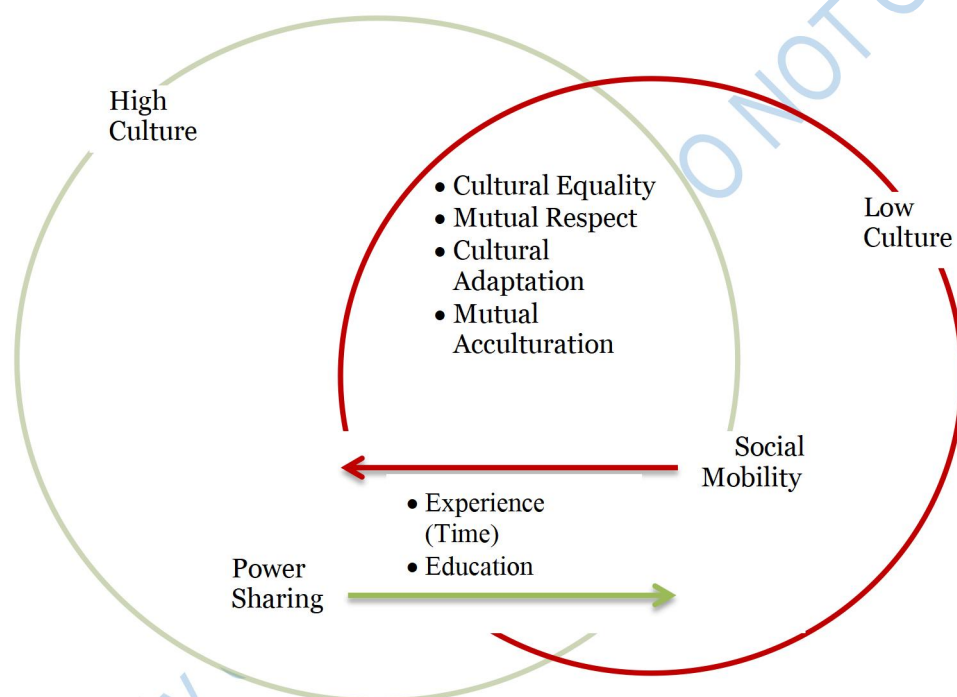


Fig.2.4: Intercultural Balancing Model

(Source: Field Survey,

Endnotes

²⁸⁵ Vallerger, Michael, and Eileen L. Zurbriggen. "Hegemonic masculinities in the 'Manosphere': A thematic analysis of beliefs about men and women on The Red Pill and Incel." *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* 22, no. 2 (2022): 602-625.

²⁸⁶ Bennett, Dawn, Sophie Hennekam, Sally Macarthur, Cat Hope, and Talisha Goh. "Hiding Gender: How Female Composers Manage Gender Identity." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 113, (2019): 20-32. Accessed April 5, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.07.003>.

²⁸⁷ Ryan, Tess. "This black body is not yours for the taking." # *MeToo and the politics of social change* (2019): 117-132.

²⁸⁸ Salem, Rania, and Kathryn M. Yount. "Structural accommodations of patriarchy: Women and workplace gender segregation in Qatar." *Gender, Work & Organization* 26, no. 4 (2019): 501-519.

²⁸⁹ Akanle, Olayinka, Gbenga S. Adejare, and Jojolola Fasuyi. "To what extent are we all Humans? of Culture, Politics, Law and LGBT Rights in Nigeria." *Decolonising the Human: Reflections from Africa on Difference and Oppression* (2016).

²⁹⁰ The Redeemed Christian Church of God Annual Report, 2023

²⁹¹ Deacon, John. "Managing an age-diverse workforce." *Strategic HR Review* 18, no. 4 (2019): 185-186.

²⁹² Excerpts of the Key Informant Interviews conducts are included in the Appendices section of this thesis.

²⁹³ Responses are found in the excerpts of the Key Informant Interviews added to the Appendices.

²⁹⁴ Herzog, Tamar. "Imagining Indigenous Consent and Indigenous Right to Resist in Colonial Latin America." *Ler História* 84 (2024): 1-18.

²⁹⁵ Ademiluka, Solomon O. "The nature of glossolalia in the neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 45, no. 1 (2024): 2932.

²⁹⁶ United Nations. 2019. "2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages." Department of Economic and Social Affairs, January 12, 2019. Last accessed on October 28, 2022.

²⁹⁷ Yumeng, W. U. "The Difference Between Chinese and German Perspectives on Time in the Perspective of Intercultural Communication." *US-China Foreign Language*, February 2024, Vol. 22, No. 2, 120-126 doi:10.17265/1539-8080/2024.02.007

²⁹⁸ Their vomit in bible terms could mean their former religions, denominations, or worse still, their old sinful ways of life having come to church and be welcomed with confusion and misinterpretations.

²⁹⁹ Sweeting, Karen D., and Brittany "Brie Haupt. "Overcoming neutrality as an organizational learning impediment." *Public Administration Review* 84, no. 1 (2024): 143-154.

³⁰⁰ The use of proverbial sayings which are usually identified as the 'sayings of the elders' is a strong attitude of the Yoruba culture when discussing. This gravity of the matter at hand does not matter. Such saying flow from Yoruba speakers without thinking about them.

³⁰¹ Oluyemi, Joseph A., and Fagbamila D. Olumide. "An anthropological analysis of the Yoruba greeting culture." *African Identities* 22, no. 1 (2024): 166-178.

³⁰² Ukagwu, Ezinne. "Hospitality in Indigenous Nigerian Cultures." In *Humanistic Perspectives in Hospitality and Tourism, Volume II: CSR and Person-Centred Care*, pp. 41-57. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2022.

³⁰³ Röer, Jan Philipp, Tom Eisterhues, Lisa Kaupert, Alina Klute, Meret Maurer, Sofia Meißner, Fynn Leon Müller et al. "Teaching sensation and perception in small groups: Eleven practical exercises." *Visual Cognition* (2024): 1-10.

³⁰⁴ Notice, Lyle (2024) "Neither Jew nor Greek: Ethnocentrism vs. Interculturalism and the Future of the Adventist Church," *Journal of Adventist Youth and Young Adult Ministries: Vol. 2, Article 11*. <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jayyam/vol2/iss1/11>

³⁰⁵ Galla, Candace Kaleimamoowahinekapu, and Amanda Holmes. "Indigenous language rights, frameworks and policies." In *Handbook of Indigenous Public Policy*, pp. 272-292. Edward Elgar Publishing, 2024.

³⁰⁶ Rybinska, Yuliia, Nataliia Sarnovska, Maryna Antonivska, Yuliia Kholmakova, Yuliia Mykhailichenko, and Maryna Mykolaenko. "Dressing Style and Its Influence on The Identity, Individuality, and Academic Impact of Modern Lecturers at The Arts University." *Synesis (ISSN 1984-6754)* 16, no. 1 (2024): 378-402.

³⁰⁷ Nwokike, Obinna. "Communicating cultural knowledge through Nigerian clothing." *Clothing Cultures* 9, no. 1-2 (2022): 75-91.

³⁰⁸ Olawale, Fasuan Emmanuel, Khoo Ying Hooi, and K. S. Balakrishnan. "'From divided past to cohesive future': a reflection on the reconciliatory mechanisms of (Yoruba) traditional approaches to conflict resolution in Nigeria." *African Identities* (2024): 1-16.

³⁰⁹ Lukong, Emmanuel Tani, and Faizefu Ambei Ruhama. "Indigenous Proverbs: A Seemingly Neglected Pedagogic Tool for Teaching, Learning and Adolescents Development in Cameroon." *GPH-International Journal of Educational Research* 7, no. 03 (2024): 40-63.

³¹⁰ Jenyo, Ifeoluwani A., Justice O. Emuoyibofarhe, and Adebisi A. Baale. "Assessment of Users Perception of a English to Yoruba Computer Aided Translation Teaching System (CATTS) for Climate Change Literacy." *Lautech Journal Of Computing And Informatics* 4, no. 1 (2024): 44-66.

³¹¹ Begosa, Caitlyn, "A Menu and its Implications on Filipino and American Culture" (2024). *Source Explore Program*. 2. <https://surface.syr.edu/source/2>

³¹² Sweeting, Karen D., and Brittany "Brie Haupt. "Overcoming neutrality as an organizational learning impediment." *Public Administration Review* 84, no. 1 (2024): 143-154.

³¹³ The interviewee expressed his mind as regards how he was not interested in the language, but he cannot deny the fact that gets 'connected' when Yoruba songs are raised although he does not understand what those words meant. He feels good, but a part of him also feels other cultures should be given same opportunities. He has also heard complaints from some quarters that Yoruba culture domains the church.

³¹⁴ This lady is a HoD in the RCCG. She affirms that the leaders in RCCG North-Central Nigeria are mostly of the Yoruba stock and that they do not directly enforce their culture on the members of the church. She is reluctant to affirm that she feels comfortable relating to Yoruba people. She agrees that the Yoruba has a unique way of eulogising God; although she does not feel well when Yoruba songs are mostly sung. She has also heard several complaints on this issue.

³¹⁵ LeMay, Alec R. "Do You See What I See? 'Religion' and Acculturation in Filipino–Japanese International Families." *Religions* 13, no. 2 (2022): 93. Accessed April 14, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13020093>.

³¹⁶ Nurish, Amanah. "Religious and Cultural Embodiment in the Land of Osing: A Portrait of Hadrami Community in Banyuwangi, East Java." *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 18, no. 2 (2024): 1-24.

³¹⁷ Peng, Xun. "Historical development and cross-cultural influence of dance creation: Evolution of body language." *Herança* 7, no. 1 (2024): 88-99.

³¹⁸ Bourne, Paul Andrew, and Michael Burke. "The Power of Music: Is Music a Behaviour Modifier?." (2024). *International Journal of Humanities & Social Science: Insights & Transformations- Vol. 9, Issue 1*

³¹⁹ Cruz Banks, O., Jackson, J.. West African Dance and Spiritual Well-Being for African Americans. In: Bond, K. (eds) *Dance and the Quality of Life. Social Indicators Research Series*, vol 73, (2019). Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-95699-2_6

³²⁰ West Hailey, Keiko Goto, Sebastian Alonso Navas Borja, Sara Trechter, and Seth Klobodu. "Evaluation of a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL): A food product analysis and development project." *Food, Culture & Society* 27, no. 1 (2024): 152-173.

³²¹ COIL Project: Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) is a form of telecollaboration or virtual exchange in which academics from any subject use online resources to support long-term student collaboration aimed at enhancing intercultural competency. The foundation of COIL initiatives is the participation of educators and learners from diverse backgrounds, languages, and cultures in the creation of cooperative learning environments through the use of online communication platforms.

³²² Seyitoğlu, Faruk, and Ozan Atsız. "Distant gastronomic experiences through online cooking classes in the covid-19 era." *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology* 22, no. 2 (2024): 304-322.

³²³ Streimikiene, Dalia, Asta Mikalauskiene, and Ilona Kiausiene. "The impact of value created by culture on approaching the sustainable development goals: Case of the Baltic States." *Sustainability* 11, no. 22 (2019): 6437.

³²⁴ Triana, Carmen, Ruixiang Song, Cyril T. Um, and Lei Huang. "Stereotypical Perception in Management: A Review and Expansion of Role Congruity Theory." *Journal of Management*, (2023). Accessed May 5, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063231180836>.

³²⁵ Schrempf-Stirling, Judith, and Harry J. Van Buren III. "The Importance of Human Rights for Management and Organization Studies." *British Journal of Management* (2024).

³²⁶ United Nations. Human Rights. <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/human-rights#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20has%20defined,in%20carrying%20out%20the ir%20responsibilities., n.d.>

³²⁷ Bromwich, Jonah Engel. "Everyone Is Canceled". *The New York Times*. ISSN 0362-4331, (June 28, 2018) Archived from the original on August 13, 2019. Retrieved July 24, 2020.

³²⁸ Yahya, Azizul Halim, and Vidi Sukmayadi. "A review of cognitive dissonance theory and its relevance to current social issues." *MIMBAR: Jurnal Sosial Dan Pembangunan* 36, no. 2 (2020): 480-488.

³²⁹Chapter Five

Conclusion

Church mission to the northern regions of Nigeria since the days of Samuel Ajayi Crowther has been a herculean task^{330,331}. Venturing into the location by the Redeemed Christian Church of God from the outset in 1986 had been tough. The challenged function of the Yoruba culture in this enterprise gives a spotlight on the challenge of available human resources in intercultural missions. In the actual fact most of the leaders who went up-north did not go wilfully, if not for the sake of obedience to leadership, or those who went due to their secular employment when the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) was created in 1991³³². This chapter discusses the summary of findings in this research, conclusion, recommendation and contribution to knowledge.

5.1 Summary of Findings

In the course of this study, it became clear that members of the Redeemed Christian Church of God have emotional opinions as regards the position of the Yoruba culture in the church. Relatively, the perspective was that the Yoruba culture dominates their worship affairs. Some of the non-Yoruba felt satisfied but the majority are silent because they resided to a feeling of vulnerability like there is nothing they can do about it, and that there is no one to discuss such a situation with without a repercussion.

In this same vein, many of the respondents in both the survey and key informant interview sessions highlighted several negative behaviours put up by the Yoruba members and leaders in RCCG north-central region of Nigeria, that serve as a disconnect to the intercultural mission enterprise of the denomination. Nonetheless this perceived attitude had not sent the disgruntled members packing, or leaving the church.

Thirdly, most of the research participants discussed Yoruba cultural values has a connect of the RCCG to intercultural mission in North-Central Nigeria. In doing this they made allusion to the numerous numbers of positive impacts the Yoruba culture have had on them. These include their getting connected to the supernatural when Yoruba worship songs are sang, the good practices of greeting and being hospital, respectful and being kind-hearted.

5.2 Conclusion

Conclusively, the Yoruba culture could not be said to be a bad culture. At the same time, the people are not in any way unscrupulous. But their perspective of life has informed their several practices which have been perceived by others as been domineering. Without mincing words, the church will only use human resources that are available at their end as pastors and missionaries. More importantly the RCCG does not discriminate when it comes to posting, even the son of the General overseer who is a Yoruba (Late Pst. Oluwadamilare Adeboye) was once sent to the north of Nigeria to pastor a church³³³.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Recommendation for General Membership

The Redeemed Christian Church of God is a global entity that uses the lingua franca of any geographical jurisdiction she operates and has never announced any particular language for church use³³⁴. Therefore, it becomes important in this understanding for memberships of the church who are Yoruba by birth, to encourage sister cultures by respecting their space through the use of national languages when addressing the church, or when they are present.

5.3.2 Recommendation for Worship Leaders

Worship is sometimes music and this does not get bound or limited by language. As sonorous and connecting Yoruba worship songs are, they could be translated or transliterated to English. The broader audience could be done a great favour by doing this. Secondly, it would be appreciated permissions are taken from members when Yoruba songs shall be sung in

exclusion of other languages. It could also be all-inclusive for music leaders to learn, compose and teach the congregation worship songs from sister languages across the globe³³⁵. In learning, they can ask members from other ethnic groups to write down worship songs from their languages and teach the church³³⁶. In composing they can learn words from a sister language of choice and string them together into melodious lyrics.

5.3.3 Recommendation for Missionaries and Pastors

Missionaries are ethnological pastors. They have been trained to be able to cross cultures and relate without error among people of their tongues. It is therefore important for these field officers to take utmost caution in learning the language of their host communities and imbibe their cultural values³³⁷. These include their customs, passage of rites, taboos, folklores, architecture, dressing, cuisine, proverbs and historical background. Armed with these knowledge, and engaging it, will make discipleship of people from sister ethnic groups much easier.

5.3.4 Recommendation for Theological Institutions

Cultural competency, ethnology and intercultural communication should be covered in the training curricula of all theological schools and universities that offer missiology or intercultural studies. This knowledge should always include discussions on cultural diversity, the need for acculturation, the ideologies of cultural values, belief systems, norms, symbols, language, rituals, and intercultural competency which are all essential for pastors and missionaries to possess³³⁸. Training for missionaries and Christian workers should be culture-inclusive and God-centric.

5.3.5 Recommendation for the Redeemed Christian Church of God

The Redeemed Christian Church of God is the foundation of this research. Therefore the recommendation to the RCCG is paramount. Firstly, the church needs to activate deliberate listening protocols for ethnic group members that are not Yoruba to know how they feel and

fare as par the influence of Yoruba and how it affects them. Secondly, missionaries being posted to North-Central Nigeria should be trained in the working language of the communities. More importantly, field missionaries should be competent with sound understanding of intercultural relations. Furthermore, conscious effort should be made to translate into all available languages where a language is represented. Lastly, pastors and missionaries should be strictly instructed never to make jest of any language, or a make a mockery of certain words from any culture.

5. 4. Contribution to Knowledge

This study has made a few contributions to knowledge in the 21st Century intercultural studies. First there is always the presence of a high culture and a low culture in any multicultural space. Second, since no culture is inferior to another, it is imperative to control the frequency of conflict between the identified assumed high culture and the supposed low, for there to be a striking of power balance between the high and low cultures which will technically lead to a form of social mobility of the perceived low cultural people group into the space of the high, and then, there will be power sharing. Lastly, power sharing comes with the consciousness of: Equality, Mutual Respect, Adaptation, Mutual Acculturation, and the Knowledge of self. It should also be expected that the so-called less respected cultures today shall with these three factors, namely: Time (or experience), Education and Economic power rise to the level of the elitist culture.

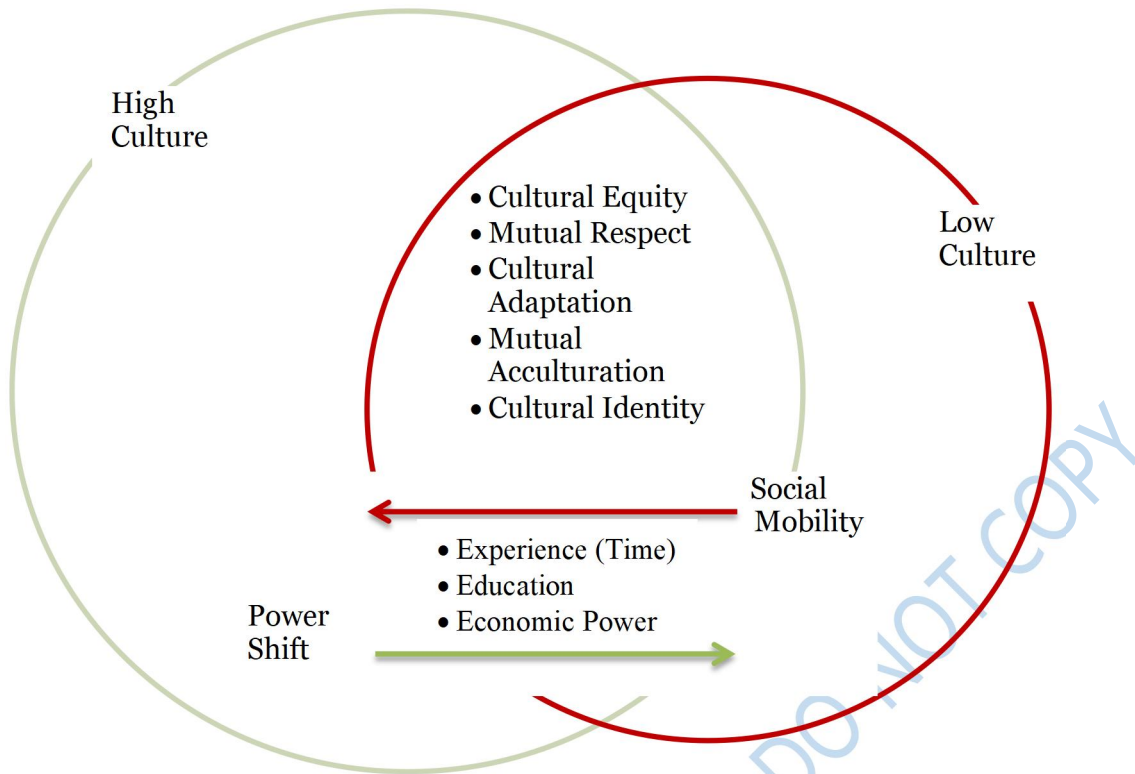


Fig.2.4: Intercultural Balancing Model

(Source: Field Survey, 2024)

5.5 Suggested Areas for Further Research

- i. Worshippers' Intercultural connectedness to the supernatural when Yoruba songs are sang in RCCG North-Central Nigeria
- ii. Ethno-centric leadership in the Nigerian church
- iii. An investigation into the logic behind Perceived Intercultural Religious Repression without leaving the space
- iv. Closing up Inquiry gaps between the leadership and the laity in the RCCG North-Central Nigeria

Endnote

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Appendices

Appendix i: Research Questionnaire



Influence of Yoruba Culture on RCCG North-Central Nigeria Intercultural Missions: A Survey (ICIM)

Lead City University, Ibadan
Department of Politics and International Relations
Intercultural Studies and Administration Programme

Dear Respondent:

This document is an academic research meant to collect information as regards what you think, feel and know about the Yoruba culture and its influence on RCCG mission work in North-Central Nigeria. Please feel free to respond as much as you can. The exercise is voluntary. But if you do not feel convenient to be a part of the survey, you can willingly withdraw.

Kind regards,

AW Okelana

A. Demography

Province

Gender

Age

Age Range

Ethnic Group: Fulani, Gwari, Koro, Igala, Gbagyi, Tiv, Igbo, Idoma, Birom

State of Origin

Assignment in Church: Member ☐ Worker ☐ Minister ☐ HoD ☐ Parish Pastor ☐

Section 2:

Instruction: Please, TICK ☒ under one of the 5 boxes of Options Provided SA [Strongly Agreed], A [Agreed], Undecided [U], D [Disagreed], SD [Strongly Disagreed]

B. People's perspective of the Yoruba culture in relation to RCCG intercultural missions in North-Central Nigeria.

- i. The Yoruba language is prominent in the RCCG worship.
- ii. All the pastors are Yoruba.
- iii. Most leaders of the RCCG in North-Central Nigeria are Yoruba.
- iv. The use of Yoruba language in services is a denial of the right of other cultures.
- v. Non-Yoruba publics complain about the use of Yoruba in Praise and worship sessions.
- vi. There has being misunderstandings between non-Yoruba and Yoruba speakers due to cultural issues like greetings, respect, food, etc. in the RCCG.
- vii. People see the RCCG as a Yoruba church.
- viii. Church leaders want people to behave like Yoruba e.g. you must prostrate, or kneel down to greet them.
- ix. These leaders do not care about other cultures but make jest of them.
- x. The non-Yoruba public hate this attitude and sends them away from our church.
- xi. The leaders want us to think and do things like the Yoruba.
- xii. It is difficult for members who are not Yoruba to become leaders in the church.

C. Perceptions of how the Yoruba culture poses threat to intercultural missions in Nigeria, especially in religious (church) programmes.

- i. Yoruba culture dominates other cultures in our Parish.
- ii. They preach from the pulpit in Yoruba while someone interpret in English.
- iii. They preach from the pulpit in English while someone interpret in Yoruba.
- iv. No other languages are interpreted in English preaching services.
- v. The pastor often burst into Yoruba language in the midst of the message.
- vi. Yoruba language is used when moderating service generally.
- vii. Yoruba is used to conduct house fellowship.
- viii. Yoruba songs dominate our singing sessions in church.

- ix. Prayers are done in Yoruba, or mixed with Yoruba.
- x. Bible reading is done in Yoruba.
- xi. Yoruba foods are mostly cooked during Church programmes.
- xii. They want us to dress like Yoruba people.
- xiii. As a non-Yoruba I feel uncomfortable when worship is done in Yoruba.

D. Yoruba cultural values that has been positive to intercultural missions in North-Central Nigeria.

- i. Despite all odds, the Yoruba language has some positive influence on the church.
- ii. Some good practices can be learnt from Yoruba people in the church.
- iii. Mention a few good things you have learnt from the Yoruba people.
- iv. There are some moral behaviour which are absent in my culture that are in Yoruba culture.
- v. Mention them:
- vi. Based on my interaction with Yoruba members, the Yoruba language is worth learning.
- vii. Based on my interaction with Yoruba members, I can marry a Yoruba.
- viii. Yoruba foods are delicious.
- ix. Suppose I have a new baby I can give a Yoruba name to my child.
- x. I prefer the Yoruba culture to my culture.

E. Possible Methods of balancing cultural best practices in promoting intercultural missions in Nigeria.

- i. In what ways can the RCCG balance the use of different cultures best practices in the North-Central Nigeria?
- ii. Our Church leaders are willing to listen to stories from our cultures.
- iii. The RCCG is interested in our cultural wears and dresses.
- iv. The church encourages our cultural dances and plays.
- v. The church appreciates our cultural foods.
- vi. The church wants to learn about our cultural values.



Influence of Yoruba Culture on RCCG North-Central Nigeria Intercultural Missions (IYCM)
(Key Informant Interview)

Lead City University, Ibadan
Department of Politics and International Relations
Intercultural Studies and Administration Programme

Dear Respondent:

This document is the Key Informant Interview of the research title: **Yoruba culture as a connect or disconnect to RCCG Mission in the North-Central Nigeria**. Please with due respect we shall be asking some sensitive questions in relation to the above topic and we shall also be doing some recording of your responses through your phone and we need your consent. This exercise is solely for research purpose. Ensure you encourage your respondents that it is anonymous and for academic purpose only.

Thank you.

Section A: Demographic Data

- i. Gender
- ii. Ethnic Group
- iii. State of Origin
- iv. Assignment in the Church: Member ☐ Worker ☐ Minister ☐ HoD ☐ Parish Pastor ☐

Section B: Generic Questions

- v. Is it true that most leaders of the RCCG in NC Nigeria are Yoruba?
- vi. Does their culture influence their duties as leaders in the church?
- vii. Do they tend to enforce their culture on the membership? If Yes. How?
- viii. In what ways do they use the Yoruba culture in the church that you think is wrong?

- ix. Do you see the use of the Yoruba language as having a positive impact on the church?
Dressing style? Food? Greetings? Respect? Care? Hospitality?
- x. Does this behaviour attract the non-Yoruba publics to the church?
- xi. Do you feel convenient relating with them through the Yoruba culture?
- xii. Why do you think the leaders sometimes PRAY in Yoruba?
- xiii. What do you appreciate in the Yoruba culture?
- xiv. How do you feel when Yoruba songs are sung in the RCCG parish in your village?
- xv. Has there being complains by members of the village church in regards to the use of
Yoruba language or culture in worshipping God?
- xvi. Have you ever reported this case to the church authority?

Appendix III

Letter of Permission to Conduct Survey in RCCG North-Central Nigeria

18th March 2024

The Continental Overseer
Pastor Ezekiel Odeyemi
The Redeemed Christian Church of God
Central Parish, Wuse
Abuja.

Dear Sir:

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN INTERCULTURAL MISSION SURVEY IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA

1. Ayotunde Okelana is a postgraduate research student at Lead City University, Ibadan.
2. His work cuts across intercultural contacts and specifically on the influence of the Yoruba culture on the RCCG intercultural missionary enterprise in the north-central region of Nigeria.
3. To have the desired results, this study is conducting a survey among non-Yoruba-speaker members of the Church in Abuja.
4. For this reason, we hereby seek your permission to carry out this research.
5. Attached is a copy of the Questionnaire.
6. Sir, hopefully, this work will contribute to the effort of the RCCG in reaching the myriads of ethnic groups in the north of Nigeria.
7. After this study, a report will be forwarded to you.
8. We thank you in anticipation of a desired response.

Kind regards,



AW Okelana
PhD. Candidate

Appendix IV

Data Collection Request

12th September, 2024

The Continental Overseer

Continent 2

The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG)

FCT, Abuja.

Dear Sir,

DATA COLLECTION FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSE

I am Ayotunde Okelana, a member of the RCCG, a senior lecturer in the Redeemed College of Missions, Ede and a doctoral student (Intercultural Studies and Administration) in Lead City University, Ibadan.

As a part of my research on the **intercultural missions of the RCCG in the North-Central of Nigeria**, it is expedient that I make an inclusion of the statistics of my sampled population. For this reason, I hereby request for the **Population statistics of the RCCG in the North-Central, and the FCT**.

Data collected shall be used solely for academic purpose in accordance to the Nigeria Data Protection Regulation (NDPR, 2019) which applies to the ethical use of all storage and processing of personal data conducted in respect of Nigerian citizens and residents.

Sir, your response to this request shall be highly appreciated and duly acknowledged in the study report.

Kind regards,



Ayotunde Okelana
RCC 5372

Appendix V

Bio-data

AYOTUNDE WILLIAM OKELANA

2 Staff Quarters, the Redeemed College of Missions, Ede, Osun, Nigeria, NG 232101

ayookelana@gmail.com, ayookelana@rcm.edu.ng

+234 805 545 9052

Profile

Ayotunde is a missions and development practitioner who believes in grass root people and their realities which are fully blown by poverty, hunger, poor hygiene, degraded self-esteem and seeming aggression. He is resilient, multi-tasking, a good listener, interested in research and a goal-getter.

Personal Data

Gender: Male

Date of Birth: 13th June 1973

Marital Status: Married with Children

Address: 2 Staff Quarters, the Redeemed College of Missions, Ede, Osun, Nigeria, NG 232101

Phone Contact: +234 805 545 9052

Email: ayookelana@gmail.com, ayookelana@rcm.edu.ng

Education & Trainings

PhD. Intercultural Studies, Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria, 2024

Certificate, Capacity Building on Shelter Management, Action Against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants in Nigeria, and FIIAPP Cooperacion Espanola: 2022

Certificate, Connecting the Dots: Storytelling, Partnership & Fundraising, CSR-in-Action Advocacy in Partnership with Global Reporting Initiative and Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen: 2022

Certificate, COVID-19 Course, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, UK: 2020

Certificate, Psychosocial Support and Case Management – International Organisation of Migration (IOM)/ NACTAL, Abuja, NG: 2020

BA, Religious Studies & Philosophy, Redeemer's University, Ede, NG, 2022

BSW, Bachelor of Education in Social Work, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, NG: 2019

PPGD (Professional Postgraduate Diploma) in Management Consultancy Practice & Organisational Transformation – IPMA, England, UK: 2017

MA, Master of Arts in Missiology – Redeemed College of Missions, Ede, NG: 2015 – 2017

Certificate, Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) – United Nations Children Fund: 2016

BBR Certificate – Harvard Humanitarian Academy, Harvard: 2016

PGD, Postgraduate Diploma in Cross-Cultural Missions, The Redeemed School of Missions, Ede, NG: 2007 – 2008

MSW (Master of Social Work, Generic) – University of Ibadan, Ibadan, NG: 2001 – 2004

BA (English Arts) – University of Ibadan, Ibadan; NG: 1997 – 2002

HND, (Agricultural Extension & Management) – Federal College of Forestry, Ibadan, NG: 1996 – 1998

National Diploma, Forestry Technology – Federal College of Forestry, Ibadan, NG: 1993 – 1995

Work History

Executive Director, Cleannation Foundation, Nigeria: 2015 – till date

Senior Lecturer, The Redeemed College of Missions, Ede, Osun, NG: 2008 – till date

College Chaplain, The Redeemed College of Missions, Ede, NG: 2008 – 2015

Church Administrator, Fresh Anointing International Church, Ibadan, Nigeria: 2007

Language Instructor, Organisation for Tourism & Hospitality Management, UK: 2005 - 06

Research Fellow, CHESTRAD International, Ibadan, NG: 2003

Intern, Ibadan Rehabilitation Centre, Ibadan, NG: 2003

Intern, University Health Services, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, NG: 2002

Intern, Community Women Development, Ibadan, NG: 2002

Intern, Educare Trust (Youth Centre) Ibadan, NG: 2001

Intern, Oyo State Juvenile Court, Ibadan, NG: 2001

Facilitator, Theseed Consult, Ibadan, NG: 2001

Field Officer, Federal Department of Forestry, Jericho, Ibadan, NG: 1999

Class Teacher, Dambam Secondary School, Dambam, Bauchi State, NG: 1998

Voluntary Services

Project Coordinator: PnP Project. Cleannation Foundation is an organisation with environment as one of her thematic areas. As a part of our work, being a child and youth based group, we have begun engaging secondary school students as well as corps members of the National Youth Service corps in what we refer to as **PnP Project** (i.e. Pick and Plant Project). This project gets young people tied to rescuing seeds and turning them

into seedlings by upcycling pure water plastic sachet into seed pots where picked seeds are planted and nurtured for eventual transplanting into the needed locations, Osun State, NG: 2023

Project Supervisor: Operation CleanUp Osun. In Cleannation Foundation we mobilise young people across Osun State to fight against river basins becoming dump site for refuse as this will mitigate the influx of plastics into the ocean and control the leaching of harmful chemicals directly into the water bodies from municipal solid waste. This is **Operation CleanUp Osun**. We brought together the trio of the Osun State Waste Management Agency (OWMA), the Ede North Department of Water, Environment and Sanitation (WES) and Community youth (including corps members in both Ede North and South to address the issue of waste management along the Osun river at the Oke Gada Bridge, Osun State, NG: 2022

Project Coordinator: AMR Plastic Project – We are involved with community sensitisation as regards the use, misuse, abuse and reuse of plastics for environmental sustainability. We know how harmful plastics are to the ecosystem; same is our knowledge of how the Nigerian society is obsessed with its use. Hence, we have designed sensitisation programmes for different segments of the society on how plastics can be minimised to save the planet. For the children we have Recycling Programme, Osun State, NG: 2022

Project Adviser: Zero Open Burning – This is a global challenge especially in the developing countries where trees are still being constantly cut down for cooking, or roasting, or bush burning in preparation for a new farming season; or sometimes in cases of burning tyres as done during riots, or offensive protests. We are out to sensitise our communities on the adverse effect of these activities on the environment and the health of the general populace, Osun State, NG: 2021

Project Coordinator, Global Fund/Catholic Relief Services Malaria/ACOMIN – Community Led Monitoring (CLM) Project Among Primary Health Care Centres in Iwo, Osun State, NG: 2018 - 2023

Project Coordinator, Community Campaign on LLIN Distribution in Ilesha East, Osun, NG: 2020

As a precursor to the mass distribution of long-lasting insecticide-treated nets (LLINs) for protection against malaria in Osun State, I coordinated the community campaign project informing the Ilesha East community members of the importance and need to accept and proper use of the LLINs.

National Coordinator, Nigeria Against Rape Campaign, NG: 2020

Co-founder of the initiative, Organise citizens and civil societies across Nigeria, Coordinate the production of Graphic design, Monitor the distribution of posters, Invite facilitators who speak to the audience on divergent themes relating to rape

State Coordinator – CSOs Emergency Intervention Group, Abuja, NG: 2020

Coordinate programmes of Civil Society Organisations on the CoVID-19 in Osun; Design Monitoring & Evaluation tools for Palliative Distribution and Community satisfaction; Liaising with donors on best practices as regards CoVID-19.

Mental Health Facilitator, Mental Health Empowerment Initiative (MHEI), Abuja, NG: 2020

Mental health challenges rose to a peak when people are locked down at home without little resources and almost nothing from the government to supplement the crumbs on their tables. Cases of rape, ritual; killing, suicide, forms of homicides and depression arose. We had to arise on the platform of MHEI to speak with people as well as counsel on how to handle their mental health conditions in spite of the depressive situation.

State Coordinator, World Largest Lesson, Osun, NG: 2019 – till date

This assignment includes mobilisation of young people across the 30 LGAs and 31 LCDAs of Osun State to be SDGs Ambassadors in their communities. We organised Sustainable Development Goals Sensitisation Programme on SDG-3 to Families and Communities in 30 LGAs in Osun. Same was also conducted at Middle Secondary Schools within the State of Osun.

State Coordinator, Civil Societies Coalition on Sustainable Development, Osun, NG: 2019 – till date

As a coalition of civil societies, my assignment as the State Coordinator is to get involved in membership drive, call and coordinate state wide meetings amongst CSO members, initiate meetings with government agencies and non-government organisations, engage stakeholders in advocacy interventions, plan activities annual activities alongside other members , and keep the organisation abreast of development issues and news within and outside the State.

Technical Committee Member, African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) Shadow Report: 2018

The technical committee worked on African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child Shadow Report, 2018 supported by PLAN International, USA.

Research Committee Member on Menstrual Hygiene Management: 2017

This committee researched on Menstrual Hygiene on a national scale sponsored by United Nations Children Fund. Three States in the North, East and South-West of Nigeria were used as case studies. National Dissemination on Menstrual Hygiene Management Research Findings were made in Abuja, 2017. IEC materials on Menstrual Hygiene Management were developed. We worked with sewists to facilitate on recyclable safe sanitary pads for middle and high schools in Osun.

Osun State Task Group on Sanitation, Osun, NG: 2016 – till date

Working with related government agencies such as Rural Water Environmental Sanitation Agency; Ministry of Health and others for a healthier State of Osun in cases related to Open Defecation Free communities; hand-washing community sensitisation; Community-Led Total Sanitation, etc.

Member, State Task Group on Sanitation (STGS), Osun State, NG: 2015 – Till date

In order to cover the 774 LGA in Nigeria as related to Community-led Total Sanitation (CLTS), the Federal Government has established National Task Group on Sanitation (NTGS) to mobilise the nation on the importance of sanitation and community as well as household hygiene within the grass root regions. This position was meant to eliminate the challenges of diseases outbreaks such as cholera and related epidemics by encouraging the concept of VIP toilets at least for a certification of the Open Defecation-Free (ODF) status within LGA of the States.

Volunteer/Coordinator, Cleannation Foundation: 2009 – till date

Coordinates Cleannation Foundation which is a community-based youth group where the 3EHA – Education, Environment, Empowerment, Health & Advocacy principle operates. A part of his task is to coordinate the Community Accountability Team working on Global Fund supplied malaria drugs distribution, and dispensing in Osun State; as well as audit Primary Health Care facilities amongst others job specifications which includes handling Mental Health cases in the organisation. Being a youth group, he also oversees sustainable environment programme in schools, empowerment programmes on computer education, and beadcrafft in the community. He is also involved with advocacy on education, and health in the State.

Responsibilities

A. Contributions: The Redeemed College of Missions, Ede, NG

Senior Lecturer, The Redeemed College of Missions, Ede, NG: 2008 – till date

Pioneer College Chaplain, Redeemed College of Missions (Emmanuel Missions Chapel), Ede, NG: 2008 – 2015

Pioneer Head of Unit, Bachelor of Arts Programme: 2008 – 2015

Member, BA Curriculum Development Committee: 2008

Organiser: Official mails to Staff, Students and External organisations: 2008 – 2016

Member, Think-Tank Council: 2008 – 2015

Member, College Curricula Review Committee: 2017

Member, Disciplinary Committee: 2010

Coordinator, College Food Shop (RECSOM Aroma): 2015 – 2016

Coordinator, College Lodgings Unit: 2015 – 2016

Administrator, College Library: 2015 – 2016

Founding Coordinator (Bachelor of Arts, [Missions] Programme): 2008 – 2015

Liaison officer, Foreign Students' Affairs Unit: 2010 – 2012

Chair, Student Project Defence Committee: 2009 – 2014

B. Courses Taught in the Redeemed College of Missions, Ede

- Introductory Missions
- Diaspora Missions
- International Missions
- Christian Evangelism
- Christian Discipleship
- Cross Cultural Communication
- 10/40 Window
- Contemporary Methods of Evangelism
- Networking Evangelism
- Church Administration
- Comparative Church Administration
- Social Work and Christianity
- Entrepreneurship for Missionaries
- Fundamentals of Speech
- Use of English
- Youth Ministry
- Computer Studies for Missionaries
- Communication in Church Administration
- Research Methods in Missions

C. Contributions to the Society with Dates

Member, Board of Trustees (Foundation for Student Mission), NG: 2021 – till date

Convener, Abuse-Misuse-Reuse Plastic Workshop, Nigeria: 2023

Facilitator, CSOs Against Gender Based Violence, Nigeria: 2021

National Coordinator, Nigeria Against Rape Campaign, Osun: 2020

Facilitator, Mental Health Empowerment Initiative (MHEI), Abuja, NG: 2020

State Coordinator – CSOs Emergency Intervention Group, Abuja, NG: 2020

Coordinator, World Largest Lesson, Osun, NG: 2019 – till date

State Coordinator, Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development: 2019 – till date

Zonal Officer, Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development: 2018 – 2019

Member, Planning Committee: South-West Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development Conference: September 2018

Patron, Nigerian Christian Corpers Fellowship: 2016 – till date

Member, Osun State Task Group on Sanitation: 2016 – till date

Volunteer, Mental Health Unit, Cleannation Foundation, Osun, NG: 2017 – till date

Secretary to the Board of Trustees, Cleannation Foundation, Ede, NG: 2014 – till date

Secretary to the Board of Directors, Distinct-Jubilee College, Ibadan, NG: 2009 – 2011

Director of Trainings, On-Campus Mission School, Ibadan, NG: 2003 – 2010

Facilitator, Foundation for Student Missions, Ibadan, NG: 2001 – till date

Research & Conference Papers

- Okelana, Ayotunde William (2023). Religion as a Catalyst-Culture in Achieving the Agenda 2030 in Nigeria; an oral presentation at Faculty of Management and Social Sciences Conference 2023, March 2023, Lead City University, Ibadan.
- Okelana, Ayotunde William (2022). An Assessment of the Knowledge of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) Among RCCG Ministers in Region 3, Osun State, Nigeria; BA (Religious Studies) project submitted to the Redeemer's University, Ede.
- Okelana, Ayotunde William (2022). Sustainability of the Zero Hunger Support Systems of Faith Based Organisations in Nigeria. An Oral Presentation on Campus at the Annual ISDRS 2022 Conference in Stockholm (Sustainable Development and Courage, Culture, Art and Human Rights), Sweden.
- Okelana, Ayotunde William (2022). Religious Engineering: A Tool for Climate Change Sensitisation in Nigeria, in O.N. Shogunle (ed) Postmodernism and African Biblical Hermeneutics – A Festschrift for Prof. Afolunso Olalekan Dairo. Ibadan: John Archers (Publishers) Ltd., pp. 325 – 335

- Okelana, Ayotunde William (2019). The Impact of Female Genital Mutilation on the Psychosocial Well-being of Adolescents in Secondary Schools in Ede South Local Government of Osun State. Bachelor of Social Work Project, University of Ibadan, Nigeria
- Okelana, A.W. (2016). An Exegesis of Matthew 5.1 – 2 as a Case for Discipleship in the Nigerian Church. Master's Thesis, The Redeemed Christian School of Missions
- Okelana, A. W (2011, November). Oral Tradition as a Social Additive to Pragmatic Social Work Education in African Tertiary Schools. Paper presented at Nigeria Association of Social Work Educators Inaugural Conference, University of Ibadan.
- Okelana, A.W. (2003). Impact of Educare Trust Programmes on the Socioeconomic Development of Widows' Children in Ibadan. Master's Thesis, University of Ibadan.
- Okelana, A. W. (2001). A Psycholinguistic Study of Utterance Filler Production among Graduating Students of the University of Ibadan. Bachelor's Thesis, University of Ibadan.

Publications

- Okelana, A. W. (2018). Redefining Missions & Evangelism in the 21st Century. Ede: Theseed Consult, Nigeria. ISBN 978 978 56520 0 0
- Okelana, A. W. (2014). English Clinic. (2nd Edition) Santa Monica, California, USA: Epub Bud. ISBN 978 1 63102 375 0
- Okelana, A. W. (2013). Leading from Within (through Self-discovery). Ibadan: Theseed Consult
- Okelana, A. W. (2010). Customised Church Administration. Oshogbo, Nigeria: Okais & Sons. ISBN 978 533 010 X
- Okelana, A. W. (2006). Oomph for Success (2006), Ibadan, Nigeria: Admoft Mega Publishers. ISBN 978 36890 2 9

Affiliations

International Intercultural Studies Association, UK

COVID-19 CSOs Emergency Intervention Group

Nigeria Christian Society

Foundation for Student Mission

Civil Society in Malaria Control, Immunisation and Nutrition (ACOMIN)

International professional Managers Association (IPMA), UK
Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development (CSCSD)
Civil Society for Malaria Elimination (CS4ME)
Nigeria Association Social Work Educators (NASWE)
Nigeria Association Social Workers (NASoW)
Non-Governmental Association for Literacy Support Services (NOGALSS)
Nigeria Red Cross Society (NRCS)
Nigeria Network of NGOs (NNNGO)
Network Against Child Trafficking, Abuse and Labour (NACTAL)
Water Supply & Sanitation Collaborative Council, Geneva, Switzerland (WSSCC)
Non-Communicable Diseases High-Impact Community Response in Nigeria (NHICRIN)

References

Prof. Afolorunso Dairo, Department of Religious Studies, Redeemer's University, Ede,
dairoa@run.edu.ng +234 803 400 1020

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Ibadan, NG oo.folaranmi@mail.ui.edu.ng; ojfolaranmi@yahoo.com +234 802 369 3241

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