

TOWARDS EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR GROWING VIABLE
CHURCHES IN RURAL AREAS: A TZANEEN CASE STUDY

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Mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree Magister Artium in Theology at the School of Basic Sciences
North West University (Vaal Campus)

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September 2015

DECLARATION

I, Tshimangadzo Norman Nembudani declare that, *Towards effective strategies for growing viable churches in rural areas: a Tzaneen case study* is my own work and that all the sources I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved wife, Matodzi Joyce and our two boys; Uada and Mulisa for the love and support they gave me while I was studying. Your commitment and love for education became clear to me through the support you gave me until I finished my studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A work of this nature is not possible without the cheers, motivation and appreciation of fellow friends, brothers and sisters. So my greatest thanks and appreciation goes to all the those mentioned here; and those I could not remember; may God richly bless you and keep you – continue the good work as you help others.

To God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, His mercies endure forever. Taste and see that the Lord is good. Through thick and thin, He has anchored me on the rock of ages, Jesus my Saviour. I run short of words to thank Him, for He is the greatest in my life.

To my supervisor, Professor T.C. Rabali; you have been a pillar of strength, your advisory role is unparalleled. You were never weary in your responsibilities. Your counsels are what made me accomplish this degree.

To Professor H.J.M. Van De Venter; your counsels and assistance at the start and at the end of this work has been an inspiration.

To my brother, Mr. R.S. Nembudani, a PhD candidate, together with his wife for the continual support throughout my studies.

To Doctor M.M. Anakoka; the moral support, guidance and motivation to scholarly work, commitment to high standards and continuing in this regard championed this work.

To the entire Church of the Seventh-day Adventist members; my greatest appreciation to the leaders of the North-East, Mopani district of the SDA. I thank the mighty TOC for affording me time to do what I love amidst the heavy schedules.

To Doctor Mongwe Justice; a leader and a great motivator, thank you for being there for me.

To Doctor S. Makuwa; further guidance and moral support was needed to finish and complete this document especially from a colleague and a friend.

I thank my friend, Mr. Edward Mafadza for paving the way and encouraging me that it can be done.

I thank my friend Mr. S. M. Sedupane for the guidance and motivation towards finishing this work.

I thank Sihle Khanyile for helping me with the stats, and Mrs Zoe Saka, your assistance in the use of the English language in writing academic papers has helped me to finalise this great work.

I thank the North-West University Library, and staff of the university for providing assistance all the years of my studies.

To my friend and a colleague Ps. P.M. Madaba, the vision is yet to be fulfilled; your moral support and your willingness to be an academic scholar, nothing is impossible with the Lord.

To my nephew Mr N.P. Mafenya and his family for putting time aside to attend to me. Your insight and knowledge to the writing of the academic papers made this work a possibility.

To my beloved nephew and niece, Fulufhelo and Mmabatho Lindelani Tshivhase, your assistance with the knowledge of technical details on the computer was indeed a great boost to the writing of this paper.

To Mrs Reiner Winter and Eugene Linda, your assistance and willingness to share information is truly appreciated.

Lastly but not the least; my beloved wife Joyce Matodzi. She is the drive behind all the efforts to this great work. The spirit in her says; 'never give up'. My love, I will always love you.

I truly thank you all.

Summary

Towards effective strategies for growing viable churches in rural areas is a case study based in Tzaneen, Limpopo Province of South Africa. The lifestyle of the people in this part of the world is characterized by poverty, unemployment, and diseases such as HIV/Aids. Very few people experience the luxury of being employed. However, the community in the area is quite religious in that there are several denominations in and around Tzaneen. Amongst the churches, are the Seventh-Day Adventists in the Mopani district that seeks to realize membership growth.

The literature review of the study uses two biblical passages; Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21, to further establish what other scholars consider useful when planning strategies for growing viable churches.

The study focuses on Tzaneen as context for missionary work and presents the challenges and opportunities for planting and growing churches in rural areas. Therefore, the study's purpose is to draw the attention of missionary leaders as they plan strategies for planting and growing healthy churches.

The empirical research was conducted in the area of Tzaneen, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods to gather data. Members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Mopani district were requested to participate in this research study. Three churches were sampled with 42 people participating in the survey, of which their participation through interviews and responding to a questionnaire is presented in this research.

Opsomming

Ten einde doeltreffende strategieë vir groeiende, lewensvatbare kerke in landelike gebiede te bepaal, is 'n gevallestudie in Tzaneen in die Limpopo Provinsie van Suid-Afrika uitgevoer. Die mense van hierdie deel van die wêreld se lewenstyl word deur armoede, werkloosheid en siektes soos MIV/Vigs gekenmerk. Baie min mense geniet die luukse om 'n werk te hê. Die gemeenskap in die gebied is egter tog godsdienstig omdat daar verskeie denominasies in en om Tzaneen bestaan. Onder die kerke tel die Sewendedag Adventiste in die Mopani-distrik wat graag groei in sy lidmaatgetalle wil sien.

Die literatuuroorsig van die studie maak gebruik van twee bybelgedeeltes, naamlik Jesaja 61:1-2 en Lukas 4:16-21 ten einde te bepaal wat ander navorsers as nuttig bestempel wanneer hulle strategieë vir die uitbou van lewensvatbare kerke beplan.

Die studie fokus op Tzaneen as konteks vir sendingwerk, en bied die uitdagings en geleenthede om kerke in landelike gebiede te stig en uit te bou. Daarom is die doel van die studie om die aandag van sendingleiers te trek, aangesien hulle strategieë vir die stigting en uitbouing van gesonde kerke beplan.

Die empiriese navorsing is in die Tzaneen-omgewing deur middel van kwantitatiewe en kwalitatiewe navorsingsmetodes uitgevoer om data te versamel. Lede van die Sewendedag Adventiste-kerk in die Mopani-distrik is versoek om aan hierdie navorsingstudie deel te neem. Twee-en-veertig persone van drie kerke het as steekproef aan die opname deelgeneem. Hul deelname het deur middel van onderhoude en die beantwoording van 'n vraelys plaasgevind, soos dit in hierdie studie aangebied word.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS IN THIS DISSERTATION

AWM : Adventist Women Ministry

Effective : able to cause some desired results; getting results, e.g. an effective medicine.

Growing :“To be able to grow in some place or situation, to increase in size by addition of material either by assimilation into the living organism or accumulation in a non-biological process” (Alexander & Rosner, 2000).

GDC :Growth Development Committee

GTM : Greater Tzaneen Municipality

IDP : Integrated Development Plan

SDA :The Seventh-day Adventist Church Headquarters in Washington DC, United States of America.

SAU : Southern African Union of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

SID : Southern Indian Division of the Seventh - day Adventist Church

Stats SA: Statistics South Africa

Strategy :According to Shenk, (1999:103) strategy is a recurring theme in the history of missions thought and practice. It focuses on how mission has been carried out and the numerous attempts to form plans for world evangelization.

TOC :Trans-Orange Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Rural : According to the World Book Dictionary (2001:1825) the following meaning of the word ‘rural’ gives a picture of the area surrounding Tzaneen: “simplicity, mild relating to, or characteristic of the country as opposed to the city”. The 2010 edition of the Oxford Dictionary allows such a usage of the word ‘rural’ because it provides the following senses for the word rural; “relating to, or characteristic of the countryside rather than the town”.

YAWM : Young Adventist Women Ministry

Viable: The word “viable” is used here in the sense of the meaning given in the South African Concise Oxford Dictionary, namely “capable of working successfully, able to germinate or able to live after birth” (2005:1308). Therefore, viable churches are those churches that are able to live or sustain themselves financially, doctrinally and in their understanding of the mission of the church.

Chapter 1

Orientation

1.1 Introduction

This study concerns the effective strategies for establishing and growing churches in rural areas of Tzaneen. It is a case study which involves the participation of a Christian community in Tzaneen.

Tzaneen, and its surrounding townships, villages and farms are receptive to the gospel. People seem eager to follow a “thus says the Lord”; and a number of religious movements get started easily. For example, healing ministries such as the one advertised in the local newspaper, wherein it is indicated that it is “open to people of all denominations (Bruyn, 2011:12).” There are a number of Christian communities in the areas around Tzaneen, and yet there are challenges arising out of the economic and demographic realities of Tzaneen. Some of the challenges are presented in relation with issues such as keeping strong religious faith groups that have fundamental principles based on the scriptures.

This study investigated some of the challenges and other factors that have to be taken into consideration when one plans to do missionary work in and around Tzaneen. Hiebert and Mieneses (1995:233) correctly observed, in this regard, that planting and growing rural churches does not only take time but that those that do so properly, also have to operate within principles that are relevant to the unique circumstances of such rural communities. The area around Tzaneen is classified as rural with few townships. This research was conducted in what is called ‘The Greater Tzaneen area’ which according to the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) (2011:34) is an area that “encompasses the proclaimed towns of Tzaneen, Nkowankowa, Lenyenye, Letsetele, and Haenerstsburg”. The area is composed of 34 wards and there are 125 rural villages. According to IDP (2011:34) “almost 80% of households reside in these rural villages”.

Tzaneen is surrounded by typical townships, villages and some small industries. During the South African Census of 2001, the Greater Tzaneen area Municipality had a total population of 375 588 comprising of 171 191 males and 204 469 females

(IDP, 2011:35). Most of the people around Tzaneen survive as subsistence farmers on small plots, and some survive by ploughing vegetables for sale in small markets. Many people are not employed, and many of those that are employed work in the small industries, plantations or on farms, and therefore usually earn low salaries.

In terms of the religious affiliation of the people in the Greater Tzaneen area, Christianity is the most popular religion as it is in the whole of South Africa. However, there is great diversity in Christianity. A significant number of Christians are part of the African Initiated Churches. The Zion Christian Churches operate with their headquarters in Limpopo, and do have significant numbers in areas such as Tzaneen. There are, however, still a significant percentage of people in and around Tzaneen that have not yet received the gospel of Jesus Christ or belong to any Christian Churches. It is due to this reality that Getz and Wall (2000:8) advocate the need for Christian missionary work everywhere by stating that, “the mission of God’s people today then is to call people to trust in Christ and thus become citizens of His heavenly kingdom”.

This study was prompted by experiences of the researcher with three churches in Tzaneen. Two of these churches are in the townships of Tzaneen and one is situated in the rural area of Tzaneen. It became clear that in the researcher’s endeavour to hasten the processes of spreading the good news of salvation, that it was important to consider what Jeoung (2007:8) says, “We need to bring as many people as possible to the knowledge of salvation. However, if we regard the numerical growth as the absolute value and do not have any careful reflection on motives, ways, and means behind the goal or the result, then we are making a serious mistake”. This study draws from insights of authors such as Bosch (1991); Allender (2006); Chester and Timmis (2008); and Wright (2010). Many of these authors generally write about church growth and missions. The researcher took up the challenge to focus on the issues with respect to the circumstances around Tzaneen, and the research therefore is an opportunity to interact with what the literature generally propose on the subject of growing and planting viable churches. This direction of focus is what Hierbert and Meneses (1995:369) also suggested as being needed when they insisted that, “Mission is more than a text. It must take flesh in human contexts. We must make the gospel known not to humans in general, but

to real people who live in particular times and places in history, who are members of real societies and who share common languages and cultures”.

1.2 Background to the study

As an active pastor in the ministry, working in the rural areas has made the researcher aware of the challenges of growing viable churches in such settings. The researcher was particularly challenged by noticing that the SDA (Seventh-day Adventist) churches he was associated with in the area around Tzaneen were not growing rapidly; that is, growth in terms of numbers, finance, and their understanding of the mission of the church. But there were other churches that were thriving well under the same circumstances. This sparked investigation into how to help the churches which are not growing sufficiently, as well as ensuring that those that are growing maintain their growth momentum. This study is accordingly also aimed at helping the leaders of those churches that are struggling to grow numerically, seek answers about how to achieve their maximum growth potential. This general struggle of raising viable churches prompted the researcher to take up the challenge of coming up with a model for growing viable churches in the rural areas like Tzaneen.

Many of the people in Tzaneen are generally poor, others are illiterate, and while others are disabled. There is a significance number of young people who are not employed and they are not at school. It is therefore also important to take to consideration what Greenway and Monsma (1989:44) state about poverty in the southern hemisphere when they report that, “the data regarding the poor in Southern World countries are such that every Christian should think hard about the Bible’s teaching concerning the nature and causes of poverty, the stewardship of resources, our duty towards the poor and the kind of assistance that meets the needs of the poor spiritually as well as physically”. Accordingly, appropriate effective strategies to grow viable churches in rural areas like Tzaneen also have to do with the way churches have succeeded in uplifting and assimilating the rural poor. This is a challenge that is often difficult to overcome for churches whose culture and institutions are associated with the middle and upper classes. McGavran (1988:27) wrote about this challenge and correctly observed that, “we must all recognize that doctrinal correctness frequently coincides with prosperity, higher education-and non-

growth. Doctrinally correct denominations tend to become so different that they do not attract people of the general citizenry”.

Much has been written on church growth and effective strategies are general in nature and often by theologians outside of Africa. However, contextualized literature still needs to be explored from a closer perspective with respect to the churches around Tzaneen. There are a number of spiritual activities taking place around Tzaneen churches that may also require evaluation in the light of the churches’ setting. For example, a local newspaper, the Letaba Herald (2011) reports, “A HEARTY invitation is extended to all to come and see what is available to buy and see at the Hope Methodist church’s car boot sale”. From another Letaba Herald issue, the reader is informed, “*Nederduitsh Hervormde gemeente Laeveld in Modjadji’s kloof bied ’n jag kompetisie aan met fantastiese pryse*”¹ (Bruyn, 2011):. These reports were evidence of a number of activities taking place in different Tzaneen churches as a way to keep up with church growth within the contexts of the area. Bruyn (2015:10) records that “Word & Spirit church recently held a gospel crusade at Tickyline/ Maake village, under the theme from Psalm 107:20: “He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions”.

However, it is useful to stand back and assess what the churches do because there is a need for clarity about evangelistic strategies that promote viable growth and enhance the impact of the churches in their communities. (Cantrell, 2004:2), raises the issue of the gospel penetrating African communities when he wrote that, “anyone doubting the shallowness of Christendom in Africa need only look at the moral and political chaos in countries where the vast majority of the population has claimed the name of Christ for years”. The issue is whether the strategies that churches around Tzaneen adopted are effective or contribute to this ‘shallowness’ of many African churches which others have noted.

1.3 Problem Statement

In 2008, the Trans-Orange Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist resolved in the Leader’s council held at Kwa-Thema, Springs, Gauteng, that churches are to

¹ Nederduitsh Hervormde Church Laeveld in Modjadji’s Kloof presents a hunting competition with fantastic prizes.

embark on a mission, “To grow membership by 20% per annum and reach 85% of the un-entered areas as shown in the Executive Secretary’s report” (Minutes from the Growth and Development Committee, 28 June: 2008).

The real concern of church leaders was to realise the fact that SDA church membership is not growing sufficiently so as to reach the expected goal. At the end of that year, churches in Tzaneen had baptized a lower percentage than that which was set for them. Hence, there was a need to conceptualise ways of increasing church membership in Tzaneen using effective strategies for growing viable churches. The main research question therefore is: What would effective strategies of growing viable churches in the rural areas of Tzaneen be?

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1.4.1 What is a useful Biblical perspective on healthy church growth in rural areas?

1.4.2 What conditions around Tzaneen could be conducive for healthy church planting and balanced church growth?

1.4.3 What are some of the challenges to be faced when planting and growing churches around Tzaneen?

1.4.4 What insights informs Tzaneen leaders as they plan to develop strategies for nurturing churches?

1.5 Objectives of the study

The main outcome of this study is to research the problems hindering church development and develop strategies for growing viable churches in rural areas such as Tzaneen. This study focused on the strategies that have been effective elsewhere; evaluated them and considered their applicability for the rural communities around Tzaneen.

Accordingly, the main objectives of this study are to:

1.5.1 Explore a Biblical perspective on planting and growing healthy churches in rural areas;

- 1.5.2 Identify conditions that could be conducive for doing mission work in the rural area of Tzaneen;
- 1.5.3 Identify some challenges that may hinder mission work and church growth in and around the area of Tzaneen; and
- 1.5.4 Suggest insights to be considered by Tzaneen leaders as they plan to develop strategies that could be helpful when planting and growing churches in rural areas.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study focuses on issues pertaining to effective strategies for planting and growing churches in townships and villages in and around Tzaneen. The results of this study accordingly avails knowledge that is useful to church policy makers, church planters and researchers. It is also believed that the recommendations of the study will help church leaders in Tzaneen as they search for strategies for growing churches.

1.7 Research Methodology

The research attained its objectives by use of the following:

1.7.1 Literature Review

The literature review of this study focuses on relevant Biblical perspectives and methods of growing believing communities. This study centres on Bible passages and uses the grammatical historical approach in an effort to understand key aspects of the Bible's message about the church and its growth.

1.7.2 Empirical study

An empirical study has been conducted in order to contextualise information about the area of Tzaneen by means of analysing available census and IDP documents. It highlights some of the opportunities and challenges for missionary work emanating from the socio-economic environment of the Greater Tzaneen area. An empirical survey was conducted by means of using questionnaires and interviews to collect

relevant information from church leaders in and around the area of Tzaneen. Further aspects and details regarding the methodology that was used in this study are discussed in Chapter 4.

1.8 Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

Factors that are likely to prevent the generalisation of the study outcomes are, amongst others, the fact that the investigation focuses on few Bible passages from a grammatical historical approach and perspectives of Bible study. Another limiting factor is that the empirical data was gathered from church leaders in SDA churches around Tzaneen. It is, however, believed that those that keep these limiting factors in mind can distil some useful lessons from this study and be able to use many of its findings in other contexts.

1.9 Chapter Divisions

Chapter 1: Orientation

Chapter 2: Biblical perspectives on church growth

Chapter 3: Tzaneen as context for missionary work: Challenges and opportunities for planting and growing churches in rural areas around Tzaneen

Chapter 4: Empirical study relating to the Insights from Tzaneen Churches and their Leaders

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter 2

Biblical Perspectives on Church Growth

2.1 Introduction

Growing and nurturing churches towards healthy growth are major aspects of this research. The research question that this chapter seeks to explore is what does a useful Biblical perspective on church growth entail? This chapter presents a study of some Bible passages which contain seminal ideas relating to the growing and nurturing of churches.

Shenk (1999:105) suggests a Biblical perspective when he records that, “The starting point for thinking about a Biblical approach to strategy must be a consideration of God’s missionary initiative. Genesis 1-3 forms a prolegomenon to the rest of the scripture by tying together creation, mission, and redemption”. There are many such Bible passages that scholars have identified. Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21 were selected for closer study in this chapter because scholars such as Bosch (1991:84) go so far as to suggest that “the key text not only for understanding Christ’s own mission but also that of the early church” can be found in Luke 4:16-21 which in Luke-Acts has replaced Matthew’s “great commission”. Much of what Luke 4:16-21 teaches regarding missions refers back to Isaiah 61:1-2. In the light of this, Bosch (1991:100) states that, “the major part of Luke 4:16-21 is a quotation that comes from Isaiah 61:1-2f”. In view of the fact that Luke 4:16-21 links itself to Isaiah 61:1-2f by being a fulfillment of what Isaiah 61:1-2 anticipated, the researcher decided to study these passages together in an attempt to establish an understanding of the church and mission work that these passages encourage.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The method that the researcher uses in the study of the Bible passages is primarily the popular grammatical historical approach as also recommended and described by scholars such as McCartney and Clayton (1994:112); and Doriani (1996:11). The

following aspects shall therefore receive attention when studying Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21, in this chapter of the study:

- general background associated with these passages of Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21;
- some relevant issues pertaining to the genre of these passages;
- the place of these passages in the layout of their respective books;
- relevant theological emphasis of these passages;
- what church planters and church growth writers make of these passages;
- relevant perspectives on church planting and the nurturing of churches in the messages of these passages;
- what these passages teach about church planting and nurturing of churches in the broader context of the teaching of the Bible; and
- Biblical strategies of church growth in rural areas as they are perceived by church planters.

2.2.1 General background associated with these passages (Isaiah 61:1-2 & Luke 4:16-21)

The general background of the two texts is dealt with separately. In both sections, the research focuses on authorship; historical context; literary form; and setting to establish the background associated with these passages.

2.2.1.1 Isaiah 61: 1-2

2.2.1.1.1 Authorship of Isaiah 61:1-2

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in establishing the authorship of the book of Isaiah. Farmer (1998:968) is therefore correct to state that, “the debate concerning the identity of the author or authors of the last eleven chapters of the book continues; these chapters are at once different from and in agreement with Deutero-Isaiah”. Some authors have classified these chapters to have been written by a different author than the one who wrote its first chapters; for example, Childs (2001:3) states, “I remain deeply concerned in the unity of the book, which I agree cannot be formulated in terms of single authorship”.

Scholars have long used the name “Deutero-Isaiah” (i.e., second Isaiah) to denote the author of Isaiah 40-66. The author referred to as the Second-Isaiah is believed to have lived in the days following Cyrus’s decree that allowed the Jews to return to Judah. An observer like Beyer (2007:155) argues that, “historically the issue of authorship was a battle between those who held a high view of scripture and those who did not”.

Scholars that support the idea that passages such as Isaiah 61:1-2 were not part of the original script of the book of Isaiah are, among others, Blenkinsopp (1997:164) who suggests that, “Cheyne, Kuenen, and others had assigned these chapters, with the possible exception of 60-62, to authors other than the author of 40-55”.

Oswalt (1997:176) presents Duhm’s (1982) findings that propose the third Isaianic author, Trito-Isaiah. These findings are in agreement with Beyer’s (2007:154) suggestions which showed that “yet another variation of the multiple authorship view, sees the names ‘Deutero-Isaiah’ and ‘Trito-Isaiah’ as designating not two individuals but schools of disciples who continued in the spirit of their eighth-century B.C. predecessor, Isaiah of Jerusalem”.

These views which further support the idea of a multiple authorship are corroborated by Holladay (1997:192), who records that, “chaps. 40-55 are the work of the anonymous prophet whom we call Deutero-Isaiah, who prophesied in Babylon about 540 BCE, and chaps. 56-66 are the work of a disciple of Deutero-Isaiah, whom we call Trito-Isaiah, who prophesied in Jerusalem in the period 538-515 BCE”. These ideas seem to be consistent with the research by Heskett (2007:239), who states that “Consequently, the writer of Trito-jesaja is a disciple of Deutero-jesaja and carries on the tradition”.

Scholars that hold to such a thought suggest that there was an insertion of a passage or lines in Isaiah 61:1 “to preach good news to the poor” and “to proclaim liberty to the captives” (NKJV).

Many writers have since challenged the view of different authors in the book of Isaiah and particularly Isaiah 61:1-2 as compared to other passages in the same book. The researcher’s view aligns with those who advocate that we have one unified work but not necessarily one author. This view is supported by Miscall

(2006:18) who writes, “With Watts and Conrad I share the assumption of a unified work composed in the postexilic period, probably in the fifth century”.

Koole (2001:266) argues, “In my view, however, these ‘Songs’ form integral component of DI, and they were not woven into their context afterwards either by the same author to whom we owe chap. 60-62”. As a result, recent studies have shown that, “it is hard to deny completely the force of the work such as Elliger’s arguments for the unity underlying Isaiah 56-66, for there is distinct themes, lexicographical features, and stylistic characteristics which persist throughout the material” (Stromberg, 2011:9). After a survey of the issues, Stromberg (2011) agrees that, “the earliest core of TI comes in 60- 2, a nucleus around which much of the rest of 56- 66 was later added in development” (2011:38). Further, Stromberg (2011:35) suggests that, “there is a broad consensus that 56:1- 8 and 65- 66, act almost like ‘book ends’, for a later redactional framework around the TI. And that “these are original compositions or redactional assemblages”.

Stromberg (2011:59) confirms the earlier observations, which showed that, “while these approaches share the conviction that a meaningful holistic reading is possible, they do not necessarily operate on the assumption that the passage examined was written from the very beginning by a single author”. This is a most likely explanation that one can carry from reading Isaiah 61: 1-2 and even verse 3. Stromberg (2011:59) seemingly agrees with this notion when he states that, “the passage could just as well be the result of an editor’s effort to combine disparate sources”.

Elsewhere, Firth & Williamson, 2009:261 suggests that “to say the book in some sense forms a meaningful whole is not to say it was written all at one time by a single individual”. This idea seems to be supported by recent scholars who think that the book is a combination of pieces taken from different historical backgrounds. Hence Stromberg (2009: 261) concludes that, “scholars now also recognize that these parts did not develop in isolation from one another, but that the later stages presupposes and develop earlier, creating a complex network of internal links”.

2.2.1.1.2 The historical context of Isaiah 61:1-2

Recent developments in the study of Isaiah have heightened the need for the historical context of Isaiah 61:1-2. Farmer (1998:964) says, “Behind the book of Isaiah lies a long and complex history extending from the eighth to the fifth centuries B.C.E”. Accordingly, Farmer (1998:964) argues that, “the history is that of political

events, often of international import, that are alluded to throughout the text” and further suggests that, the book of Isaiah presents a history about spiritual evolution, considerable and decisive, that happened in Israel’s faith during those centuries in addition to it being “a history of re-readings and re-writings that progressively resulted, over three and a half centuries, in the book we read today” (Farmer, 1998:964).

The view of Classens (2009:209) is that; “a theological interpretation is attentive to the canonical nature of the biblical text, emphasizing that a text cannot be read in isolation but that one should look for the way in which texts fit into the larger canonical context”.

A study by Oswalt (2003:18) touches on the historical context of Isaiah when stating that, “it addresses itself to at least two and perhaps three, different settings”. The book of Isaiah presents the following scenarios: “Isaiah’s own times, from about 740 to 700 B.C., but chapters 40-55 seem to be addressed to the Judean exiles in Babylon between 585 and 540 B.C., and chapters 56-66 seem to reflect conditions in Judah after the return from exile in 539 B.C.” (Oswalt, 2003:18).

These views seem to be consistent with the other research by Heskett (2007:230) which showed that, “Isaiah 61: 1-3 belong to Deutero-Isaiah’s disciple; ‘Trito-Isaiah,’ who perhaps ministered during the early but also post exilic period, primarily to “reawaken Deutero-Isaiah’s message of salvation for a people, remnants of Israel after exile and return”.

The conclusion which the researcher arrives at in this research on the historical setting of Isaiah 61: 1-2 is similar to the one shared by Holladay (1997:193) who records that, “chaps. 40-45 are the work of the anonymous prophet whom we call Deutero-Isaiah, who prophesied in Babylon about 540 BCE, and chaps. 56-66 are the work of a disciple of Deutero-Isaiah, whom we call Trito-Isaiah, who prophesied in Jerusalem in the period 538-515 BCE”.

2.2.1.1.3 The Literary Structure of Isaiah 61:1-2

Several studies investigating the literary structure of Isaiah 61:1-2 have been carried out. There are some scholars who hold the view that many phrases in Isaiah 61:1-2 were not part of the original script of the book of Isaiah. Different scholars have

suggested a structure for Isaiah 61:1-2 and its links. Koole (2001:267), suggests a form that can be considered as a pronouncement of salvation by a speaker to people that are in a sorrowful situation.

Oswalt (1997:176) states that, "It is a truism that chaps. 56-66 of the book of Isaiah exhibit many differences from the other two sections of the book, chaps 1-39 and 40-55". Any proposal about the literary structure of Isaiah has to take into consideration the three parts which comprise the book.

Stromberg (2011:7) argues that the book of Isaiah is composed of three sections, namely: First Isaiah ranging from chapter 1-39; the second section of the book of Isaiah is termed Deutero- Isaiah, which is composed of chapters 40 – 55; and the last section referred to as Third Isaiah is composed of chapters 56 – 66, known as Trito-Isaiah.

The above view of Stromberg (2011) is also in Miscall (2006:16) who says, "In the late nineteenth century Bernhard Duhm refined the concept into a hypothesis of the three Isaiah's". Conrad (1977:3) had already propagated this position when he stated that, "the major sections of the book have been identified as First Isaiah (chaps. 1-39), Second Isaiah (chaps. 40 -55); and Third Isaiah (chaps. 56-66)".

Watts (2000:872) has analyzed the structure of Isaiah 61 and accordingly arranged it in the following manner:

vv 1-3 YHWH's anointed messenger introduces himself as one to proclaim 'the year of YHWH's favor.

vv 4-5 A program of restoration for Jerusalem to be a temple city is supported by pilgrim's devotees.

vv 6-7 Priests are inserted and granted the usual privileges.

vv 8-9 YHWH identifies himself with these developments and with his people.

vv 10-11 The emperor says a hymn of praise and thanks for salvation and credibility that have come from YHWH.

On a closer view one is able to note that the proclamation of the good news in chapter 61 is on the basis of the promises of chapter 60. In chapter 60 the promises are proclaimed and passed on by the one who has been anointed. According to

Watts (2000:872), the scene of chapter 61 presents three speakers who figure in Jerusalem's renaissance. The first is a preacher, healer and a messenger (vv 1-3); there is a significance change of tone and tense in verse 3b. There is a return of the future tense, which is quiet dominant in chapter 60. Another observation is that chapter 61:8 assumes divine authority. One notices the character of God and what He does for His people. The speech has implications on why people must believe in the promises: "to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and opening of the prison, to proclaim the year of favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them a garland of ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah that he may be glorified" (NKJV). a second speaker is a ruler and an administrator (vv 4-7); and a third speaker is central to the scene, he identifies himself (v. 8a) as YHWH and affirms his own dedication to justice and his antipathy to robbery and injustice. Isaiah 61:10 seems to be the response of the prophet on behalf of the believers who are comforted.

The form of the passage at study resembles Isaiah 49: 1-6. This section is not a "call narrative as such; rather, like Isaiah 49: 1-6, it consists of a modification of that older form" (Keck, 2001:514). Further study on the structure of Isaiah 61:1-2 by Keck (2001:514) led him to express the view that, "we find aspects of the Prophet's mission coordinated with that of the servant earlier. He is anointed and sent, and so represents a coalescing of roles once belonging to Cyrus (as liberator) and servant (within Israel; see esp. 42: 1-7)". According to Gove (1976:432) *coalescence* or *coalescing* means, "A growing together or union in one body, form or group". This definition informs Keck's (2001:514) statement that "the depiction of a day of vengeance and year of favor appears to be a coalescing of 34:8 and 59:17, on the one hand, with a positive outcome (favor) for those whom the prophet here addresses".

In trying to prove the point of a single literary structure, Keck (2001:514) records thus: "Comfort" is a virtual motif-word in Deutero-Isaiah, and here it is expressly tied to those who mourn in Zion".

Keck (2001:514) advances the argument by picking such phrases as the "faint spirit" of v.3b and hints that it recalls both 57:16 and 42:1, thus, again bringing aspects of

present and earlier discourse. He is of the view that the thrust of this is that it maintains continuity between what he terms “the servant to the generation of the servants even in new and changed circumstances” (Keck, 2001:514).

The researcher shares the view with Keck (2001) who concludes his argument by pointing out that the final line of Isaiah 61:3b picks up certain aspects of 60:21, thus, justifying the notion that there is some underlying unity in the whole of Isaiah.

2.2.1.1.4 *The setting of Isaiah 61:1-2*

Previous research findings into the setting of Isaiah 61:1-2 yields inconsistent and sometimes contradictory results. A number of factors contribute to this mishap. One authority, Mischall (2006:29), argues that, “A major part of the experience of reading Isaiah is to be constantly moving back-and-forth through the text to find where he says the same or the opposite thing; where he uses similar or opposed imagery, where he employ similar terminology and phraseology; and examine the parallel passages to determine whether they agree with one another, build on one another or stand in tension with one another”.

Carson, Gordon, Motyer and Wenham (1994:667) suggest that, “Isaiah 61:1-4 is set in captivity; accordingly, Babylon would be the most probable place”.

Mischall’s (2006:188) findings on Isaiah 61:1-4 contains “a concentration of Messianic terminology and imagery for deliverance”.

According to Classens (2009:209), “scholars interested in developing the theological dimension of Isaiah have searched for ways to look with fresh eyes at the rich prophetic material”. Emmerson (1992:5) and Miscall (2006:27) also associate the setting of Isaiah 40-66 with the time of the Babylonian exile and the return from that exile.

The researcher’s finding on the setting of Isaiah, particularly the passage under study, is that it is better to align with authors like Oswalt (1998:562) who argue that, “chapter 61 and 62 speak of the character of people of God when they experience the deliverance that the arm of the Lord procures for them. The section begins with servant/messiah’s announcement of his role (61:1-3), and concludes with a call for the people to enter into the salvation that God has made available to them and to

embrace their role as “the Holy People” (62:10-12)”. This view is supported by Classens, (2009:212) who argues that, “most scholars assume that Isaiah constitutes a composite work that reflects different socio historical realities”.

2.2.1.2 Luke 4:16-21

The book of Luke 4:16-21 is investigated in this section in order to establish its authorship; historical context: literary structure; date and setting.

2.2.1.2.1 Authorship of Luke 4:16-21

Bartholomew, Green, & Thiselton (2005:81) hold a view that, “Luke-Acts does not make any direct claims about authorship”. The book of Luke does not mention the name of its author; it is, however, clear that the author was an associate of Paul. The author’s association is apparent in the so-called ‘we’ passages of Acts which are found sporadically in the book from Acts 16 until the end of the book. The external evidence in the form of the united testimony of the early Church support the view that Luke, the companion of Paul, wrote Luke and Acts (Bartholomew *et al.*, 2005:81).

2.2.1.2.2 The historical Background of Luke 4: 16-21

The historical background of Luke 4: 16-21 can be argued from two perspectives: 1) the chronology of the events narrated; and 2) the traditional content.

As for its chronology, Orton (1991:31) argues that, “it seems highly improbable that a visit to the Nazareth Synagogue which resulted in rejection was in fact the first act in Jesus’ public ministry which is what Luke’s story asserts”. Furthermore, Orton (1991: 31) says, “that Jesus visited and taught in the Synagogue of his people is widely affirmed in the tradition; that he did so at Nazareth is attested by Mark vi 1-6 (cf. Matt xiii 54 ff.) and is inherently likely, but only Luke gives details of what took place in the Synagogue”.

Bosch (1991:97) records that, “the infancy narrative of Luke’s gospel, in particular stands in an unresolved tension with the book of Acts, particularly the latter’s conclusion; the expectations raised in the gospel are largely *not* fulfilled in the subsequent narrative”.

Historically, Orton (1991:31) records, “the use of Synagogue lectionaries which were presented to Jesus on that day affirms the historicity of the event. The focal point is to consider how the lections’ were used and the unity of the passages in Luke 4: 16-30”.

According to Orton (1991:32), “two things are worth noting here. First, Jesus preached a sermon at Nazareth at the end of the month Tishri or the beginning of Chesvan, and that the sermon reflects in its contents the Old Testament passages which were read at that time of the year in the Palestinian triennial cycle; Secondly, that Luke was acquainted with this lectionary and was influenced by its language in his description of the sermon and the reaction it provoked”. This information is as according to Orton (1991:32) who records that, “the readings from the Pentateuch (*sedarim*) are arranged according to a three-year cycle beginning in Nisan”.

Notably, Moesner (2005:137) records that, “when Jesus declares to his hometown synagogue worshippers that the ‘good news’ to the poor and the release for the blind and crushed enacted by the anointed prophet of Isaiah 61 has become reality ‘today’ in their very gathering, their reaction follows the stereotypical pattern”. Furthermore, Moesner (2005:137) argues that, “instead they refused to accept and demand a sign; Jesus does not respond to their demand but narrates an Old Testament story to emphasize the point of their indictment”.

2.2.1.2.3 The Literary Structure of Luke 4:16-21

More recently, literature has emerged that offers contradictory findings about the literary structure of Luke’s writings or the passages thereof. To date, some scholars have classified the Lukan gospel as Hellenistic historiography (Mallen, 2008:27).

The following useful structure of Luke 4:14-21 has been suggested by Garland (2011:191):

- I. Jesus return to Galilee (4: 14-15)
 - I (a) Empowered by the Spirit (4: 14)
 - (b) Praised in the synagogues (4: 15)
- II. Jesus’ reading from Isaiah at the Synagogue in Nazareth (4: 16-20)

III. Pronouncement that the Scripture has been fulfilled today in their hearing
(4: 21)

The structure above forms part of the study in this research. Garland (2011:191) states that, “the structure highlights Jesus’ anointing and sending. Unlike John, who referred to someone else who was coming, Jesus refers to himself (“the spirit of the Lord is upon *me* because he anointed *me* to announce good news to the poor. He has sent me” 4:18).

Spencer (2005:114) states that, “it can be theologically illuminating to study Lukan appropriation – and in some cases alterations – of an undisputed source, the LXX (Septuagint) or Greek Old Testament, that Luke frequently cites”.

Nevertheless, one also needs to take into cognizance what McComiskey (2004:31) says when stating that, “Scholars who propose structure for the Gospel, or even just occasional interrelatedness between passages that is supposedly intended by the Evangelist, often fail to rest their proposals with sufficient rigor”. According to McComiskey (2004:204) “the pattern behind Luke 4: 14-24:53 is based on narrative features of the text involving such phenomena as conflict accounts, teaching of the crowds, Jesus’ warning of the disciples against religious leaders, verbalizations of faith and commitment toward Christ by Peter, and passion predictions including the resurrection”. McComiskey (2004:210) also states that, “the interpretation of passages should not be hijacked by the structure; because the structure cannot contain all valid interpretations”. Furthermore, the author “uses themes, literary forms, formulae, actions/events, wording, function of unit texts in the plot, and characters to construct his overall pattern” (McComiskey, 2004:227).

2.2.1.2.4 *The date and setting of Luke 4: 16-21*

Bartholomew *et al.*, (2005:98) suggest the dating of Luke-Acts to be around the 60AD, almost a decade before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD. This view is most likely generally accepted because according to scholars like (Bartholomew *et al.*, (2008:98) who further says that, “such a date has been defended by scholars, who have suggested that Luke ends with Paul under house arrest in Rome – slightly anticlimactically because this is as far as the story has got”.

Another view found in Bartholomew et al, (2005:240) is that “scholars such as Liverdiere and Thompson have an understanding that Bosch deduce that the book of Luke was written somewhat around or after 80s; reasons for this argument is based on the fact that Luke – Acts were written seemingly by one author who would have taken records about the workings of the Holy Spirit in the early church”. Bartholomew *et al.* (2005: 24) advances the idea that “Acts is not an afterthought – Luke intended from the beginning to write two books: the two volumes were, from the beginning a planned and written as a unity”.

There appears to be no reasonable clue about the setting of the gospel of Luke. Tenney (1961:175) suggests that; probably it was written outside of Palestine, though it may have been composed at Caesarea”. Neyrey (1991:315) suggest that, “the primary geographical space lies between Jerusalem and Rome”. This area forms the most probable setting of Luke. An implication of this is the possibility that; “From the point of view of Luke-Acts, this space contains land, the Great Sea, one river called the Jordan, and one lake called Gennesareth (Luke5:1, which the other Gospel writers call the Sea of Galilee” (Neyrey, 1991:315).

2.2.1.3 Some relevant issues pertaining to the genre of these passages

The term *genre* can be defined as “a literature type which makes meaning and produces effects in a particular way” (Voeltz, 1997:294). There is genre in art, literary technique, texts or style of writing. According to Voeltz (1997:294) “genre studies, then, discuss and seek to determine what that pattern is, how meaning is made by it, and how this pattern achieves its function or purpose”. A previous study by Vanhoozer (1998:342) suggests that, “a genre, in other words, is not only a mode of communication but a mode of experiencing and thinking about the world, and the encounter with the author’s intent, the engagement with the world, and the encounter with the addressee”. The researcher’s view aligns with those of Vanhoozer (1998:342) who argue that, “each genre makes possible a distinct way of thinking about and experiencing the world”.

2.2.1.3.1 Genre of Isaiah 61:1-2

It is not easy to read and understand a prophetic book. The subject, style, genre and mood keep changing, often without warning. The researcher’s deductions are that

the book of Isaiah, and in particular Isaiah 61: 1-2, is prophetic and is also a historic text. A prophetic text is, as Keck (2001:45) suggest, one in which “readers attempting to follow the train of thought frequently find themselves derailed, or at least shifted to a different track. So is the book of Isaiah, both the substance of individual prophetic speeches and the organization of the book challenge and disorient the reader”. Further still, Keck (2001:45) argues that, “some of this challenge and disorientation are by design, especially in the individual prophetic accusations and announcements, and sometimes also in the way the book has been put together. But some of the difficulties in following the book arise from its complicated history of composition as well as our unfamiliarity with ancient conventions of speech and literature”. According to Whybray (1975:239), “The contents of chapter 61 are more varied than those of chapter 60. In verses 1-3 a prophet speaks of his divine call and mission, which is to bring God’s word of healing and liberation to the disconsolate community”. Whybray (1975:239) also notes that in verses 1-3, “there are close similarities between these verses and the servant songs of Deutero-Isaiah: so close that many of the older commentaries held that this is a ‘song’ belonging to the same group and the work of the same author”. However, Whybray (1975:240) records that, “according to Luke 4:17-21 Jesus took this as a prophecy concerning himself”. On the prophetic claim to possess the ‘spirit of the Lord’; ‘has anointed me’; this is obviously to be taken metaphorically like ‘his anointed’ in Isaiah 45:1”. And traditional Jewish custom says, “The only persons to be actually anointed in Israel were kings and high priests” (Whybray, 1975:240). Heskett (2007:230) therefore suggests that, Isaiah 61: 1-3 assumes a prophetic genre without specifically naming the speaker as ‘the prophet’”. In addition, Heskett (2007:230) gives examples of scholars such as Wilson (1985) who referred to Isaiah 61 as the so called “prophetic liturgy” and Petersen (2002) who referred to Isaiah 61 as “tradent-prophecy” whereby Third Isaiah performed an “exegetical” role in response to an already existing prophetic tradition but did not make an original prophetic contribution. The researcher takes the view that Isaiah 61:1-2 is prophetic and is a historical text also.

2.2.1.3.2 Genre of Luke 4: 16-21

Knight (1998:3) records that, “the first question we must consider is the question of Luke’s genre”. According to Elwell (1984:472), the book of Luke is a gospel and

defines *gospel* as “the joyous proclamation of God’s redemptive activity in Christ Jesus on behalf of man enslaved by sin”.

Scholars like Moesner (2005:126) submits that, “when the gospel writers set pen to papyrus, they were utilizing a genre with norms and expectations of its epistemology and social functions widely shared by authors and literate audiences alike throughout the Greco-Roman world”.

However, another view is that of Mallen, (2008:26) who corroborates that, “Luke’s work appears to contain a combination of biographical, historical and confessional elements that are not easily grouped under a single genre”.

Mallen (2008:26) further says that, “the vigorous scholarly debate concerning the genre suggests that the evidence is not clear cut”. Hence the view, “adopted here is that Luke’s work is best characterized as Hellenistic historiography” (Mallen, 2008:27). The reason for this conclusion according to Mallen (2008:159) is that, “Luke is profoundly interested in Jewish issues and hence in the interpretation of Jewish scriptures-but expresses his narrative using the models and strategies of Hellenistic rhetoric”. Even though Luke’s work is characterized as Hellenistic history; the researcher supports the view by Bosch, (1991:84) who suggest that, “Luke has a conception of the narrator’s calling different from ours”; with this understanding one concludes that “Luke not only wrote the gospel but also the book of Acts”.

2.2.1.4. The role that Isaiah 61:1-2 plays within the overall message of Isaiah.

The role of Isaiah 61:1-2 is that it contributes towards an understanding that the book of Isaiah brings hope to the hopeless. The message that emanates from the passage is to revive the soul of the people who had forgotten about their past, present and future. According to Paul (2012: 536), the prophecy and the mission of Deutero-Isaiah was “to give hope to the disheartened, to expedite the release of captives, and to console the bereaved since their grief and mourning is about to be transformed into festive joy”. Herman (2005: 455) suggests that the passage is classified as a servant song, “many of its phrases are similar to ones already used and it sets out the manner in which the Lord is going to fulfill the vision of the new Jerusalem that has just been described in chapter 60”.

So the role of the passage in reference to the rest of Isaiah's message, also further helps to set out the passage in a manner that shows some of the connections in the book. This notion is further expounded by Stromberg (2009:162) who suggest that, "royal features may be present in 61 when it continues with 'a description of part of the royal task of defending the cause of the poor and disadvantaged' ". So the role of Isaiah 61:1-2, concerning the overall message of the book of Isaiah, is that it is connected to the rest of the book of Isaiah in that it clarifies how the Lord goes about in fulfilling His promise of restoring His people.

2.2.1.5 The role that Luke 4:16-21 plays within the overall message of Luke

The role of the passage in Luke 4: 16-21 in the context of the overall message of Luke is that it provides evidence about the promised Messiah in terms of Isaiah 61:1-2. It can thus be suggested that, "This text not only identifies God's Isaianic Servant (Isa. 42) to be the Spirit-anointed One (that is, the Christ), but also establishes the agenda for his subsequent ministry" (Stronstad 2012:47). It can therefore be assumed that "Luke not only reveals Jesus to be the prophet like Isaiah but also reports that Jesus is the prophet like Elijah and Elisha" (Stronstad, 2012:47).

Neagoe (2002:44-45) suggests that, "The first half of the Nazareth account concentrates on Jesus' positive presentation of his ministry as fulfillment of an Isaianic prophecy". In the same passage, Carroll (2012:110) states, "Jesus' messianic vocation is developed with the aid of several significant associations: empowerment by the Spirit of God; fulfillment of Scripture; the prophetic role; a mission of deliverance for the marginalized, the needy, and outsiders; and relenting reflection by well-placed insiders". Thus, Carroll (2012:111) suggests that the passage reveals, "when the narrator depicts Jesus' Sabbath-day synagogue participation as his customary practice (4:16), this reinforces a point established earlier in the story: like his parents (2:21-24, 41-42), Jesus is a devout, Torah-observant Jew". The researcher's observation is that the passage in Luke 4:16-21 gives evidence to the fact that Jesus was indeed the prophetic Messiah and the text is in line with what the author has written in Luke.

2.2.1.6 Theological emphases of these passages

2.2.1.6.1 *Isaiah 61:1-2*

Numerous studies have attempted to explain the theological emphases of Isaiah 61:1-2, (for example: Guthrie, 1970; Akroyd, 1971; Watt, 1987; and Goheen, 2011). According to Laymon (1971:354), “Zion herself is summoned to be the herald of good news to the surrounding cities of Judah, hailing the coming of God, who with his mighty arm, as in the exodus events, brings with him his rescued people, caring for them as a shepherd for his flock”. This view is further expounded by Watt (1987:305) who suggests that, “The message is not for the powerful or the rich, but for the poor, the imprisoned, the broken, and the mourners. He does not come as a strong leader to do something, but as an anointed messenger announcing meaningful things. His message is of freedom, comfort, and support. The effect of his words turns all negative conditions into beautiful positive things”.

The researcher shares the view with Childs (2001:504) who records that, “the words of the prophetic speaker describe himself at once in the garb of the figure of the servant of second Isaiah”. It appears, and it is clear from the passage, that the spirit of God is within this prophet bearing a message of release, healing and restoration. Childs (2001: 504) argues that, “the promise is given that the spirit of God will also be upon the offspring of the servant”. Childs (2001:505) further says that, “the relation of chapter 61 to the servant remains a very subtle one, but fits in clearly with the major theme of third Isaiah in linking the suffering servant of second Isaiah with the servants of chapters 56-66 who are his offspring”. For one to understand the passage in Isaiah 61:1-2, and get the theological meanings and emphasis, one would have to acknowledge the way in which the passage has been placed and interpreted. Heskett (2007:238) argues that from the original level of tradition history Isaiah 61:1-2, refers to the prophet, the servant, or even a Messiah and furthermore states that there are no specific or direct references to conclude or finalise the matter of the speaker in the passage of Isaiah 61:1-2 then concludes that, the passage is ambiguous and the text illicit polyvalent interpretations. Stromberg (2009:262), who focuses on the approaches of studying Isaiah, suggests the reading of the passage Isaiah 61:1-2 from two different approaches is possible: 1) the diachronic approach which focuses on the development of the text from a historical background and 2) the synchronic approach which focuses on other factors than history. Other scholars like Firth & Williamson (2009:262) concur that by using the diachronic approach, the

passage reveals that, “the book as a whole show that the post-exilic Isaiah 61:1-3 draws from the earlier exilic *Deutero-Isaiah* (DI), to portray its speaker in terms of various figures announcing salvation there”. Goulder (2004: 142) endorses the idea of DI – according to him, “the message of 61 is DI’s message often in his words and phrases: good news for the impoverished and broken, release for the imprisoned, comfort for Zion, vengeance on her oppression, joy and praise in place of mourning; the rebuilding of towns long in ruins, aliens to work as her shepherds and ploughmen”. According to Goulder (2004:142), “Jews would be the world’s aristocrats, its priesthood, which then meant *la dolce vita*; they will enjoy double privilege for the shame they have suffered”; further still; “YAHWE’s covenant with them will be unbreakable, and the nations will acknowledge that they are the seed he has blessed”. The nation would be a blessing to the world, royal priesthood of sons and daughters. The nation would help in the proclamation of the kingdom of God.

2.2.1.6.2 Luke 4:16-21

Nolland (1989:202) records that, “The Nazareth ministry is presented as a concrete example of preaching in the Synagogue of Galilee, ‘as was his custom’”. The Synagogue scene is recounted entirely with reference to Jesus’ role, and a sense of his initiative dominated the narrative. Jesus is presented as reader of the synagogue lesson from the prophets (vv16-20a LXX supplemented from Isaiah 58:6) and as a preacher for the day (vv20-21). The first emphasis is that the scriptures were being fulfilled through Christ. The burden of his message is that the prophetic text now finds its fulfillment in him (Nolland, 1989: 202). It then becomes a challenge to those who listen and hear how they will carry the message which was delivered.

The second emphasis is that the year of Jubilee had begun. Goheen (2011:123) explains thus: “This theological interpretation of history highlights both the central significance of Christ’s work and also the church’s role in redemptive history to continue what he has begun”. Here is the core business of the Church as declared by Jesus. There is a link between Jesus’ mission and that of the church noticed through the presence of the Holy Spirit. Goheen (2011:123) agrees that, “the work of the Spirit is the third way in which Luke connects Jesus to his community”. Jesus’ first contact is his presence, the speech or message and then by his Holy Ghost, the Spirit.

An implication of this is the possibility that there is a connection of prophecy between Isaiah and Luke. Mallen (2008:74) confirms that possibility by agreeing that Jesus actually fulfils or validates what the Prophet has said in Isaiah 61:1-2. For Mallen (2008:74), “The sending of a speaker to announce good news and proclaim God’s grace suggests that this is a prophetic role (Isaiah 40:9). The concept of proclaiming release in Isa. 61:1 points to the Jubilee laws in Deuteronomy 15 and Leviticus 25”.

Accordingly for Kidner (1970:622), “a new speaker, our Lord saw His mission revealed as clearly in his song as in others (cf. Luke 4: 17-21) and we may notice, in this ‘spirit’-endued and ‘anointed’ one, a blending of terms that relate to the servant and the messianic king”. This being a special mission, needed to be announced and re-announced, so the people may be alerted to its importance and so the master took upon himself to announce the good news. In Isaiah 61:1-2, according to Laymon (1971:368), “the opening words echo the commission of 2nd Isaiah 40:9, where the summons to give good tidings is addressed to Zion”.

The third emphasis is when He declared that the good news is meant for everyone. An observation by the researcher is that the incident of Luke 4:16-21 marks one of Jesus’ remarkable moments which defines his ministry and the beginning of the Christian movement, but also fulfilling the prophetic message of Isaiah 61:1-2.

2.2.1.7 What Church planters and church growth writers make of these passages: Isaiah 61: 1-2 and Luke 4: 16-21

There seems to be a general understanding amongst the church planters and church growth writers on these passages. Bosch (1991: 89) says, “An implicit reference to the future Gentile mission does, however, surface in the so called Nazareth episode”. According to Bosch (1991:89), there are at least three fundamental concerns of Luke that are expressed here: “(1) the centrality of the poor in Jesus’s ministry; (2) the setting aside of vengeance; and (3) the Gentile mission”. The very same understanding is also shared by McComiskey (2004:41) who says, “It is a commission from God that involves the Holy Spirit and Jesus’ Messianic identity, its goal is released, which is accomplished primarily through proclamation, and benefits those who suffer from various physical and spiritual needs”. The idea is further expounded by Bartholomew (2005:242) who argues that; “Luke realized more than any other New Testament author that he was living in a time that differed significantly

from the time of Jesus' earthly mission. On the other hand, there is a close relationship between the eras; the church lives in historical continuity with the life and work of Jesus". Thus, the mission of today's church is supposed to be in line with what Jesus commands in these passages. Bartholomew *et al.*, (2005:243) further states that, "One of the reasons Bosch is led to foreground this periscope is that it has replaced Matthew 28:16-20 in missiological discourse as the primary text for providing a foundation for the mission of the church. In these verses Jesus announces a 'unique and revolutionary missionary program'".

According to Bosch (1991:100), "Luke does not only quote from Isaiah 61; 1f. He inserts a phrase from 58:6 between Isaiah 61:1 and 2, "to let the oppressed go free". Bosch (1991: 100), further suggests that this insertion was not accidental but, "that Luke intentionally insert these words from another chapter of the book of Isaiah in order to communicate something to his readers which was apparently not sufficiently clearly expressed in Isaiah 61 (cf Dillon 1979:253; Albert 1983:183f, 191)".

The research to date has tended to focus on these passages in Luke 4:16-21 and Bartholomew *et al.* (2005:88) state, "as for the contents, the Isaianic quotation itself seems to highlight key Lucan themes, such as the Holy Spirit and the poor, and the concluding story about Elijah and Elisha ministering to Gentiles and about the hostility shown by those in the synagogue towards Jesus seems at least in some way to anticipate the story in Acts where Paul and others regularly go to synagogues, fall out with them, and go to the Gentiles".

2.2.1.8 Some relevant perspectives on church planting and the nurturing of churches in the messages of these passages under study

Nolland (1989: 194), suggests that "Luke's Nazareth synagogue scene contains the earliest extant report of a synagogue service." and as such, "the major elements of the synagogue service were the recitation of the Shema (Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21); Num. 15:37-41)". The praying of the Tephillah by one of the congregation, a reading from the Torah, a reading from the prophets, a sermon based on the readings and final priestly blessing. Tasks were allocated by the ruler of the synagogue who supervised the arrangements for worship and the business of the synagogue as a whole". According to Keck (2001: 514), "the presentation of the material as we now have it suggests a clear picture, in which the prophet steps forward to address the

audience set apart in chap. 59". This is a typical example and an understanding of today's congregational setting, in which scripture is read, studied and preached from. The researcher's view is that churches need to honor the appointed time of worship where leaders or pastors take charge of worship services. A view by Guthrie (1970:895) says that a similar kind of setting on this historical text is portrayed to be in Babylonian times of Israel's captivity. Watts (1987) records that Yahweh's messenger introduces himself as the servant of the Lord, who is sent to bear the news. Incidentally, Keck (2001) seems to agree in part with Watts (1987:301) on the setting of the passage that; "there the king was clearly in view, whether real or ideal".

Watts suggests that (1987:302) the phrase "Has anointed me", compares with Isaiah 45:1 where reference is to Cyrus. The anointing here is clearly related more to God's gifts of his spirit than to the oil used in ceremonies". The setting indeed befits that of our churches wherein the word of God, the Bible is read and preached almost every week.

Watts (1987:305) further says that, "the scene presents three speakers who figure in Jerusalem's renaissance; the preacher, a healer and a messenger" (vv 1-3). There is an apparent connection of those participating in delivering this message. Today's church is in need of some direction so as to conclude the mandate of the Master, Jesus on planting and nurturing churches into viable communities of believers.

Nolland (1989:191) says that "Luke omits Mark 1:15 and instead characterizes Jesus' preaching ministry by means of big accounts of Jesus' activity in Nazareth and Capernaum". One is fascinated by the whole event which took place that day in Nazareth, and in Capernaum, in that he was generally rejected at Nazareth but later accepted in Capernaum that same day.

The researcher shares the view with scholars such as Bartholomew et al (2005:137) that, "when Jesus declares to his hometown synagogue worshippers that the 'good news' to the poor and the release for the blind and crushed enacted by the anointed of Isaiah 61 has become reality 'today', in their very gathering their reaction follows the stereotypical pattern". Jesus' audience resist the message, probably because he is one of them, questions are raised; objecting to his family background.

2.2.1.9 What these passages, Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21 teach about church planting and nurturing of churches in the broader context of the teaching of the Bible.

Bosch (1991:100) argues that, “the first words the Lukan Jesus speaks in public (4:18f) contain a programmatic statement concerning his mission to reverse the destiny of the poor”. The words of Jesus referred to here are from the scripture that Jesus read when he stood in the synagogue at Nazareth and took the scroll thereby reading from the book of Isaiah 61:1-2.

The spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he has anointed me
To preach good news to the poor
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind;
To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. (NKJV)

Carroll (2012:107) records that, “With the aid of prophetic scripture (Isaiah), he describes Spirit-empowered mission. He is “anointed” (Christ) – by the Spirit of God – and that messianic anointing is of a prophet who boldly speaks the word of God”. Here, Jesus laid a foundational ministry which was later carried by his disciples. Bosch (1998:100) further says, “That Jesus announced and exerted himself for fundamental changes in the society of his day cannot, however, be denied”.

This observation was also noted by scholars such as Bosch (1998); Mallen (2008); and Goheen (2011). It is Mallen (2008:153) who suggests that, “Luke deliberately chooses to introduce the ministry of Jesus in terms of the Isaianic herald and servant through an explicit quotation of Isaiah 61:1-2”.

Goheen, (2011:132) further correctly observes that, “the coming of the Spirit is followed by an inaugural speech connecting the Spirit to mission, which is confirmed with scriptural quotation (Luke4:16-21)”.

Another observer, Longenecker (2010:121) suggests that, “This general interpretation of Jesus’ words coincides wholly with the Lukan interpretation of the significance of Jesus world’s ministry found in the account of Jesus’ preaching at Nazareth (Luke 4:17-21)”. The researcher shares the view with Longenecker (2010:122), that according to the Lukan gospel, the Nazareth account, was a defining moment for Jesus’ mission.

2.3 Strategies to facilitate Church growth as reflected in the passages of Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21

There are general acceptable strategies that contribute to the growth of the church. Such strategies have been studied and used by other church planters and church growths strategists. Hereunder, the strategies that play an important role in the normal church growth are reflected on: The mission perspective to be upheld in the light of what Isaiah 61:1-2 says about the Messiah’s mission as well as what Jesus said in Luke 4: 16-19 is one that is holistic.

2.3.1 The Messiah’s mission in Isaiah 61:1-2 is foundational

According to Goldingay (2001:344), “verse 1 of chapter 61 is a brisk introduction to the account of the prophet’s message that is designed to encourage people to take its good news seriously”. In the following verses of chapter 61, it is clear that the mission perspective being advanced by what is said about the servant of the Lord is that mission is the work of God himself, and the idea of *missio dei* is apparent. It is also clear that the mission of Christ is foundational with respect to that of the apostles and the church. Goldingay (2001:346), says that “anointing suggests commissioning, consecrating, and authorizing”. The only one who sends is God. In Isaiah 61:1-2 the Lord God sent his servant to proclaim.

This understanding is further expounded by Mischall (2006:168), who echoed Goldingay (2001: 346) when stating “Isaiah 61:1-4, to be so endowed is to proclaim and thereby to affect liberty and restoration; the book of Isaiah proclaims just this”. Bringing hope to the hopeless and strengthening and reviving the spiritually weak. “Jesus himself defined his mission this way: “God did not send his Son into the world

to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him” (Goldingay, 2005:347)

The researcher shares the same view with Ortlund (2005:409), who defines the messiah’s perspective “as helping people, people in bondage, people whose hearts are broken”. The church has a duty of helping people overcome these challenges, be it poverty, unemployment or teaching skills.

2.3.2 Messiah’s mission in Luke 4: 16-21

Bosch (1991:117) argues that by quoting the book of Isaiah 61:1-2, “Jesus’ sermon in Nazareth (4:16-30) constitutes the Lukan parallel to Mark’s (1:5) and Matthew’s (4:17) accounts of the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry”. As for Heskett (2005:295) “Jesus claims to be the one fulfilling Isaiah 61: 1-2 in their hearing, and the text describing the crowds driving him out of town and trying to throw him off a cliff (4:9) indicates that the narrative presents him making extremely bold assertions, whether or not messianic”.

One observer, Ortlund (2005:409) suggests that, “Jesus came with a message different from what our emotions tell us. Our emotions tell us that God is against us, we’ve exhausted our possibilities, life is a waste, so why not just settle into mediocrity and make the best of it?” Furthermore, the gospel of Jesus Christ announces salvation, salvation to all humanity as stated by Ortlund (2005:409), “The gospel announces that Christ has won the victory over everything that’s against us”.

Thus, “Jesus identified with this passage so closely that he launched his ministry by reading it in a synagogue service in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-21)” (Ortlund, 2005:409). Therefore, according to Motyer (1993:499), “This is the passage the Lord Jesus deliberately sought out as the starting point of his public ministry (Luke 4: 16-22)”. Motyer (1993:499) further says that, “His action validates authoritatively the understanding we have reached without appeal to the gospels, and that Isaiah displays here a Messianic figure”. According to Anderson, Smith and Terry (1998:42) an effective missionary strategy therefore centers on Kingdom growths. The plan may relate to one group of people or one national entity and to the work of one evangelizing group. Whichever the case, the strategy for the missionary is aimed at

winning souls. The researcher's view is that these strategies should be employed in churches that have lost the momentum for growth.

2.3.3 Messiah's holistic work in Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4: 16-21

Messiah's work is holistic in terms of its mandate. Anderson *et al.*, (1998:442) suggest that "Holistic mission strategy often emphasizes the humanitarian aspects of the gospel that must accompany direct witness". Ortlund (2005:409) defines the ministry of the messiah as "helping people in trouble, people in bondage, people whose hearts are broken". Whereas the people in Jerusalem are reconstituted, "the people remain poor, broken hearted, demoralized, crushed in mind and spirit, captives in their own land, prisoners, people who grieve the continuing suffering of their city and who are metaphorically smeared with ashes of mourning" (Goldingay, 2005:347).

According to Garland (2011:200) Messiah's work is not simply social reform, instead, "Luke portrays his liberating work in terms of personal exorcisms, healings, and the teachings of the people". Furthermore, "Luke shares the same set of Messianic expectations found in Q521 211, which refers to the anointed one and the Lord's hovering upon the poor, "freeing prisoners, giving sight to the blind, straightening out the twisted" (Garland, 2011:200). These and many more are ills often found amongst the people who are in rural areas like Tzaneen and its surrounding settlements. It is therefore the interest of this study to reflect on the challenges and how they impact on church growth.

2.3.3.1 The Church

Kuiper (1998:118) says that, "The Apostles, to whom the Church's Head gave the missionary command, were the foundation of the New Testament organized church". However, the church was not started by the Apostles, the Apostles continued on the foundation which was already started in Eden. "Pentecost is not the birthday of the Christian Church. Accordingly Kuiper (1998: 119) suggests that the church came into being in the Garden of Eden".

Before the fulfillment of the promise of the coming of the Messiah, the church was to be mobilized into a community of believers. The idea was to establish a community

with common purpose, principles and values of good living. The church has principles and values to live by. The church follows the teachings which are Christ's set standards of living. This seems to be some of Jesus' emphases. Freedman (2000:252) explains what the church stood for then and now. In the New Testament, the word *church* is used to describe the people gathered or those called by Jesus and are ready to follow him. They are people called by God and are prepared to follow the master Jesus and his teachings. Amongst other things, these people are in the business of the Master. They preach and teach about the coming of the kingdom of God while at the same time they promote good lifestyles.

Luzbetak (2002:376) records that, "the church is the gathering of people for spiritual upliftment". So the people meet for a purpose, for a clear vision which is discussed as often as possible. Luzbetak (2002:376) also states that, "the communal model views the church as the body of Christ, as God's people, as a fellowship in Christ deeply committed to the well-being of its members".

Luzbetak (2002:252) further says that; "Theologically, the strength of this model lies in its deep scriptural roots; anthropologically, its strength lies in a deeply ingrained human trait, the human need and subconscious craving for fellowship in almost everything we do as humans". According to Luzbetak (2002:376), "the communal model views the church as the body of Christ deeply committed to the well-being of members". Jesus' mission centers on bringing good life for the people of God.

Freedman (2000:252) further explains that Jesus viewed himself as an ambassador for this announcement. He called around him an inner circle of followers (the twelve) who assisted in this proclamation and who constituted the nucleus of the community (Matt.10:1-42; Mark 3:13-19; 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6, 10). It is in these scriptures that Jesus' mission is unveiled. His mission was not self-centered. He revealed it, shared it and commissioned his followers to proclaim it to the world.

Laymon (1971:680) elsewhere indicates that the surprising thing in Luke 4:18-21 is Jesus' interpretation of Isaiah 61:1-2; "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing, means that Jesus understands his own mission as fulfilling ancient prophecy". Since there has been a gap before Christ Jesus, was closing that gap. Laymon (1971:680) views Jesus as, "the one anointed ...to preach good news to the poor; his baptism was the event of his anointing with the Spirit. Jesus is the one who will proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind".

Whereas Vanhoozer (2005: 468), explains Jesus' mission in Luke 4:18-21 that; "Jesus comes to declare good news, 'proclaim freedom', proclaim the year of the Lord's favor". However, "Jesus' announcements of what God is doing in salvation and Judgement are combined with challenges to join in with God's work" (Vanhoozer, 2005: 468). The new community was then started by this group whose leader happens to be the son of Joseph. Freedman (2000:252) suggests that "This new community anticipated the special fellowship of the new era by dining together in celebrative meals (cf. Luke 14:1-24; 22:14-23)".

It is important here to note what characterizes the nature of meetings in the very first Church. Those that attended had plenty to eat and spare, (Luke 9:14-17, 7:36). There was much fellowship in its broad sense. According to Freedman (2000:252); "at these meals, and throughout his teaching, Jesus employed images such as harvest, banquet, and new wine to describe the salvation of the new era".

We also hear of the release of the captives in the book of Isaiah. Whereas, it had a literal meaning then, referring to the release of slaves at the end of 6 year period (Exodus 21:1-6) it also carries a prophetic spiritual meaning referring to freedom from sin. When the people accept the Lordship of Christ in their lives, they are freed from sin. The people are freed from the condemnation of sin. The people are joined together to the believers or Church.

2.3.3.2 The mission of the church then and now

The mission of the Church then and now finds its meaning in the strategies for growing Churches. These strategies were formulated and reformulated and adopted by various groups which existed in different areas and time periods. Anderson et al (1998:436) says that, "Understanding the history of missionary strategy aids in understanding the directions missionary methodology today should take. New Testament Christians began the missionary enterprise evangelizing and starting churches as they moved out from Jerusalem". The strategies were then used to nurture the continuity of the church life all over the world.

People everywhere are called out of the world to join these communities of believers known as Christians. Thereafter, they are charged with a mission to preach or proclaim the gospel to the poor and set them free from this sinful world. This then

fulfills the great commission found in Matthew 28:18-20; “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”.

Mission work is therefore foundational to the strategies of growing and nurturing the church. The mission of the church must then continue in the teaching of the word and reflection of the mandate as given by the Messiah of Isaiah 61: 1- 2 of Luke 4:16-21.

According to Freedman (1971:253); “the connection between the ‘mother’ church at Jerusalem and similar churches among the Jews in greater Syria throughout the Jewish diaspora is still an unsettled issue”. However, each local assembly seemed to perceive itself as the visible expression of the gathered community in any given place that owed ultimately loyalty to Jesus as Lord and Savior (cf. Thess. 1:1; Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:2, 22; 2 Cor. 8.1).

In line with the missionary spirit of the believers, Lingernfelter (1996:235) says, “Through effective relationships one is able to communicate the gospel, to disciple new believers, and to build a viable dynamic church within the context of the social environment of that particular society”. In light of the above statement, the researcher sees elements of this research to build viable and dynamic Christian communities. These communities, or the Church, meet regularly for spiritual enrichment and in support of the mission.

Hill (1984:57) records that, “Despite the inflow of many newcomers to rural life the overall decline of the church continues today. The opportunities for the church planting appear to be limited by the natural conservatism of the established communities compounded by the ‘escapism’ of the incomers who have run away to the country looking for a quiet life”. So life continues in the rural areas and so the church of God becomes a primary need, if not a necessity.

2.3.4 Social inequalities in Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4: 16-19 and the present life situations.

Before the Messiah came, the inequalities that existed were physical in nature. The people were poor and others were rich. There were those held in captivity and there

were also free ones. Other people were blind and still others were bruised. The Messiah's mission also included equating the social inequalities amongst the people. God, the father, addressed the issues of inequality; he started the evangelistic campaign by sending Jesus Christ. Kuiper (1998:15) calls this, "the God-man's public ministry" by which, God "anointed Him to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, 'to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord'" (Luke 4:18-19). This declaration by Jesus of Luke was in a way a public declaration of inequalities that existed then and now. An observation made by Neyrey (1991:172) suggests that "Luke 4:19 might allude to the ancient Jubilee traditions of Leviticus 25 and Isaiah 61:1-4 that promised redemption of family land". Around this season of the year, "the ethical thrust of Jubilee laws is accentuated in the provision for the redistribution of land (Lev 25:10, 13-17), which is not found in the Sabbath year laws" (Sakenefeld, 2008:418).

However, in Luke's narrative the reference to the fields is omitted.

According to Kirk (1999:62), "the substance of the message may vary according to the circumstances in which it is conveyed. There is an enormous richness of material in the good news. It is inescapable about salvation, understood as God putting right a situation which has broken down or gone wrong". This includes the inequalities amongst gender, culture and race. The solution to the inequalities of a divided society is further expounded by Ortlund (2005:411) who records that; "Ever since Adam fell, sin has been spreading a culture of death. We'll never understand ourselves and our surroundings without that background. This world is not normal. We are not normal. Everything is broken. So here is a radical proposal: *we need a Saviour*". Hesselgrave (1988:88) suggests that, "Evangelicals have not only retained a priority for ministry to the spiritual needs of mankind, but in their best moments, have seen that it is much more difficult to know how best to minister to peoples' physical and socio-political needs". The people's socio-political and physical needs are also diverse in nature. In an interview between Pomerville, a former member of the Assemblies of God, with Ronald Sider; Hesselgrave (1988:125) reports that, "while both Old and New Testament do make reference to the socioeconomic poor, the "significance of the poor... in connection with the kingdom is that they are ready to respond to the gospel because of their humility and probable positive affective disposition toward repentance and faith...". This clarification is further expounded by

Hesselgrave (1988:125) who suggest that, “in its new testament and present expression the outworking of the kingdom is primarily the liberation of people of faith from the bondage imposed by their sin, Satan, and Satan’s emissaries of evil, not by oppressive political and economic structures”.

Neyrey (1991:173) argues that “Luke apparently fails to represent adequately the interest of the ancient countryside. Collective control of land, as advocated in Acts would not be acceptable to peasants’ villagers”. Bartholomew et al (2005:248) then argue that, “When Jesus reads Isaiah 61:2. He stops in the middle of a Hebrew parallelism”. He proclaims the favourable year of the Lord but refuses to announce the day off the vengeance”. Hence a conflict arises soon after the declaration of the Messiah’s mission.

The issue of land redistribution was not presented as promised. The land issue often continues to raise the socio inequalities amongst the communities and further opens the injustice that prevails. When Jesus then declares the scripture to have been fulfilled, his audience see a missing link. They accept the message with fury and anger; they drive him out and attempt to kill him on account of missing the information. Our contemporary churches are no less similar to the Jesus’ synagogue experience, they anticipate earthly rewards, and the punishment of the wicked here and now. Many preachers of the gospel have fallen to this trap, where they end up promising earthly prosperity vs heavenly prosperity.

2.3.5 Messiah’s programs as mission of the Church in Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21 compared to the present church programs in the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Tzaneen.

The servant of the Lord in Isaiah and the Messiah-Jesus Christ of Luke 4:16-19; introduces a program that is aimed at rebuilding the people’s residences. Some of those programs include; the building of physical structures (churches, houses, and missionary schools and clinics). Other necessary deliverables are basic needs such as water, electricity, food and agricultural infrastructures. According to Bosch (1991:101), “it is now our task to attempt to interpret the Nazareth episode within the context of Luke’s writings and theology”. This view of Bosch (1991) suggests that we should look beyond what Jesus has declared in Luke 4:16-19. Thus, the liberation of the poor and the freeing of slaves, restoration of the peace and security in the

country, is also of importance in our era. According to Bosch ((1991:100) “The major part of the quotation comes from Isaiah 61: 1f, a prophecy first directed to the disappointed Jews shortly after the Babylonian exile. There it is aimed at encouraging them by assuring them that God had not forgotten them but would come to their aid by ushering in ‘the year of the Lord’s favour’, namely the jubilee”. Another observer, Garland (2011:206), records that, “Jesus’ application of one of the Servant songs in Isaiah to himself do more than announce good news to the beleaguered people, the Messiah, and the servant of the Lord, who is to fulfil the program outlined in Isaiah”.

Garland (2011:209) propagates that, “in continuing the work of Christ, his church feeds the poor, cares for the sick, ministers to the imprisoned, rescues orphans, and reaches out to the oppressed”. The work of the Messiah then continues to take place in our lives. According to Ortlund (2005:410) “And he continues to free people today through the preaching of the gospel. Every Christian preacher today should be able to say, ‘The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me’. And when that is so, then Isaiah 61 is being fulfilled in your hearing”. It is this understanding of the scriptures that must be appropriated by the churches in the Greater Tzaneen area and the surrounding villages so that they can play their part so as to alleviate the poverty and the plight of sin that has left many unemployed and without hope. When the leaders of the churches are properly oriented to carry their duty in their churches; Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4: 16-19 becomes a reality in our times.

2.3.6 Church planting a mandate from Isaiah 61:1-2 and in Luke 4: 16-21

In both the Old and New Testament, God has always had the mission of a church; so the issue of planting a church comes as a mandate by Jesus just before he was taken up. The mandate is, “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). The command still stands up to today, the making of disciples is as Greenway and Monsma (1989:22) put it, “an act of incorporating individuals and families into a new community of Christ, a mini Jerusalem within the cities of the world”. When these communities of believers come together, they form Church.

According to Greenway and Monsma (1989:22), “the apostle’s task was to lay a foundation; to establish communities that would serve as lights, as salt and leaven in the midst of the city, as Zion’s representatives in the Babylon of today”. It would be proper here to bring in the understanding and definition of the two words *church* and

growth; normally used amongst those who study missiology. According to Hill (1984:21), “Church growth investigates the nature, function, structure, health and multiplication of Christian churches as they relate to the effective implementation of Christ’s commission to ‘Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples’ Matt:28:19-20. Church Growth seeks to combine the revealed truths of the Bible with related insights from contemporary social and behavioural sciences”.

Research studies on the subject of church viability conducted somewhere indicate that one has also to consider the impact of diversity on the church. Goreham and Rathge (1989: 73-74) point to this aspect when raising the question: “As rural areas increase in ethnic diversity, will mainline Protestant churches become less viable? This issue may be particularly relevant to states similar to North Dakota with strong ethnic enclaves”. It is noteworthy to mention that one of the well-known church planters in the Bible is none other than the apostle Paul. Apostle Paul also ministered amongst the poor of his time.

Allen (1984:22) argues that, “In little more than ten years St. Paul established the church in four provinces of the Empire, Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia and Asia. Before A.D. 47 there were no churches in these provinces, in A.D. 57 St. Paul could speak as if his work there was done, and could plan extensive tours into the far west without anxiety lest the churches which he founded might perish in his absence for want of his guidance and support. Most of Paul’s activities on how he got churches established are recorded in the book of Acts. When we consider these chapters, and other scriptures in the Bible, it is clear that there are four fundamental issues; “God’s purpose, God’s people, God’s plans, and God’s power” (Hill, 1984:22). These areas are major and worthy to be considered when conducting research on church growth.

2.4 Summary

In Chapter 2, the researcher established the general background associated with Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4: 16-21 in relation to their authorship; historical context; literary form; and setting of these individual passages. Then there was the relevant issues pertaining to the genre of these passages which was followed by the place of

these passages in the layout of their respective books (Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21 within the structure of Isaiah and Luke).

The researcher established theological emphases of these passages that somehow interlink with them. It was also important to look at what other church planters and church growth writers make of the passages under study. The researcher established some relevant perspectives on church planting and the nurturing of churches in the messages of these passages and what these passages teach about church planting and nurturing of churches in the broader context of the teachings of the Bible.

The central discourse in Chapter 2 is on the biblical perspectives on church growth as reflected in the passages of Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21. The Messiah's perspective in the book of Isaiah and Luke, mission and holistic work serves to unearth the strategies of facilitating church growth.

To conclude Chapter 2, the researcher has looked at the church; the mission of the church then and now; and the social inequalities in Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21. The researcher has also checked and presented the Messiah's programs as the mission of the church in Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21; church planting a mandate and a commission from the Master, as reflected by the Messiah of Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21. Finally, the researcher has given brief perspectives on mission and church planting in Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21.

2.5 Conclusion

The literature study of the passages in Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21 has revealed that a proper reading and analysis is necessary first as a step to establish the mission perspectives that could be in these passages of Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21; the researcher has examined what literature says about the history of the texts, authorship, genre and the setting thereof.

If the first part refers to the work of a figure who many scholars consider the Messiah, then it is the foundation for the work of the community that benefits from his

work. This could then be the relationship between Isaiah 61:1-3 and much of what the other verses of the chapter teach.

The Messiah himself then does his work as the one sent and equipped by his father, or God, through the work of the spirit.

The work of the Messiah according to Isaiah is holistic; and mission work would receive this characteristic from the fact that it is related to his holistic work. Therefore, missions are holistic. In the context of the rural areas, this holistic nature of mission work would be meaningful. The Jubilee festival metaphor indicates that the work of the Messiah gives people a second chance. In other words, the inequalities that may have developed are addressed. People are given an opportunity to rebuild and restart a new life.

The preaching is central both in the work of the Messiah and that of the church. Therefore, even with a view to rural area mission, preaching of the Gospel is central. There is a critical need for mercy programs in the work of the Messiah and of the church. Mission work cannot focus only on the so-called 'souls' of people. The rebuilding of their areas or villages is important. Issues of food and water, employment and of agriculture are important. Issues pertaining to health, HIV and AIDS challenges have significant meaning in these passages. These and similar issues will accordingly be pursued further in chapters 3 and 4 when exploring Tzaneen and what the churches that were selected as case study are doing around the area of Tzaneen.

The other perspective is that the work should be understood as deliverance. This entails being delivered from darkness and all kinds of evil powers. Many will call this spiritual darkness.

It is also important to understand the time of mission work as one of grace. It is a time that will one day come to an end. It is like the year of God's favour. There must, therefore, be a sense of urgency when doing mission work.

The mission of the Messiah leads to joy and praise.

It is important to see that the recipients of grace are presented as working. They have the power to work as well as the motivation and courage to do so. Even if the challenges are huge, they work with the hope that they will prevail. It is because of

the success of the work of the Messiah that they work. This is very significant in the light of the structure of the Gospel of Luke and also in its relation to Acts. The church works and her work is not in vain because Jesus' mission as Messiah was a success.

The setting of working to restore or build what was destroyed is very important. Although many scholars relate this to the postexilic conditions of people having to rebuild what had been destroyed, this should not be seen as the only setting. In the history of Israel, there were many cycles involving rebuilding. The broad setting is the biblical structure of creation, fall, redemption and consummation. The setting, therefore, is that of reversing the consequences of the fall into sin. This is also the case for Luke-Acts. It is also the same in today's mission. For example, lack of unity does not bode well for the church's mission as Jesus also indicated in his prayer in John 17.

The picture is clear that mission work will be successful; it will be fruitful. This is at least clear when the metaphor of growth is employed in Isaiah 61. Again, the promises for growth are founded on the work of the speaker in the first part of Isaiah 61. The notion of inter-generational relations is also an important principle. The church that grows even in the rural places has to cater for its youth and children. Their programs are to be emphasised in missions and in church building or planting. These insights about mission work will be used in chapters 3 and 4 of this study.

Chapter 3

Tzaneen as Context for Missionary Work: Challenges and Opportunities for Planting and Growing Churches in Rural Areas around Tzaneen

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher continues to make use of literature in the form of census, IDP sources and other related written material that provide an understanding of the Greater Tzaneen area in which the churches under study operate. Accordingly, this chapter has the following outline:

- The area around Tzaneen
- Main places of Tzaneen
- The missionary work in Tzaneen
- Challenges when planting and growing churches around Tzaneen
- Opportunities for planting and growing churches around Tzaneen
- Availability of resources for the SDA leaders when doing mission work.

3.2 The Area around Tzaneen

The IDP (2014/15:19) records that, “The Greater Tzaneen Municipality is situated in the eastern quadrant of the Limpopo Province within the Mopani District Municipality Area of Jurisdiction, together with Greater Giyani, Ba-Phalaborwa and Greater Letaba., Polokwane to the west, Greater Letaba to the north, Ba-Phalaborwa and Maruleng to the east, and Lepelle-Nkumpi to the south, border the Greater Tzaneen Municipality and Giyani border”.

Raper (2004: 380) suggests that, "Tzaneen is a Principal Town of Letaba district, 89 km South of Soekmekaar and 104 km east of Pietersburg (Polokwane), at 23 50S, 30 10E". Changuion (1994:24) records that, "In his book 'Ichsuchte Land in Africa' /5 H S Altenroxel wrote that when he first came to this area in 1882, he asked Chief Magoeba to give him information about the land on which he wanted to settle. Magoeba said: 'the area you told me about that we know as Tzaneen (pronounced Tzanin), means: 'the happy land'". This is the area that is presently referred to as Tzaneen or Greater Tzaneen.

Different theories are advanced in respect of the name *Tzaneen* and its origin. One theory is that the name *Tzaneen* is derived from a Sepedi word *Tsaneng*, which means 'gathering place' or *Tsana* (basket of hills). This theory claims that Makgoba, the leader of a small *Tlou* tribe, gave the name *Tsaneng* to the place where the town of Tzaneen is situated today (Changuion, 1994:25). Since then, this Sepedi word has been used by both the Tsonga and the Pedi to refer to the name of this place and was popularly used by Afrikaner colonisers as well

Other theories suggest that the name *Tzaneen* is derived from the Venda word *Dzanani*. This theory suggests that Venda people once occupied the area and that they named it *Dzanani*. Researchers have raised problems over this second theory in that this is just a theoretical claim rather than a reality since there is no concrete evidence that Venda people once occupied the area. Therefore, the Sepedi word *Tsaneng*, given by the *Tlou* tribe under Makgoba, is probably the more accurate and correct one. (Changuion, 1994:25).

Bulpin (1993:271) suggests that "the origin of the name of the town is uncertain. One theory is that the name comes from the Tzaneng people who lived here". There are various theories; all assuming that it is derived from the Sesotho language. One other theory states that it derives from *Batsaneng*, (meaning "*People of the Small Village*"), the name of a group who split away from the Bokgaga tribe. Other theories state that the name derives either from the word *tsaneng*, which means *come together*, or *tsana*, which means *basket of hills*. However, there is another theory which says that the name Tzaneen came from the name Dzanani. This was the place where the Vha-Venda lived many years ago; it is said that the whole area from Limpopo (Vhembe) river to the now called Olifants River was occupied by Vha

Venda to the side of Madzivhanombe (around Giyani). Near Tzaneen is Bolobedu (where some Venda-origin people are still staying)" (IDP 2014/15:20).

Tzaneen’s infrastructure is comprised of vacant unspecified land; commercial and /or industrial land; subsistence farming; conservation; forestry; and mining. The cultivated land is used extensively to grow banana, citrus, mango, nuts, tea, tomatoes and various vegetables. There are villages and townships that demarcate the area of Tzaneen. According to Bulpin (1993:271) “the town of Tzaneen was established in 1912 as a centre for this agricultural area” The map below shows the infrastructure of Tzaneen:

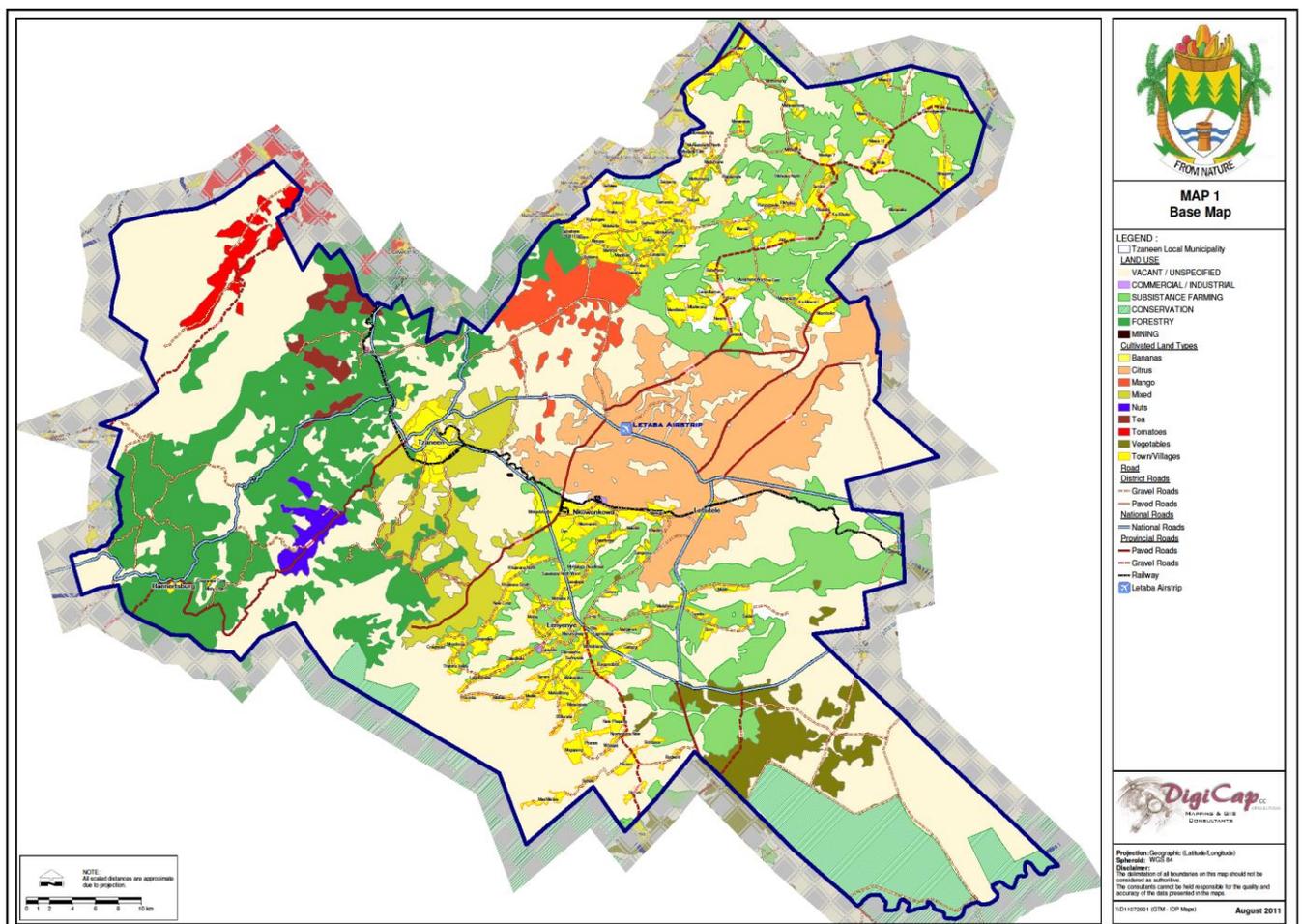


Figure 3.1 Infrastructure opportunities and Constraints Map (IDP, 2014/15:23)

3.3 Main Places of Tzaneen

Hagan (1995: 81) says that “First-time visitors to the Tzaneen area are sometimes puzzled by the unfamiliar appearance of the vivid green, waist-high bushes that grow in densely packed swathes on the lower slopes of the Drakensberg escarpment”. It is just the right place to do farming. There are scores of agricultural fields around the area of Tzaneen. Accordingly, “the Greater Tzaneen Municipality area encompasses the proclaimed towns of Tzaneen, Nkowankowa, Lenyenye, Letsitele and Haenertsburg. In addition, there are 125 rural villages, concentrated mainly in the south-east, and north-west, of the study area. Almost 80% of households reside in these rural villages” (IDP 2014/15:283). The demarcation emanated from the South African racial segregation or apartheid system.

Place	Code	Area (km ²)	Population	Most spoken language
Bakgaga Ba Maake	90301	14.37	12,651	Northern Sotho
Bakgaga	90302	14.54	14,923	Northern Sotho
Bankuna	90303	448.79	151,014	Tsonga
BatlhabineBa Magoboya	90304	65.26	17,883	Northern Sotho
Dwarsfontein	90305	0.45	983	Northern Sotho
Haenertsburg	90307	1.04	481	English
Letsitele	90308	1.16	310	Afrikaans
Modjadji	90309	315.69	84,386	Northern Sotho
Nwa' Mitwa	90310	165.78	36,344	Tsonga
Nyavana	90311	44.36	8,783	Tsonga
Tzaneen	90312	18.80	6,959	Afrikaans

Place	Code	Area (km ²)	Population	Most spoken language
<i>Remainder of the municipality</i>	90306	2,149.54	40,856	Northern Sotho

Table 3.1 Main places in Tzaneen Source: IDP 2014/15

The table above shows the latest figures on main area's population groups. Whereas Tzaneen has different areas of residence, people seem to have no choice as there are existing demarcated areas or highly populated by a certain group of people. In all the towns of Tzaneen and Haenertsburg, this was previously dominated by Afrikaans and English speaking people while almost all the villages are dominated by Tsonga or Northern Sotho speaking people. The situation is changing gradually since the new dispensation.

3.3.1 Demographic Population of Tzaneen

According to the South African Statistics Census 2011, the Greater Tzaneen Municipality has increased its population from **375 588** to **390, 092** (an increase of 14 504) comprising of **181 558** males (Census 2001, **171 119**) and **208 536** females (Census 2001, **204 469**). Females still outnumber males as they comprise 53% of the population (54% during Census 2001). Young people between the ages of 14 – 35 constitute 40% (**156 900**) of the total population of the municipality.

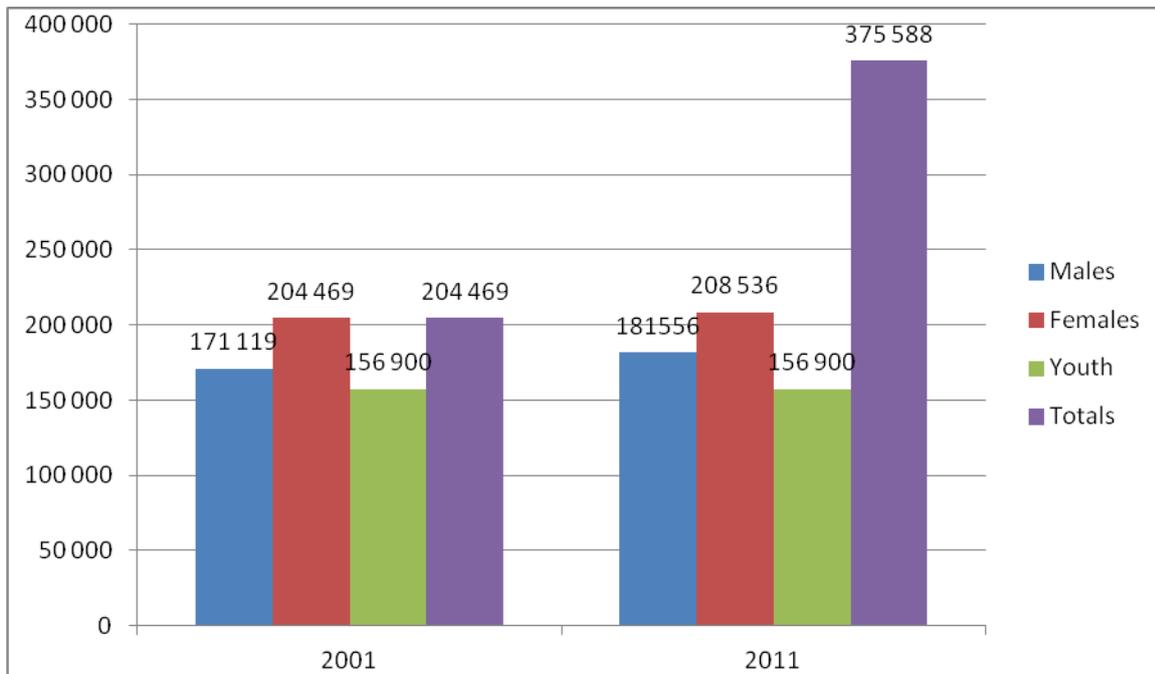


Figure 3.2 Population of the GTM

3.3.2 Statistics per languages in Tzaneen

“The Greater Tzaneen Municipality is representative of the following languages according to Census 2011 data. Afrikaans 10 063; English 6 129; IsiNdebele 946; IsiXhosa 384; IsiZulu 1 713; Sepedi 179 572; Sesotho 16 815; Setswana 972; Sign Language 600; Siswati 658; Tshivenda 1 675; Xitsonga 159 054; Other 11 493; total is 390 092” (IDP, 2014/2015: 30).

Language	Total no. of people
Afrikaans	10 063
English	6 129
IsiNdebele	946
IsiXhosa	384
IsiZulu	1 713
Sepedi	179 572

Sesotho	16 815
Setswana	972
Sign Language	600
SiSwati	658
Tshivenda	1 875
Xitsonga	159 074
Other	11 493
Grand Total	390 092

Table 3.2 The statistics for language GTM

source (IDP, 2012/13)

3.3.3 Employment Status

According to the Census 2011 data, the employment status of the Greater Tzaneen area shows rather poor conditions. Accordingly the IDP, (2014/2015:31) reported that, “we still have the majority of our people in our households comprising of the unemployed, discouraged work-seekers and those who are not economically active”. The figure in the next page shows the employment status in a graph.

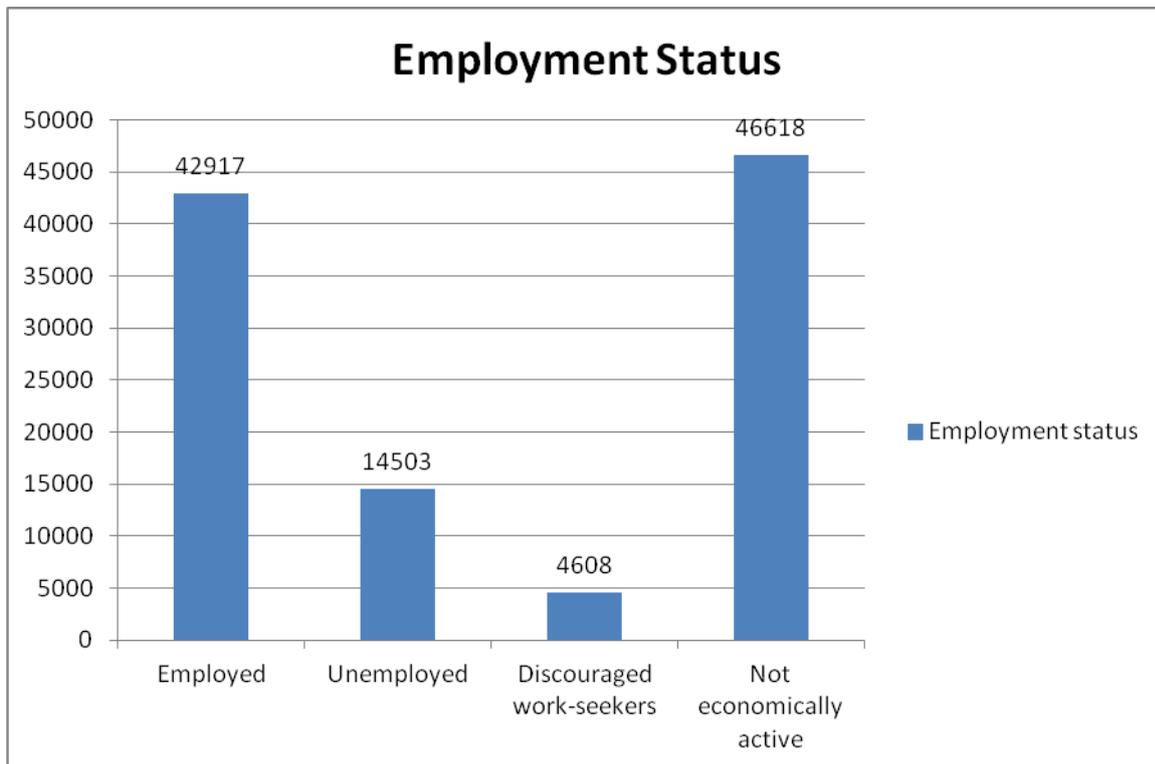


Figure 3.3 Employment Status

3.3.4 Household heads by gender as of 2011

The graph below represents the gender heads of households within the municipality. According to the Statistics South Africa Census 2011, the municipality comprises of 108 926 households (Stats Census 2001, 89 831). This represents an increase of 19 092. Males constitute 56 884 of heads of households whereas female constitute 52 052. This information shows a shift of gender heads of households to males from females.

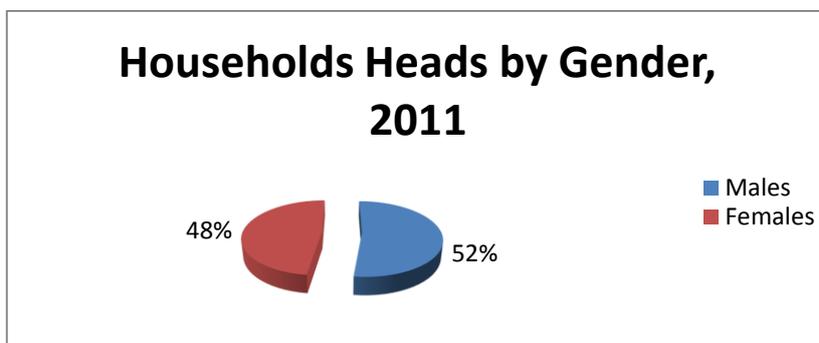


Figure 3.4 Household heads by gender, 2011

3.3.5 Monthly Income levels per Individual

In view of the fact that the Greater Tzaneen Municipality experiences challenges concerning unemployment, it was necessary to present hereunder the monthly income levels per individual. The IDP (2014/15:32) has indicated that 160 256 individuals make 41% of the total population in the municipality that have no source of income. It is also confirmed by the IDP (2014/2013:32) that a significant number of people at 45% do earn a salary or income. However, their wages ranges from a minimum of R400 to a maximum of R204 401 per month as it is shown on Table 3.3 below.

Individual monthly income	Total
No income	160 254
R1 – R 400	105 823
R 401 – R 800	15 004
R 801 – R 1, 600	56 634
R 1, 601 – R 3, 200	15 148
R 3, 201 – R 6 400	8 0557
R 6 401 – R 12 800	7 793
R12 801 – R 25 600	5 779
R 25 601 – R 51 200	1 507
R 51 201 – R 102 400	367
R 102 401 – R 204 800	226
R 204 401 – or more	190
Unspecified	11 785
Not applicable	1 529
Total	390 095

Table 3.3 Monthly Income levels per individual (Source: Stats SA Census 2011)

3.3.6 Highest education level

Table 3.4 below, shows a significant decline in education level after Grade 12/Std 10 in the municipal area of Tzaneen. The issue of access to higher education is a concern. There are also a large number of people without a formal education.

According to the IDP (2014/15:35) “planning must seek to address and respond to these realities through interaction with the locals”.

Highest Education Level	Figures
Grade 0	13 038
Grade 1/Sub A	11 383
Grade 2/Sub B	11 374
Grade 3/Std 1/ABET 1 Khari Gude	12 685
Grade 4/ Std 2	13 949
Grade 5/ Std 3/ABET 2	14 628
Grade 6/Std 4	14 705
Grade 7/Std 5	18 885
Grade 8/Std 6/ Form1	24 818
Grade 9/Std 7/ Form 2/ABET 4	24 518
Grade 10/Std 8/ Form 3	31 688
Grade 11/Std 9/ Form 4	31 847
Grade 12/Std 10/ Form 5	51 433
NTC I/N1/NIC/V Level 2	540
NTCII/N12/NIC/V Level 3	472
NTCII/N12/NIC/V Level 4	450
N4/NTC 4	325
N5/NTC 5	231
N6/NTC 6	544
Certificate with less than Grade 12/Std10	367
Diploma with less than Grade 12/Std 10	380
Certificate with Grade 12/Std 10	3 450
Diploma with Grade 12/Std 10	4 322
Higher Diploma	3 841
Post Higher Diploma/Masters Doctoral Diploma	628
Bachelor’s Degree	2 638
Bachelor’s Degree and Post-Graduate Diploma	948
Honors Degree	1 375

Higher Degree/ Masters/ PhD	673
No schooling	44 075

Table 3.4 Highest Education level in GTM (Source: Stats SA Census 2011)

3.3.7 Disability prevalence

The Greater Tzaneen Municipality’s IDP documents reflected a large number of people who have been declared disabled. The people have no means of survival – no income at all. They have become the responsibility of the government. It is also the work of the gospel workers to see to it that the disabled people are taken care of. This is in line with the scripture of Isaiah 61: 1-2 which calls for the liberation of the bound and freedom of the prisoners. IDP (2014/15:35) records that, “people with disabilities have often been overlooked during planning processes of government at all levels”. Amongst these people, we count those on chronic medication; using eye glasses; with hearing problems; with walking stick or frame; persons in wheelchairs; and many more. The church can then act as a catalyst to reach the disabled and minister to them.

3.4 Some missionary work around Tzaneen

Isichei (1995: 100) correctly sums up the history of missions when she writes: “The missionary enterprise in South Africa is often dated from the arrival of the first LMS representative, van der Kemp, in 1799, although a few Moravians did, in fact, precede him”. The missionaries chose specific areas according to the directives from their missionary societies. The Berlin Missionary society entered the South African mission field in 1834 and succeeded to also work around Tzaneen among the Pedi and Balobedus. In fact the Berlin Missionary Society’s missionaries did the first translation of the Bible into Northern Sotho. They also were able to establish schools from the late nineteenth century in Sekhukhune land.. Other missionaries that did work around Tzaneen towards the end of the nineteenth century were of the Paris-Swiss missionary society (the Evangelical Presbyterians from France and Switzerland). These missionaries were responsible for the first translation of the Bible into Tsonga (Schaaf, 1994: 113); and they also started schools and are credited with developing the Tsonga language (Ravhudzulo, 2011:538). According to Ravhudzulo (2011:538) “in 1889 the first church building was officially consecrated at Shiluvane Mission Station” in the Tzaneen area. However, the Catholics and the Anglicans also entered the areas around Tzaneen during the early decades of the

twentieth century. The rest of this section gives some details about the work of the Catholics and the Anglicans around Tzaneen because there is much that is still relevant and can be learned from the work of these major churches in Tzaneen.

3.4.1 The Missionary work in Tzaneen by the Catholics

According to the national broadcast (SABC:2015) “The history of the Catholic Church in Southern Africa begins with the arrival of Bartholomew Diaz at Walvis Bay on 8th December 1487. He appropriately called it the gulf of Santa Maria de Conceicao. The first Mass, celebrated perhaps in late December 1487 or early January 1488, was celebrated on the island of the Holy Cross (named as such by Diaz), just off Port Elizabeth”.

Recent evidence suggests that “Between 1652 and 1795, under the Dutch East India Company rule, Catholicism was forbidden in South Africa. Only occasional visits of priests travelling on Portuguese or French boats were allowed. The same attitude prevailed between 1795 and 1802 under the British rule. In 1804, the Dutch government opted for religious toleration, but two years later, the British rule forbid again the presence of the priests and lost no time in expelling them” (SABC:2015).

The missionaries came to South Africa with a mission to convert the indigenous Africans into Christians. This mission was not easy; there were some resistance from different groups. The first missionary work in the area around Tzaneen was introduced by the Catholic community. Changuion (1994:40) record that, “The Catholics of Tzaneen were first ministered to by the Priests of the Pietersburg Diocese, who had Mission stations established at Messina, Sibasa and Magoebaskloof”.

Sometime later, around 1948, a missionary, His Lordship Bishop Hennemann, S.A.C., wrote a letter to his superiors in Rome. The contents of the letter have evidence of a crisis, “A crisis had arisen in the life of the nation which threatened its ultimate development to bring injustice and hardship and loss of dignity to the non-white peoples of South Africa” (Anon., 1948:14).

Around this time, circa 1948, South Africa was introduced to racial segregation. Later, Bosch (1991:407) records that, “In the contest of the apartheid system and the experience of repression and police brutality during a state of emergency,

evangelicals felt forced to respond and articulate their views on evangelism, mission, structural evil, and the church's responsibility with respect to justice in society".

The missionaries covered a vast area, moving from one place to another with scarce resources. Hence, Changuion (1994:40) also record that, "Since the 1920's St. Benedict's Monastery has been known up in Magoebaskloof, with the Abbot/Bishop and the Monks living there. The late Father Schilling O.S.B. travelled from the Limpopo to the Olifants River on a bicycle, ministering to his flock on the way, and including the people of Tzaneen, where services were held in the homes of his people there".

Even under such hard conditions, the missionaries persevered to sustain the work. "In 1954 the new Abbot/Bishop Clemens van Hoek O.S.B. moved the Monastery to Pietersburg, leaving the Mission at Magoebaskloof, and at the same time the congregations in this area were agitating for a resident Priest, he approached the Society of the M.S. asking them to provide priests to help and to see to the needs of the people there. Thus in 1954 Father Shine was appointed pastor, but with no place to go" (Changuion, 1994:40). The accommodation of the pastors has been the main concern; there were no mission houses at the time.

Later in the year, "1961 Father Murphy arrived to the enlarged, as well as the outlying Missions until his death in 1974. During this period not only did the congregation grow, but in 1962 broke completely from the Pietersburg Diocese and were given own Prefecture Apostolic of Louis Trichardt/Tzaneen under the direction of Monsignor J. Durkin. This; later changed to the Diocese of Tzaneen/ Louis Trichardt, with the appointment of Monsignor Durkin as the first Bishop" (Pratt, 1994:42).

3.4.2 The Missionary work in Tzaneen by the Anglicans

The first Anglican clergy to minister regularly at the Cape were military chaplains who accompanied the troops when the British occupied the Cape Colony in 1795 and then again in 1806.

The first missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel arrived in 1821. He was William Wright, a priest. He opened a church and school in Wynberg, a fashionable suburb of Cape Town. Allen Gardiner, a missionary of the Church Missionary Society went to Zululand, and arranged for a priest, Francis Owen to be sent to the royal residence of King Dingane. Owen witnessed the massacre of Piet Retief, the Voortrekker leader, and his companions, who had come to negotiate a land treaty with Dingane, and left soon afterwards.

According to Pratt (1994:42), “Underneath the spreading Fig tree could be said of the beginning of Anglican work and worship in what is now the Parish of Letaba. The fig tree was near the junction of the Tzaneen, Duivelskloof and Pietersburg roads close to present day, Merensky School, on the farm Krabbefontein. This was the meeting place, monthly church services were held by the Reverend Frederick Rand, to which people of all denominations and languages came to worship”.

The worship services attracted many people including those that were there for entertainment or business. This is confirmed by Pratt (1994:42) who records that, “These services were quite a social event, as farmers arrived on Sunday mornings in their wagons and carts, bringing their lunch and tennis gear along to make a day of it after worship. Father Rand used to make the rounds to the local farmers on foot, or catch lifts on wagons to conduct church services every few months, before the advent of Tzaneen in 1924”. Some of the theological doctrines that depict the Anglican church of the time also responded to the evils of the Apartheid system in South Africa. One of the resolutions of the 1948 Lambert Conference says; “This conference is convinced that discrimination between men on the grounds of race alone is inconsistent with the principles of the Christian religion” (Anon., 1948:4).

There is evidence in the resolution that suggests that racial divide and segregation had now crossed over to the priesthood of the church. The Anglican Church concluded the petition by yet another strong statement, Anon (1984:5) records that “We, the Bishops of the Church of the province of South Africa in Synod assembled, affirm that Christian principles are an especial challenge to the inhabitants of South Africa at the present time, and solemnly call on them, and particularly the members of the teaching of our Church, to reconsider their race attitudes in the light of the teaching of Christ, and to uphold with all their power the Christian doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man, in all its bearings”.

The researcher is convinced that this level of commitment by the leadership of the church is highly honorable and admired. The Anglican Church structure erected in Tzaneen was built by the Anglicans on Agatha Street. That church was dedicated to the Lord by Bishop Neville, November 1930 (Pratt, 1994:42). Furthermore, Changuion (1994:40) suggests that, "After the second world war the farmers of Ofcolaco got together and built an attractive thatched roof Church named 'St. George's in the Bush close to the Ofcolaco sports club, this Church was dedicated in 1952. It is one of the few Anglican Churches in the Northern Transvaal Diocese to have a graveyard in its grounds".

3.4.3 SDA Population of 3 churches in Tzaneen

The churches chosen for this research survey in the period 2010 -2015 submitted the following figures to the head office, Orange Grove, as a proof for their statistics. Pseudonyms were used to distinguish churches under survey, however the contents are real. Figure 3.3 shows that the membership has not grown satisfactorily over a period of five years. As it is, the churches have only increased a small fraction of membership. Church A has increased from 196 to 211 in five years. Church B has increased its membership from 113 to 117 in five years, and Church C has increased its membership from 155 to 157 in five years also. These figures show a rather discouraging situation considering the period it takes for a church to gain a member. There is no remarkable increase of membership in all the three churches which were selected for study. One of the pioneers of church growth Wagner (1984:23) says that "God Himself does a lot of counting. He even has hairs on each person's head numbered. When each individual comes to faith in Jesus Christ, that name is written in the Lamb's book of life". The Bible also records that, "there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents (Luke 15:7). These churches need to realize that they are not growing their congregation in terms of membership; they need to study other means and ways such as the ones the researcher suggest.

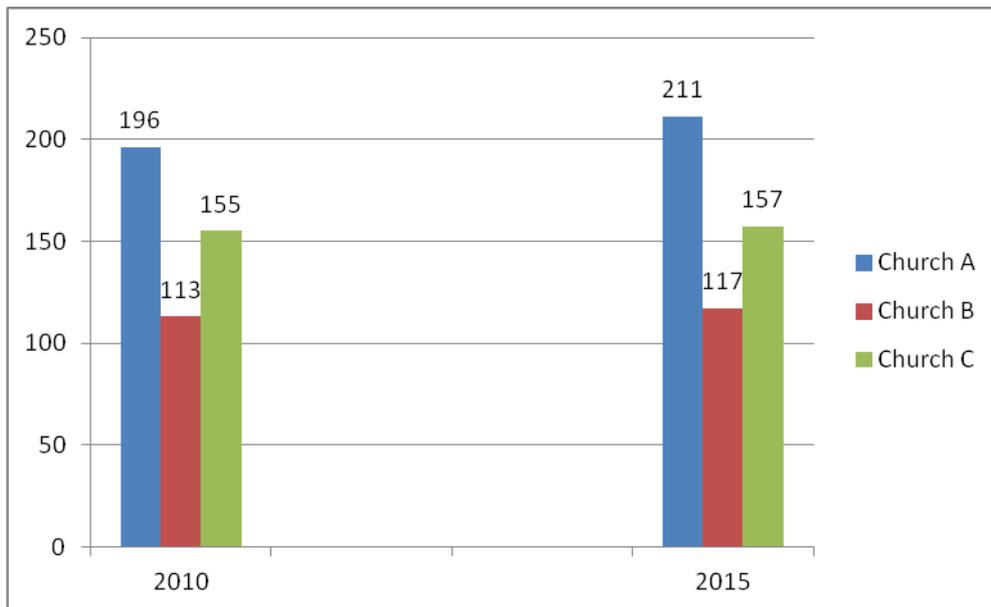


Figure 3.5 Membership growth pattern of SDA church

According to Figure 3.3 above, Church A managed to increase membership by 15 people in five years. Church B increased membership by 4 people five years and Church C managed to increase membership by 2 people. Even though this chart does not speak to the people the churches might have lost through death or missing, these figures are a cry for an alternative strategy for growing membership.

3.4.4 The Missionary Work in Tzaneen by the Seventh-day Adventists

Spalding (1962:9) says that “The Seventh-day Adventist message reached South Africa in 1887. In January, 1908, with two conferences of European people and four missions among the natives, the South African Union Conference was formed”.

According to Thompson (1977:31-32) “From its beginnings in the 1890s, the Seventh-day Adventist church grew rapidly in Southern Africa—though racial discrimination was the accepted practice. For example, in 1920, church policy stated that ordained Black ministers could baptise—but only with the approval of the Mission Field executive committee. They could also administer communion—however, they were in no case to take precedence over a White church elder—even if he was not ordained to the ministry”.

According to Spalding (1962:9) “The work in South Africa naturally divided itself into two concerns: first, with the white people—and that in two languages, English and Afrikaans; the second, with the native peoples who had yet to be Christianized”.

In the manuscripts prepared by Neuhoff (2015: 12 June) suggests that, “The first Adventist’s in the Tzaneen area were the de Lange Family; and Pastor Albert du Plessis was already here in 1954”. The researcher used this information as a testimony presented by the nephew, Eugene van der Linde of the late grandmother, Engela Neuhoff. The information was then translated into English.

Neuhoff (2015:12 June) states that, “On the 25th of June 1957, a Thursday, we arrived from Brakpan to the ground we had purchased near Tzaneen in the Jaffray area. We were strangers and did not know anybody. There was no house on the farm. Our furniture only arrived on the following Sabbath day”.

“The next Sabbath we prepared our food, went to the farm and parked underneath some fig trees, it was raining. We rented a room from the people we had purchased the farm from and also rented some storage space for our furniture” (Neuhoff, 2015:12 June). The life of a missionary had always been a life of struggle. Lack of resources to start a church is found in many stories such as the one mentioned above.

Circa 1958, Pastor Stapels officially founded a little “bush church”. At that time members were: Brother (Br) and Sister (Sr) Luther; Br and Sr de Lange; Br and Sr Rodney de Lange; Br and Sr Carel Neuhoff and two children; and Br and Sr Orsmond and four children.

Other people were Br and Sr Kruger and three children; Br and Sr de Jager and three children; Br and Sr Besuidenhout and four children; Sr Krause; Sr Le Roux; Sr Muller and three children; and Sr Ada Le Roux. Later the group was joined by: Br and Sr Joubert; Br and Sr Nel; Br and Sr van Vuuren and two children; and Sr Le Roux (Neuhoff, 2015: 12 June).

Amongst the Black African community, the missionary work by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tzaneen began in 1952. In the Northern Transvaal, there was a mission school known as Shiloh. Nhlapo (2012:82) records that, “Shiloh Mission School was situated in the Mashashane village in the Limpopo province. It was built for the development of the work in the northern part of the country”.

Nhlapo (2012:91) states that, “Shiloh Mission created a number of ministerial players worthy of special mention. One such worker was a young, dedicated worker who had graduated from Bethel Training College in 1952”.

Pastor Michael Mkasi worked in Limpopo and in Tzaneen area. Nhlapo (2012:92) indicates that, “in 1954 Mkasi helped set up the groundwork in the Venda and Mamaila areas with Evangelist Grellmann, focusing on church-planting, among the Tsonga-speaking people”. The work in the area of Tzaneen was also supported by the presence of Pastor Joseph N Ramugumo, and Pastor Eric Masungwini who were friends since high school. These men were known to have vision and the revolutionary spirit about the church planting in and around Tzaneen.

Masuku (2004 [conference presentation]) records that, “A Church planting revolution is needed in the SAU – a church planting renaissance is an imperative to effect the objective of the great commission, soul winning is unmistakably the reason for our existence as a church”.

It is possible to hypothesize that these conditions which existed when missionaries were starting the work are no longer the same. However the researcher has come to realize that the present challenges need to be addressed as a way of exposing the horrible past and compare it with the present situation. Missionaries, and those who love to do missions, have to deal with the shadow of the Apartheid past or racial segregation.

3.5 Challenges when planting and growing churches around Tzaneen

As a church planter in Tzaneen, one needs to be consciously aware of the challenges that can be experienced when one begins to do church planting around Tzaneen. Among those challenges, an evangelist planning to start a Church in the area of Tzaneen will have to be aware of challenges such as: unemployment; illiteracy and poverty; HIV and Aids; and a divided Church. These challenges become imperative as we reflect on the work of the Messiah in Isaiah 61: 1-2 and of the Church as envisaged by Jesus in Luke 4: 16-19.

3.5.1 Unemployment as a hindrance to church planting

Unemployment is a big issue, especially in the rural areas of Tzaneen. The IDP 2014/15 reported that “The employment status with Greater Tzaneen Municipality according to the stats SA census 2011 shows a not impressive situation; we still have the majority of our people in our households comprising of the unemployed; discouraged work seekers and those who are not economically active” (2011:310). As an evangelist, it is a joy to start a church today and reap the fruits immediately. However, if the members are not working, it can delay the start of your ministry. The effect of not working influences the church because members will be unable to support the church financially. The little remuneration church members get, even if they get piece-jobs, is likely to be spent on households. In this particular area, the researcher has worked with one leader who had no permanent job. The brother was surviving under the circumstances; it was a challenge for him to be able to meet expected requirements such as: returning tithes and offerings; supporting church building; and travelling for church meetings that are held far from home. These challenges are not unique to the churches around Tzaneen.

Longernecker (2010:260) says that, “we should guard against the assumption that the only ‘motivational basis’ worthy of note are those of the middle status artisans and house-holders, and that servile functionalises had ‘no motivational base’ to be considered since they simply follow the initiatives of the householders”. Such was the case during the time of Jesus, and therefore it needs to be taken into consideration. Longernecker (2010:260) further says that, “arguably, the early Jesus-movement offered a great deal too impoverished urbanities, especially those beyond the relative security of a household”. It was Jesus-group who set an example of better living societies by word of mouth or practice. “If Jesus-groups set up communal funds for the poor and gathered to share food and drink in cooperation dinners and other occasions, it is relatively easy to see what economic attraction such communities would have hold for people in ...who fell beyond the structures of a household” (Longernecker, 2010:261). If the same practice were to be adopted today, the church’s position would be different and effective in its strategies of doing mission work.

3.5.2 Illiteracy and poverty

In the area of Tzaneen, there are a number of people who are illiterate. The Greater Tzaneen Municipality reported in 2011 that, “the large number of people with no schooling must be a course of concern within the municipality. Almost related to the issue of unemployment is poverty”. The two are inseparable. The gospel which does not embrace the poor is not the gospel of Jesus Christ. For Jesus confessed that he came for the poor in Luke (7:22), “...the good news is preached to the poor”. In many of Jesus’ discourses, he never fails to address the poor. In the Beatitudes, Jesus begins by blessing the poor. Matthew (5:3), “Blessed is the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”. The poor, either spiritually or physically, are to be considered first when planning to start a community of believers, a Church.

Bosch (1991:436) records that, “There can be no doubt that both in the Old Testament and in the ministry of Jesus there was a significant focus on the poor and their plight”. Unfortunately it has always been the poor who receive the negative treatment. Longenecker, (2010:262) records that, “Poverty....was a social condition, with social causes, often the result of greed and manipulation on the part of others. The poor were vulnerable before those members of society who controlled economic and political power, and were willing to use that power ruthlessly. Consequently the poor were also the down trodden, often pushed by circumstances to the margin of society”. This social trend of life has always existed even before the time of Jesus and he presented it as a plight of society. That is the reason why churches need to consider the poor when doing evangelistic work. At the time of writing this research, there was debate concerning ethnicity as the cause of tribalism. According to Zondi (2003:26), “Factors that have made matters worse are poverty, illiteracy and the Bantustan legacy”. Since the church’s main objective is membership growth; poverty and illiteracy are contributing factors that hinder church growth. In Tzaneen, 90% of the Seventh Day Adventist church members are situated in townships and villages which are classified as rural areas. Amongst these, there are a huge number of the poor population; either not working or working but earning too little wages or being pensioners with a number of children and grandchildren to look after.

3.5.3 HIV & Aids Stigma

Along with poverty comes a disease. Other diseases are quite modern and without cure. HIV/Aids is a dreadful disease of the 21st Century. This disease is feared amongst the Black African community more than diabetes or cancer. The reason why it is so dreadful is that since the disease was discovered there has not been medical cure found for HIV/AIDS. Those who do not understand HIV/Aids classify it as a spell or a disease that only affects the sinful and adulterous people. Hence, the disease is stigmatised. "Stigma is a social construction which dramatically affects the life experiences of the individuals infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and their partners, family and friends" (Alonzo & Reynolds, 1995:). The infected and the affected are often isolated and in time people develop stigma towards these people. Peterson (2011:350) says, "Stigma is an obstacle to care, treatment, prevention and practical assistance for orphans and other children affected by the epidemic".

According to Peterson (2011:350) Because of the associated stigma concerning people who have contracted HIV/Aids, or the fear of stigma, people who are infected or affected are likely to deny the impact of HIV on their lives and ignore the necessity to seek help or change behaviour. When people use stigma to isolate one another it becomes difficult to even teach about it in the churches. In one church in the district, a member could suffer; even to the point of death and be hospitalised and not say a word about his/her HIV status in fear of being stigmatised. Yadav (2007:7), states that, "Stigma and denial undermine efforts to increase the coverage of effective interventions among high risk groups such as men having sex with men, commercial sex workers and injecting drug users". It is the stigma and stereotypes that harbours ignorance and slows down awareness of the HIV/Aids pandemic even in Tzaneen. A Seventh-day Adventist response to AIDS says, "Desiring to reach the redemptive love of Christ we need to separate the disease from the issue of morality, demonstrate a compassionate positive attitude toward persons with AIDS, offering acceptance and love, and providing for their physical and spiritual needs. We should feel ashamed when we see social rejection of people who have AIDS" (Netshifulani, 2015:16). It is the church's ideal to deal with the HIV/Aids stigma which continues to destroy our country and our church membership.

3.5.4 A divided church

During the time of the Apostles, the church's biggest threat was division as a result of conflicts or misunderstandings. According to White (2002:280), "There was danger that this party spirit would result in great evil to the Christian church, and Paul was instructed by the Lord to utter words of earnest admonition and solemn protest".

From its beginnings in the 1890s, the Seventh-day Adventist church grew rapidly in southern Africa—though racial discrimination was the accepted practice. For example, in 1920, church policy stated that ordained Black ministers could baptise—but only with the approval of the Mission Field executive committee. They could also administer communion—however they were in no case to take precedence over a White church elder—even if he was not ordained to the ministry.

Mbali (1987:44), when responding to the South African situation, records that, "The protest of the mission churches against the Nationalist government programme of apartheid was heard from the 1950s onwards. But it is important to realize that the hierarchy of these churches was still white".

Apartheid is a system of segregation practiced by the South Africa government since 1948–1994 when the government of South Africa was democratically elected.

White (2002:280) had already cautioned that, "Of those who were saying, 'I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ,' the apostle inquired, "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" "Let no man glory in men," he pleaded". "For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (NKJV, 1982).

This caution was given to the church almost two thousand years ago; and yet in the Seventh-day Adventist Churches there still exists spirits of division even in the area of Tzaneen.

An open letter from The Legal Steering Committee, 2009:7-11 September records that, "At the 26 March 2006 'organizing business session' held in Gauteng, the SAU intended to merge the TC and TOC conferences. Some TOC churches who were most aggrieved by the unconstitutional manner in which the meetings were called, attempted to get clarity at that meeting. When they were threatened with expulsion from the meeting by the Union President, Ps F Louw, they physically and vocally

prevented the meeting from continuing, and so the so-called '*organizing business session*' was aborted"

This is a result of a problematic state of affairs that existed in South Africa under the auspices of Apartheid. The voice of Bishop Tutu challenges one and all when he says, "The Church community would show forth that we have nothing to fear from our differences, our uniqueness as people of different backgrounds, cultural, ethnic, political, religious and social; that far from these making for separation, they would contribute to a real and deep unity" (Prozesky, 1990:239). A divided church misses the opportunities for planting and growing churches.

3.6 Opportunities for Planting and Growing Churches around Tzaneen

The setting to restore or build the church of God is important. This is clear from what other scholars refer to as the postexilic conditions of people having to build what had been destroyed. Thus, the conditions and the strategies to follow are also considered relevant in terms of the setting in which the churches operate. As a way of reversing the consequences of the Fall, the following needs to be taken into cognisance: creating job opportunities for members of the church; communication and education as an opportunity to spread the gospel; and the presence of such institutions as the hospitals, clinics, schools, and the correctional services do offer an opportunity for spreading the gospel. The population of the area around Tzaneen, (Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2) in chapter 3 indicates that there are a greater number of young people who could be a target population for doing evangelistic work in the area of Tzaneen. The use of technology or the availability of computer or cell phones can also help to fast-track communication in the area; breaking the stigma of HIV/AIDS and political transformation.

3.6.1 Creating Job Opportunities

The church's responsibility to its members, when it comes to creating job opportunities, may go a long way if handled correctly. Members can be taught handy-work skills like sowing, cooking, mechanical and counselling skills. Other

structures are also concerned with creating job opportunities for the people; the Greater Tzaneen Municipality has reported a concern and a strategy to follow; IDP (2011:31) reported, “Our LED strategy and other related programmes should begin to be geared towards decreasing these figures through the creation of decent work for our people”. The very same strategies can also be adopted and utilised by church leaders to create jobs for the members of the Church. Initially the GTM Annual report (2008/2009:89) had reported that, “The Greater Tzaneen Municipality is committed to skills development and fully subscribes to the provisions of the National Skills Development Strategy”. In view of such a need in the Tzaneen area, the church, together with those interested parties, may attempt a joint venture towards creating jobs for the members of the church and community.

When a church runs such programs of creating job opportunities, it becomes easier to preach about the love of God. Anderson *et al.*, (1998:449) suggest that, “Teaching English as a second language opens the door for many Christians who desire to share in missions. Certified teachers of English as second language can enter and share the gospel various countries that cannot be otherwise entered”.

As a church planter, it may be appropriate to emphasise and reemphasise unity amongst the members –just like the early church used this principle of togetherness. Acts 2:44-45 records that, “All the believers were together, and had everything in common; selling possessions and goods, and they gave to anyone as he has needed”.

The researcher’s view is best shared by Paulsen (2014:8) who records that, “Church members have extended their Wednesday evening efforts to include a variety of seminars that are designed to meet particular needs in their local neighborhood. They offer different courses on personal finances, religious freedom, psychological health, tracing family tree, and photography as well as studies on biblical topics”. These avenues and many others can be used to keep members in the church as well as attracting new ones.

In Dan, one of the villages near Tzaneen, a young couple’s house was burnt to ashes. When the church members heard of this sad news, they went to their home with blankets, clothing and food parcels. The family was so thrilled and could not help it but to drop a tear of joy. Since that incident, the couple has always praised the Lord for the help they had received and have since continued to come to church. So

creating job opportunities and practicing the principle of togetherness for members of the church shows that members do care and are willing to help.

Accordingly, IDP (2015/15:108) reported that, “Skills training within GTM should be concentrated on the three priority sectors, namely agriculture, tourism and processing”. These are commercial areas of Tzaneen that can uplift the standard of the people and members of the churches.

3.6.2 Communication and Education

Communication can act as a catalyst to spread the gospel amongst the poor. Since language is a communication tool used by various people, using the right language with a particular group can help facilitate the spread of the gospel faster. If one is able to communicate in at least one of the indigenous languages around Tzaneen, then the opportunities for one doing missionary work are higher compared to one who may not be familiar with any of the languages.

According to Hesselgrave (1991:355), “Almost without exception, missionaries will be well advised to learn the language of their respondent culture”; to do so enhances the chances of communication. Hesselgrave (1991:355) suggests that, “Short term missionaries and some specialists may find that they will have to settle for a limited language – learning experience, but they should not hesitate to make a start”. This is very true, especially when how the early church pioneers of the Old Testament handled the matter of language is observed. The Messiah in Isaiah 61: 1-2 spoke Hebrew. Jesus in Luke 4:16-19 read the scripture in such a way which allowed the people to understand. Thus, being able to speak another language is an advantage for doing evangelism.

Over the past century there has been a dramatic increase of knowledge. White, (2002:18) records that, “Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children. Godliness--Godlikeness --is the goal to be reached. Before the student, here is opened a path of continual progress. He has an object to achieve, a standard to attain, that includes everything good, and pure, and noble. He will advance as fast and as far as possible in every branch of true knowledge”.

Through education advancement, information using technology can be accessed. The use of movie pictures, videos and films is another tool of attracting people,

especially the youth, to meetings. Herring (2009:67) says that, “continued training is imperative for the House of worship technicians. Today more than ever, opportunities exist for House of worship of any size and any budget. I’d say that 90 per cent of the Houses of worship I work with could improve their A/V systems tenfold by simply getting the right training. We see a full turn around in quality, morale, and performance simply by investing one or two weeks in training people how to be empowered in the area of ministry they serve”.

Using technology is one of the best tools to spread the good news of Jesus. There are as of today; CDs, DVDs, Internet, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp etc., and these are tools that can be used or integrated when spreading the gospel. However, training on how to use technology is important in this field for one to get effective results.

3.6.3. Breaking the stigma of HIV & Aids

Breaking the stigma of HIV/Aids amongst the church members will enhance knowledge about this epidemic and incurable disease. According to the municipality records, “The provision of workplace HIV and AIDS education interventions to construction workers on site will also increase levels of HIV knowledge and responsibility” (IDP, 2014/15:66).

Breaking the stigma of HIV/Aids requires collective efforts. Paterson (2011:354) says that, “The success of prevention and care programmes depends on people facing reality in terms of the help they need and the risks they choose to take”. For one to be able to break the HIV/Aids stigma one has to try to be understood by the locals; therefore it is very important to learn the culture of the people. According to Paterson (2011:354), “Prevention strategies are unlikely to succeed where there is denial, where reality is stigmatised, or where the messages given out by the dominant voices seem to bear no relation to individual realities”. Once one is understood by the local people it becomes easier to impress upon their cultural understandings. Cultural tendencies are such things as one’s language; and one’s social and economic world, religion, psychological and national differences also forms part of one’s culture” Hesselgrave (1991:10). Thus, if one knows the culture of the people to be ministered to, it becomes easy to assimilate and understand some things even about people’s beliefs. Paterson (2011:372) suggests that “There is also some

significance interest in pastoral care through education observed in a body of literature that describes and motivates for the education of congregations, community, and religious leadership about HIV and AIDS as a caring activity". This happens when the leader is willing to learn another culture so that he/she may be effective.

In Tzaneen, there are two dominant cultures. This happens to be Xi-Tsonga culture and Selobedu culture. To know these cultures is an added advantage for one who plans to do missionary work around Tzaneen. Anderson *et al.* (1998:445) state that, "Effective missionary methodology insists on being culturally appropriate". So in the case of Tzaneen, the researcher suggests that one should be well conversant with the cultures of the area.

3.6.4 Social transformation

A possibility of transformation may lead us to confession and to repentance. A transformed church is a confessing church which allows full repentance. These steps are similar to the *ABC of faith* namely, Acceptance, Believe, and Confession. According to Steere (2009:10), "Families and social institutions also have their transformational stories. These often involve significant events in common life, such as births, deaths, moves, merges, marriages, new presidents or leaders, as well as formative events that impinge upon the group from within or from the outside world". Whenever there is a need of transformation, as in the case of SDA Churches around Tzaneen, it is necessary to go through the stages of transformation so as to reach a reconcilable condition. Steere (2009:10) further suggests that, "whether we are considering an individual or some larger community of persons, the transformational story is one of renewed responsibility and change in relationships long subjected to the stress and strain of some private narrative they have shared in common". Hofmeyer & Pillay (1994:273) records that, "A change must come for otherwise our country faces a disastrous future..." This call has reached many members of the Christian community. Hofmeyer's and Pillay's (1994:273) argument says, "But the Christian duty remains of seeking to unite rather than to separate, to dissolve differences rather than perpetuate them. A difference colour can be no reason for separation when culture, custom, social condition and above all, a common faith and common love of Christ impel towards unity..."

However, the problem in Tzaneen is not only local but it runs up to the administrative ladder, where the Trans-Orange Conference and the Transvaal Conference, recently renamed Northern Conference, is still at a stale-mate on the issue of a merger.

3.7 Available Resources for the Seventh-day Adventist Leaders when doing Mission Work

In this section, the researcher establishes and presents the use of other materials that are available to leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tzaneen as they endeavor to develop the strategies for church growth. The researcher has presented a scientific statistical analysis to report information about the area of Tzaneen. The researcher has also focused on social inequalities in Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-19; and the Messiah's programs as mission of the church.

It is in the interest of the researcher to review the availability of resources on the strategies of growing viable churches in the area around Tzaneen and to church leaders in Tzaneen and find out if these resources or guidelines are used effectively and efficiently.

3.7.1 The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Besides the Bible, the Seventh-day Adventist Church uses working policies; church manuals; minister's handbooks; constitutions and the statements of beliefs as a guide when developing strategies for church growth.

The SID policy A (2010:33) states that; "Seventh-day Adventist mission is centred in God's loving gift of His Son to be the Saviour of the world. We are to share this good news with all people, telling them that 'Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved' (Acts 4:12), and that 'whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life' (John 3:16)".

Frost and Hirsch (2003:18) state that, "the mission of the Church is the very heartbeat and work of God. It is in the very being of God that the basis for the missionary enterprise is found. God is a sending God, with a desire to see human kind and creation reconciled, redeemed, and healed". Therefore, the mission of the

church in terms of strategies for growth and objectives is to reconcile the brethren; healing the broken hearted as the Messiah suggested; and redeeming the lost to the kingdom of God. Scholars further suggest that, “The missional church, then, is a sent church; It is a going church, a movement of God through His people, sent to bring healing to a broken world” (Frost & Hirsch, 2003:18). An observer suggests that, “going and being in the heart of the world is the essence of mission, the church should see itself as a people on the move” (Kirk, 1999:217). Whereas it can happen that Christians or members of the church should move from one place to another, the movement suggested here by the scholars is an evangelistic one as recorded in Matthew 28:18-19; “And Jesus came and spoke to them saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age’”. This is further embodied in the Seventh-day Adventist policy A (2010:34) which states that the “Seventh-day Adventist mission is comprehensive in its scope. It involves proclaiming the good news to the whole world (Matt 24:14), making disciples of all nations by going, baptizing, and teaching them (Matt 28:18-20), and inviting them into the ecclesia—the end-time community of believers in Jesus who worship God the Creator and Redeemer (Rev 12:17; 14:6-7)”.

3.7.2 The Seventh-day Adventist Church’s mission in the light of the work of the Messiah in Isaiah 61: 1-2 and Luke 4: 16-19

Seventh-day Adventist Policy A (2010:34) states that; “At its core, mission is bearing witness through word and life and in the power of the Holy Spirit. As the Lord commanded Israel of old,” You are my witnesses, and my servant whom I have chosen” (Isa 43:10), so the Risen Lord commands us, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8”.

Beukes and Scherer (1992:6) suggest that, “through lives given for the healing of human’s community. Christians witness to the reality of God who empowers them. They witness to the fullness of life and liberation which is found in being sons and daughters of the creator in a community sustained by one who is the bread of life. Living this life for the world is what it means to be ‘doing mission’ in Christ’s way”.

The Seventh-day Adventist Minister's Handbook (2009:117) records that, "The members of the New Testament Church went everywhere telling the story of Jesus. Most new converts are won by members relating to people at work and in their neighbourhoods. This can be accomplished through a multitude of outreach programmes, including cooking and health classes, youth ministries, women ministries, community programmes and recreational activities". According to Kirk (1999:39), "though the problems of discovering and reapplying mission in the way of Christ may be complicated, the Christian community needs a standard by which to measure its own performance – a standard which is able to call in question its own policies, programmes and practices". Membership growth of Seventh-day Adventist Churches in the area of Tzaneen gets reviewed together with the rest of the membership in the region over a stated period of five years. Kunene & Louw (2010:31) states that, "Membership, Baptismal and Tithing Trends are considered to be typical key performance Indicators for the Seventh-day Adventist Church".

Such a standard can then serve as a guide for doing mission work. Wagner (1990:129-120) put forward three suggestions towards preparing the church for church growth: making sure that the members know their purpose, making sure they are in touch with God and making sure that their morale is high. These suggestions can also be applicable in churches that are in rural areas like Tzaneen.

3.8 Summary

Chapter 3 introduces the reader to the area of Tzaneen as a context for missionary work as well as the missionary work conducted by the Catholics, the Anglicans, as well as the missionary work by the Seventh-day Adventist church. The chapter then shares some of the challenges that hinder church growth around Tzaneen such as; unemployment; Illiteracy and poverty; HIV/Aids as well as a divided church.

The researcher also explored the opportunities for planting and growing churches in rural areas around Tzaneen. These include among others; creating job opportunities for members of the church; communication and education; technology; breaking the stigma of HIV/Aids; and the political transformation.

The chapter concludes by presenting the availability of the available resources to the Seventh-day Adventist leaders when doing mission work; the understanding of the mission statement; the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church; and the Seventh-day Adventist church mission as fulfilled by the Messiah of Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-19.

The finding of chapter 3 helps this research in that in chapter 4 the researcher uses Tzaneen's context to probe and interpret the empirical findings of this research.

Chapter 4

Insights from Tzaneen Churches and their Leaders

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is comprised of two sections. In the first part of the chapter, the researcher describes how the empirical section of this study has been approached and carried out. The second part of the chapter deals with report findings of the empirical study on the effective strategies for growing viable churches in Tzaneen. The primary tool used for this data gathering was done by means of interviews, questionnaires, observations, and document analysis.

4.2 Research Design

Creswell (2009:3) says that “research designs are plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis”. There are three approaches or methods used to design a research study; which are quantitative, qualitative and mixed method (Creswell, 2009:4). Denzin and Lincoln (2011:3) state that, “Qualitative research is a field of enquiry in its own right. It crosscuts disciplines, fields, and subject matter. A complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts, assumptions surrounds the term”. According to Maree (2010:50), “Since 1970s qualitative research as a research paradigm has made major inroads into other social science disciplines, and has become an important research paradigm based on the emerging world-view”.

4.2.1 The location of this research

The research was done in the North East (Mopani) District of the Seventh-day Adventist in South Africa, Limpopo Province, in Tzaneen. It was in this area where the researcher has worked with the churches of the Seventh-day Adventist as a

Pastor for 4 years (2008-2011). The North East District (Mopani) forms part of the Trans-Orange Conference of the SDA churches in South Africa.

Since 2008, the Trans-Orange Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist resolved in the Leader's council held at Kwa-Thema, Springs, Gauteng; that Churches are to embark on a mission; "To grow membership by 20% per annum and reach 85% of the un-entered areas as shown in the Executive Secretary's report" (Minutes from the GDC strategic document, June: 2008). Therefore, the real concern for church leaders was to realise the fact that Seventh-day Adventist Church membership is not growing effectively in terms of the expected goal. At the end of 2009, churches in Tzaneen had baptized a lower percentage than that which was set for them. Hence, this research study seeks to develop strategies to increase church membership in Tzaneen by identifying relevant effective strategies for growing viable churches.

4.2.2 Method of the empirical study

This research is a case study based in Tzaneen; the researcher has made use of the empirical approach which allows the use of interviews and questionnaires to gather information for the empirical study. Bui (2009:6) states that, "an empirically based research study is based on data that are produced by experiment or observation (rather than an opinion)". Whereas Babones (2014:191) also says that, "empirical research is largely driven by setting questions of causality, and the entire science of causality is predicated on the assumption that there exists a single empirical reality in which particular actions taken under given circumstances yield predictable outcomes". Hence, the researcher prepared the questionnaire tool for gathering information on the effective strategies for growing viable churches in Tzaneen amongst the Seventh-day Adventist Church members and their leaders. The researcher also conducted interviews with elders and pastors of the churches which participated in the survey.

4.2.3 Research strategies

Since the qualitative research approach entered in the twentieth century, scholars have recommended it. According to Maree (2010:50), "the very term 'qualitative research' was until then viewed as a sub-discipline of anthropology and sociology, and was associated with terms like ethnography, field work and participant observation". The qualitative research strategies use the following types of

approaches: ethnography, grounded theory, case study, phenomenological and narrative research (Creswell, 2009:13). Hereunder, three strategies, which are: narrative, ethnography and case study will be explored in terms of this study and its objectives.

4.2.3.1 Narrative research

According to Creswell (2009:13), "Narrative research is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher studies the lives of individuals and asks one or more individuals to provide stories about their lives". The information collected is then used to make conclusions on the subject under study. Denzin & Lincoln, (2011:421-432) records that, "some researchers study narratives as lived experience, as itself social action. These researchers are as interested in how people narrate their experiences as in what their stories are about". During the course of this study, the researcher has met people who were willing to share their life experiences. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2011:423) "This approach to narrative inquiry has been used to explore a broad range of topics".

4.2.3.2 Ethnographic research

According to Fouche (2005:271), "Ethnographic research is an enquiry which is characterized by observation (participant observation) and description of the behaviour of a small number of cases". In this research strategy, data is interpretive which also involves descriptions of the phenomenon (Fouche, 2005:271).

"Ethnography can be defined as research designed to describe and analyse the social life and culture of a particular social system, based on detailed observations of what people actually do" (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2013:122). The main focus of this research is to study the life experiences for which certain strategies for growing churches in rural areas may be appropriate.

4.2.3.3 Case study

According to Creswell (2009:13), "Case studies are a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals". Fouche (2005:273) further suggests that, "The exploration and the description of the case takes place through detailed, in-depth data collection methods, involving multiple sources of information that are rich in context. This

includes interviews, documents, observations or archival records”. Accordingly; “Whatever the field of interest, the distinctive need for case study research arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena. In brief, a case study allows investigators to focus on a “case” and retain a holistic and real-world perspective” (Yin, 2014:4).

4.3 Research Methodology

There are three methodologies that scholars recommend. The quantitative, qualitative and the use of both which according to Creswell (2009) is a mixed method research. A mixed method approach is an inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms. It involves philosophical assumptions, the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and the mixing of both approaches in a study (Creswell, 2009:4). The researcher used a combination of the two approaches, quantitative and qualitative approach. The quantitative approach was used because according to Maree (2010:257) the method allows for the use “of convenience sampling to select from the individuals who are available and willing to participate in the study”. Furthermore Vos (2005:133) defines quantitative research design as one that also “refers to all the decisions we make in planning the study – decisions not only about what overall type or design to use, but also about sampling, sources and procedures for collecting data, measurement issues and data analysis plans”. The researcher’s primary method in this research has been qualitative. “Qualitative researchers typically gather multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations and documents, rather than rely on a single data source. Then the researchers review all of the data, make sense of it, and organize it into categories or themes that cut across all of the data sources” (Creswell, 2009:175).

4.3.1 Methods of data collection

There are different methods by which researchers collect data set. For this study, the researcher’s data collection methods included interviews, questionnaires, observation and documents.

4.3.1.1 Interviews

Qualitative research normally uses interviewing as an information collection method. This kind of method is mostly preferred because of its nature. Scholars such as Seidman (2005:285) aptly suggest that, “you interview because you are interested in other people’s stories”. The researcher considers the story of Tzaneen SDA churches as a story to be researched. Hence, the researcher had to interview the church community of the Seventh-day Adventist. Yin, (2014:110) states, “one of the most important sources of case study evidence is the interview”. The leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist were interviewed as a way of gathering data that was used in this research survey. These leaders were elders and pastors.

Bogdan & Taylor (1998:107) record that, “Qualitative interviewers have to force themselves to constantly ask informants to clarify and elaborate on what they have said, even at the risk of appearing naive”.

There are several approaches when conducting interviews. The researcher needs to be aware of approaches such as the interviewing techniques and tips for the researcher as well as communication techniques required by the interviewer. Seidman (2005:289) states that, “Several communication techniques are utilised during interviewing”. For this study, open-ended interviews were conducted; which according to Maree (2010:87), “often takes the form of a conversation with the intention that researcher explores with the participant her or his views, ideas, beliefs, and attitudes about certain events or phenomenon”. Knowledge of such techniques were applied and used to gather data for this study. Of the three churches which participated in the survey, three elders and three pastors participated in the interview. Details of the interview were captured as data, and interpreted according to the research questions of the study.

4.3.1.2 Observation

The researcher has observed the community of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for four years before embarking in a study of this nature. “Observation is the systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants, objects and occurrences without necessarily questioning or communicating with them” (Maree, 2010:83-84). As one works with the participants, it is advisable to remain independent as Maree (2010:84) suggests that, “as you get immersed in the setting, participants often use you as a confidant to share their problems and concerns.

Remain a researcher and do not become a therapist, and always protect the participant's integrity and anonymity". Observational approaches may take two general forms; that is a naturalistic observation and participant-observer research. For this study, the researcher was a participant-observer since he was working in the area of Tzaneen. According to McBurney and White (2013:194), "observational research involves recording on-going behaviour without attempting to influence it". The researcher kept a recording book in the form of a diary to record all the processes and behavioural patterns observed during data gathering.

4.3.1.3 Documents

It is important to note here that there is a possibility of using both the literature review and using documents for information gathering. However, Maree (2010:82) recommends that, "Your literature review provides an overview of scholarship in a certain discipline through analysis of trends and debate". The use of a literature review further "describes past and current research on a particular topic. It is typified as being critical and integrative, using mainly inductive reasoning" (Maree, 2010:82). Some scholars suggest that an annotated bibliography is necessary for record keeping. Yin (2014:125) suggest that, "Besides providing a compact overview of these documents, such an annotated bibliography also can serve as an index, facilitating the documents' storage and retrieval, so that later investigators can inspect or share the database". Documentation in research serves to assure the readers that what has been written was scientifically researched. "By doing so, you allow your reader a feel for the framework, and cite several sources to give your reader a feel for the existent work in an area" (McBurney & White, 2013:88).

According to scholars such as Delport *et al.*, (2011:376), "Within the context of qualitative research, observation and interviewing are usually used to collect the relevant data". Hence, this research's information is scientifically presented. The researcher has used documents in a form of literature review; interview and observation to collect data.

4.4 Literature Review

Tashakkori & Teddlie (2009:124) say that, “The ultimate goal of the literature review is a synthesis of the existing work regarding a researchable idea in a given content area of interest”. According to Babbie & Rubin (2014:623):

Literature review answers to questions such as; ‘what have others said about this topic? What theories address it and what do they say? What research has been done previously? Are there flaws in the body of existing research that you feel you can remedy? How will your study relate to, yet go beyond the previous studies? How has the prior work influenced your proposed study?

The researcher has used literature extensively in an attempt to respond to the objectives of the research. Chapter 2 is a result of a literature review as it covers the biblical perspective on the strategies for growing churches. There has not been material published on the subject towards effective strategies for growing viable churches in rural areas, a Tzaneen case study. Nevertheless, there are related works on the subject of church growth which the researcher has used to inform this research study. Some related materials that have been published are those of Bosch (1991); Wagner (1990); and Timmis & Chester (2007). Whereas the published material is related to the research topic of this study, they do not answer or give a solution or address directly the matter of effective strategies for growing churches in the rural area of Tzaneen. Hence, the topic of this study seeks to give answers to the need of growing viable churches in the rural areas of Tzaneen.

Tzaneen being a town surrounded by rural villages is an ideal place to gather data and try to interpret it according to recent developments in church growth. Whereas this is a challenge yet to be confronted, the biblical mandate on evangelism remains a mission to all Christians.

The expectations of this research is that the results are likely to largely confirm the findings of those done by some other scholars elsewhere such as Goreham and Rathge (1989:60) who suggest that, “the influence of institutional forces on church viability has been investigated, including factors within the church structure (e.g., programs, leadership style) and its congregation (e.g., psychological make-up, values)”.

4.4.1 Piloting

Vos *et al.* (2005:205) state that the aim of piloting of questionnaire is to find out whether they measure what they were intended to measure and if they are suitable for the study. The researcher has distributed the questionnaire among colleagues to test if the questionnaire is relevant and easy to handle. The researcher has also presented the questionnaire to the study's supervisor in order to ensure that the questionnaire was up to the standard; not threatening and not undermining human dignity. This exercise was approved by the supervisor and by the university's research ethics' committee.

4.4.2 Sample and sampling techniques used in the study

Maree (2010:79) suggests that, "Qualitative research is generally based on non-probability and purposive sampling rather than probability or random sampling approaches". The researcher has used the purposive sampling technique. Accordingly, "Purposive sampling decisions are not only restricted to the selection of the participants but also involve the settings, incidents, events and activities to be included for data collection" (Maree, 2010:79). Along with purposive sampling Morse and Richards (2013:221) suggest the use of the, "nominated or snowball sampling in which participants already in the study recommend other persons to be invited to participate". Purposive and snowball sampling have been used in this research study to appoint the relevant participants. Here a group of participants have been selected according to the following demographics: age, gender, grade level, and the number of years of experience in the church. This information protects this study against someone who wants to replicate this research. As Bui (2009:144) suggests, "a person who needs to replicate such a study may need to select participants who are comparable to these mentioned in this study so as to produce maximum results". So, the participants' were sampled in terms of the demographic aspects as suggested above.

After receiving permission from the leadership and administrative personnel of the Trans-Orange Conference, the researcher then approached the leadership in the churches under study. So in each of the three churches, members of the church board which is the leadership of the church, were able to take a voluntary questionnaire as prepared by the researcher. Three churches were earmarked in this study. Only fifteen individuals per church who were leaders in those churches

were selected for the study. Participants were visited by the researcher in their homes and some in their offices. Of the fifteen persons, five were adult males, four adult females, three youth males and three youth females. In total, participants earmarked for this research were forty-five (45). The researcher also interviewed six people who are leaders of the churches, three elders and three pastors.

Further still, the participants were expected to have a formal learning, a minimum of Grade 7/Std. 6. This is a requirement in view of the fact that the questionnaire was written in English. Participants were also expected to have been in their particular churches for a period of not less than (five) 5 years as baptized members.

4.5 Data Collection

Creswell (2009:178) says that, "The data collection steps include setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through unstructured or semi-structured observations and interviews, documents, and visual materials, as well as establishing the protocol for recording information". The qualitative data gathering procedure is to "purposefully select participants or sites (or documents or visual material) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question" (Creswell, 2009:178). According to Maree (2010:259), "A typical type of study that employs qualitative procedures would be a study in anthropology in which the researcher goes out into the field where the individuals live, gathers their stories and writes a persuasive, literary account of their experiences". It is important to note what is suggested by Yin (2014:88) that, "Collecting data for case studies involves an entirely different situation". To interview key persons, you must cater to the interviewees' schedules and availability, not your own". In view of such complexities Creswell (2009:178) suggests that the researcher has to "indicate the types of data to be collected. In many qualitative studies, inquirers collect multiple forms of data and spend a considerable time in the natural setting gathering information". Data collected for this research was done by the use of interviews and a questionnaire.

4.5.1 Data recording

Creswell (2009:181) suggest that the researcher should “use a *protocol* for recording observational data. Researchers often engage in multiple observations during the course of a qualitative study and use observational protocol for recording information while observing”. According to Maree (2010:259), “The data is collected from people immersed in the setting of everyday life in which the study is framed. The researcher serves as an instrument of data collection and asks the participants’ broad, open-ended questions to allow them to share their views about and experiences with the phenomenon”. In qualitative research, “data is classified in different forms; data may be recorded in dialogue with its own setting that may include taking pictures, writing field notes, recording descriptions of the setting, and collecting documents or diaries about the setting” (Morse & Richards, 2013:125-126). The researcher interviewed leaders of the church, young people of above 20 years and the elderly who were asked to answer the questionnaire; the information was recorded, and presented in this research study as data.

4.5.2 Data validation and reliability

Creswell (2009:190) says that, “qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher’s approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects”. Because of the nature of the study, the researcher has had to verify the data by using both the questionnaire and the interviews. The two techniques have proved to be effective and reliable. Creswell (2009:191-192) further suggests, “Triangulate different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes”. The necessity of triangulation helps the researcher to present as much data available as possible.

According to Maree (2010:216), “The validity of an instrument refers to the extent to which it measures what it is supposed to measure”. This is possible when procedures are followed. The procedures followed to verify data compare the questionnaire with the research questions of the case study. Vos *et al.* (2005:160) defines data validity as having two aspects: “that the instrument actually measures the concept in question, and that the concept is measured accurately”. Specific types

of data were discussed; sampling strategies and the approaches used to establish validity of data were identified as suggested by Creswell (2009:217).

4.6 Tools for Data Collection

The researcher developed a survey template (questionnaire) to be used amongst the church members of Tzaneen. The researcher has also selected a sample population of the members and requested them to take part in the research study. This process is suggested by Creswell (2009:145), “researchers can create their own surveys quickly using custom templates and post them on Web sites or e-mail them for participants to complete”. The researcher printed the questionnaire to be completed by church board members, and prepared the questions for the leaders of the church. Arrangements were made with the leaders of the church to be visited in their own private capacity and the schedules were set for explaining the questionnaire and for interviewing the leaders. The participants were then allocated a coded number. According to Vos *et al.* (1998:341) “Coding represents the operations by which data are broken down, conceptualized and put back together in new ways. It is the central process by which theories are built from data”. The coding system of using numbers and letters was used for this survey.

4.6.1 Pretest

Pretest refers to the testing of a questionnaire before it is actually sent out to the participants. Blair *et al* (2014:33) say that, “Colleagues and students may also be asked to try out questions and provide feedback”. In this case study of Tzaneen, the researcher is not new in the area; the researcher has worked with the people in this area of Tzaneen from 2008 until 2011 and the researcher is well informed about conducting this research study. So the researcher has had formal meetings in the private homes and in the offices with the said participants and briefed them about the survey. The participants have agreed to take part in the study and the researcher guided them through the process of completing the questionnaire and leaders were briefed about the interview questions.

4.6.2 Intervention

According to Bui (2009:144), “In the intervention phase, describe any procedures that were implemented during the intervention. This includes the frequency and duration, the stages of the intervention, and any measurement instruments that were administered”. The researcher distributed the questionnaire amongst the selected participants. Before the participants were given the questionnaire, there was a short interview which took place, with each of the participants. The interview was a guiding tool, leading and explaining the questionnaire tool.

4.6.3 Posttest

The posttest phase, according to Bui (2009:144), can be a procedure that was implemented after the intervention, or meetings after the participants have taken a questionnaire or an interview. The participants were given a follow-up consultation after they had completed the questionnaire. For some it was telephone call, others an email and others were thanked by the researcher personally. The posttest assured the participants that their participation was appreciated.

4.6.4 Administration of questionnaire tool for data collection

It is most important after collecting the data to see to it that data is handled or administered properly. Oates (2006:215) states that, “So that the functionality of a research design can be evaluated, it is important in a protocol to outline the types of data that are to be collected and the ways in which they are to be collected”. In this research case study, participants have been phoned to request the appointment where the researcher or a person designated by the researcher visited them with a questionnaire to be completed.

4.7 Ethical Considerations

Creswell (2009:89) suggest that, “the researcher needs to consider the special needs of vulnerable populations, such as minors (under the age of 19), mentally incompetent participants, victims, persons with neurological impairments, pregnant women or foetuses, prisoners, and individuals with AIDS.” The researcher has used anonymous names and applied the rule of confidentiality as suggested by Bui (2009:89), “Remember that it is imperative before, during, and after the study, the

participants' identity and records should not be revealed". Therefore, in this research the participant's right to confidentiality is protected.

4.7.1 Permission

Permission was granted by the North West University and by the Trans-Orange Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists Churches allowing the researcher to conduct a research study in the churches around Tzaneen.

All the participants were informed about the nature and the objectives of the research or investigation so as to enable them to participate voluntarily. The researcher has also used a recommended informed consent form, as also suggested by Creswell (2009:89) that, "This form acknowledges that participants' rights will be protected during data collection".

4.7.2 Withdrawal from participation

Withdrawing from participation in the research study is the right of every person approached. For this research, 45 people were requested to respond to the questionnaire as reported above in 4.4.2. Out of 45 questionnaires distributed, only 42 questionnaire documents were returned. Three individuals chose to withdraw from participation without notifying the researcher.

4.8 Data Presentation and Analysis

Data is presented in tables and graphs using a computerised program already installed. Maree (2010:183) says that, "After the information has been collected and captured on computer as numbers, called data or raw data; the analysis process usually starts with descriptive statistics". The computer program will be able to give the percentages and variables to draw hypotheses or expectation on the objectives of the study. According to Vos *et al.* (2005:218) "Analysis means the categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarising of data to obtain answers to research questions". In this research, data has been classified according to research questions, taking into consideration the biography, religious affiliation, and educational level of the participants.

4.8.1 Results from the interviews with the elders and pastors

The researcher has interviewed three elders and three pastors of the three churches. These leaders were chosen because the SDA Manual (2010:33) says that, “The pastor, with the assistance of the elders, is expected to plan for and lead out in all spiritual services, such as Sabbath morning worship and prayer meeting, and should officiate at the communion service and baptism”. The interview took place at different times and locations.

The interviews were approximately 30 minutes long with each person. According to Maree (2010:87), “The aim of qualitative interview is to see the world through the eyes of the participant, and they can be a valuable source of information, provided they are used correctly”. The interview was based on the research questions. All the interviewees were asked similar questions to which they responded differently but with similar ideas. The researcher then compiled their responses and converted them into meaningful ideas. All the interviewees were 6 (six); two from each church, a pastor and an elder. They all responded to the questions posed to them, thus a 100% response in the interviews was realised.

4.8.1.1 Biblical perspective

Question: Do you consider it important to have a useful Biblical perspective on healthy church growth in rural areas

100% of the participants think that it is important and useful to have a biblical perspective for healthy church growth.

4.8.1.2 Conditions around Tzaneen

Question: What conditions around Tzaneen could be conducive for healthy church planting and balanced church growth?

80% of the participants mention the presence of the huge numbers of young people, the passion for evangelism, and the willingness of members to do God’s work. 20% mention the schools, hospitals and prisons as an advantage of doing evangelism in the area of Tzaneen.

4.8.1.3 Challenges

Question: What are some of the challenges to be faced when planting and growing churches around Tzaneen?

A significant 60% mentioned finances as the main issue that poses a challenge when planning for evangelistic campaigns. 20% of participants mentioned the unavailability of human resource in terms of willingness to do house-to-house visits and conducting Bible studies. The other 20% mentioned the lack of public campaigns and literature distribution.

4.8.1.4 Insights from Tzaneen leaders

Question: What insights informs Tzaneen leaders as they plan to develop strategies for nurturing churches?

About 80% of the participants say that, members' participation is the solution to advancing strategies when planning God's work the involvement of the conference leadership by conducting workshops and seminars for all leaders of the church. 20% of participants suggest the use of departments in the church for various functions.

4.9 Interpretation/ Empirical Research Results

4.9.1 Introduction

This interpretation of the data collected in the North East (Mopani District) of the SDA Churches is merely a representation of the members. The researcher does not claim that these results are representative of the rest of the population; such as pastors, elders, deacons, departmental leaders, council leaders of women and young people. However, these results surfaced from a purposive sample population who were available and willing to participate in the study.

4.9.2 Biographical information

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	19	45.24%
Female	21	50.00%

Not indicated	2	4.76%
Total	42	100.00%

Table 4.1 Gender distribution

Purpose: To determine gender distribution amongst church members who participated in the survey.

Results: Of the members, who participated in the survey, 45% indicated their gender as males and 50% indicated their gender as females; 4.76% did not indicate the gender to which they belong.

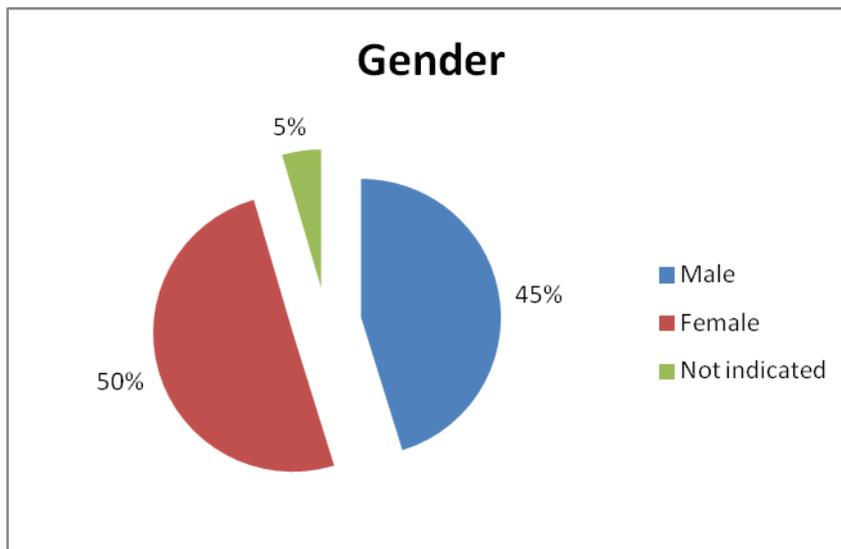


Figure 4.1 Gender distribution

4.9.3 Age distribution

Code	Age	Frequency	Percent
1	(i) Below 30 years	13	32.50%
2	(ii) Between 31-40 years	9	22.50%
3	(iii) Between 41-50 years	8	20.00%
4	(iv) Between 51-60 years	7	17.50%
	(v) Above 60 years	3	7.50%
Total		40	95%

Table 4.2 Age distribution

Purpose: To determine the ages of members who participated in the survey.

Results: The largest group was young people under the age of 30, but above 20 years at (32.5%). The next group comprises 22.5% of the sample denoting the age group ranging from 31 years to 40 years. The next group comprises 20% of the sample denoting the age group 41 years to 50 years. 17.5% of participants are between 51 years and 60 years. Only 7.5% of participants are above 60 years of age.

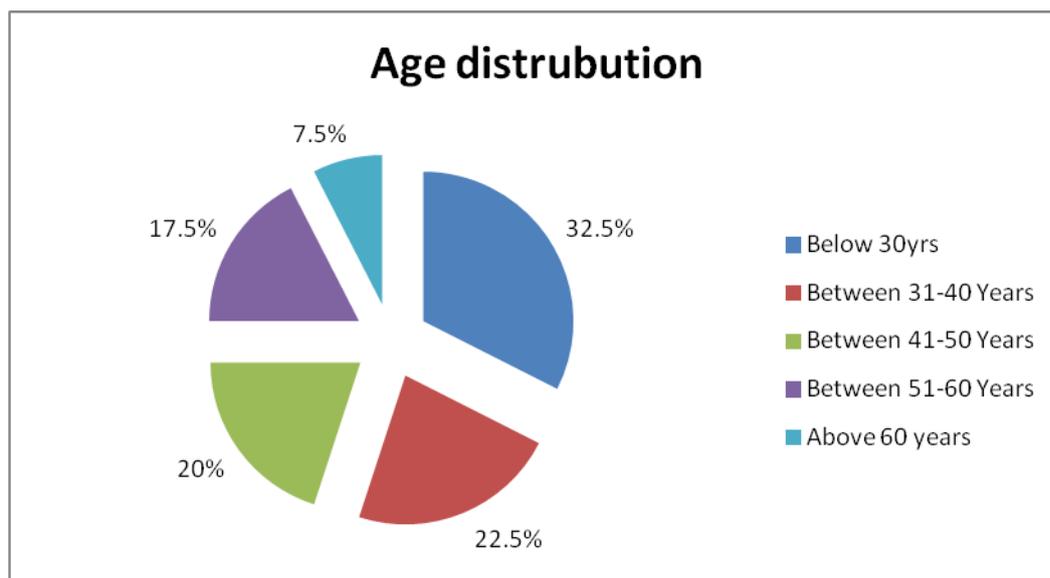


Figure 4.2 Ages

4.9.4 Level of education

Code	Response Item	Frequency	Percent
1	(i) Was never at school	0	0.00%
2	(ii) Only primary education	8	20.00%
3	(iii) Completed Matric	6	15.00%
4	(iv) College level	13	32.50%
5	(v) University level	13	32.50%
Total		40	95%

Table 4.3 Level of education

Purpose: To find out the level of education amongst church members.

Results: An equal amount of participants have attended university or college comprising 32.5% respectively. 15% of participants have completed matric with 8%

of the remaining participants having a primary school level education. .Those who participated have all at least attended formal school.

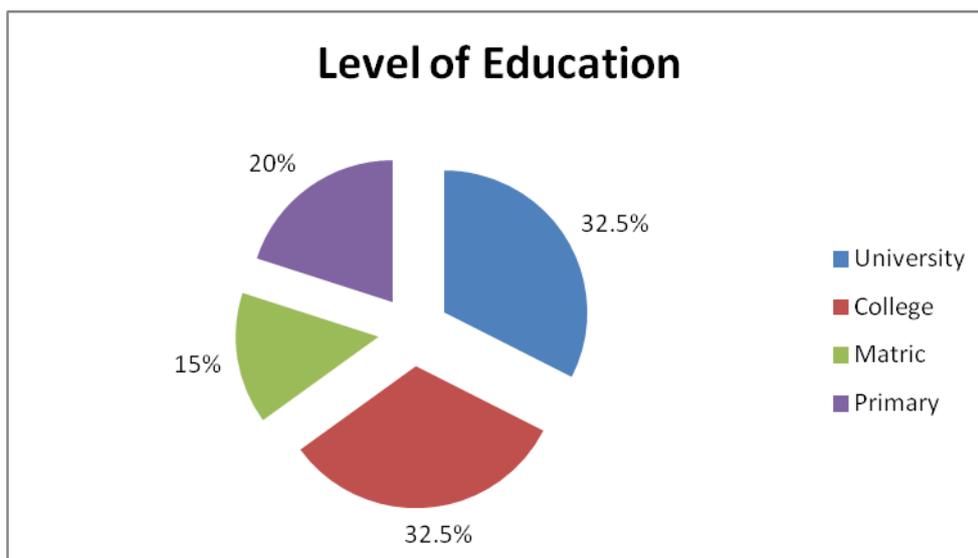


Figure 4.3 Level of Education

4.9.5 Employment

Q4			
Code	Response Item	Frequency	Percent
1	(i) Employed	20	50%
2	(ii) Pensioner	2	5%
3	(iii) Medically unfit	0	0%
4	(iv) Student	11	27.5%
5	(v) Other_____	7	17.5%
Total		40	95%

Table 4.4 Employment status of members

Purpose: To investigate the state of employment amongst church members.

Results: The general population of members who participated in the survey which are employed are 50%; pensioners total 2% of the members who were participants in this survey study; the students or those at school make up 28% of participants; and 18% of participants did not indicate their employment status.

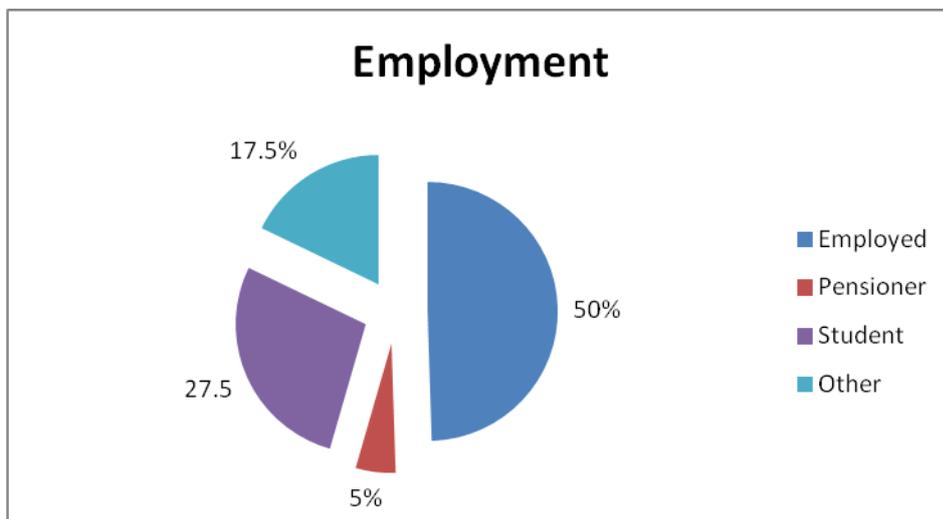


Figure 4.4 Employment

4.9.6 Strategies to facilitate church growths

4.9.6.1 Initial Contact with SDA Church

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Through parents	15	36.58%
(ii) Through other relatives	11	26.82%
(iii) Through other members of the church	9	21.95%
(iv) Through religious tracts/magazines/books	1	2.45%
(v) Other (please specify) _____	5	12.2%
Total	41	97%

Table 4.5 Contact with SDA Church

Purpose: To investigate how the members first came in contact with the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Results: The findings of this survey show that a large percentage (37%) of members was born in the Seventh-day Adventist Church; 27% of participants knew the church through other relatives. The other 22% of participants knew the church through other members of the church. 12% of the participants did not specify how they knew the church. Only 2% confirmed that they knew the church through reading religious tracts/ magazines or books.

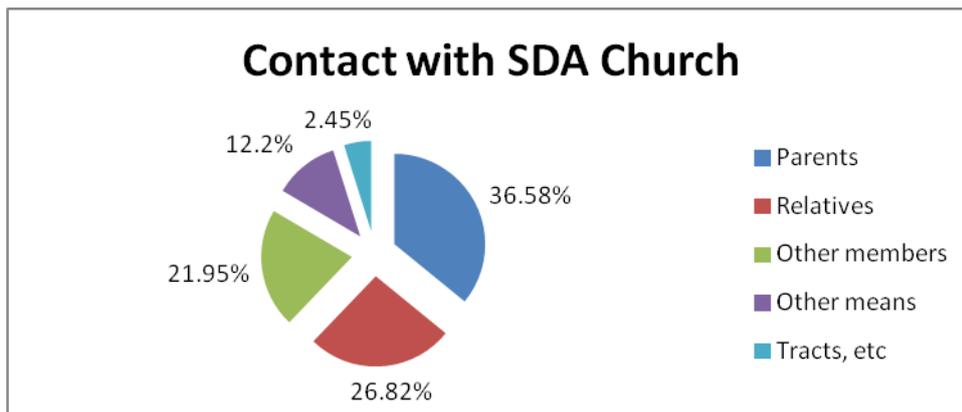


Figure 4.5 Contact with SDA Church

4.9.6.2 Meetings for church worship services

Response Item	Frequency	Percent
(i) Once a week	26	68.4%
(ii) Once per fortnight	2	5.3%
(iii) Once a Month	1	2.6%
(iv) Once in two months	0	0%
(v) Other _____	9	23.6%
Total	38	90.4%

Table 4.6 Meetings for Church worship services

Purpose: To find out from members if they know how often church members meet for worship services.

Results: 68.4% of the members who participated in the survey confirmed that there are church services once a week; 5.3% of the participants indicated that meetings takes place once per fortnight. 2.6% of members indicated that meetings take place once a month. 23.6% of members had also indicated that meetings do take place once in two months.

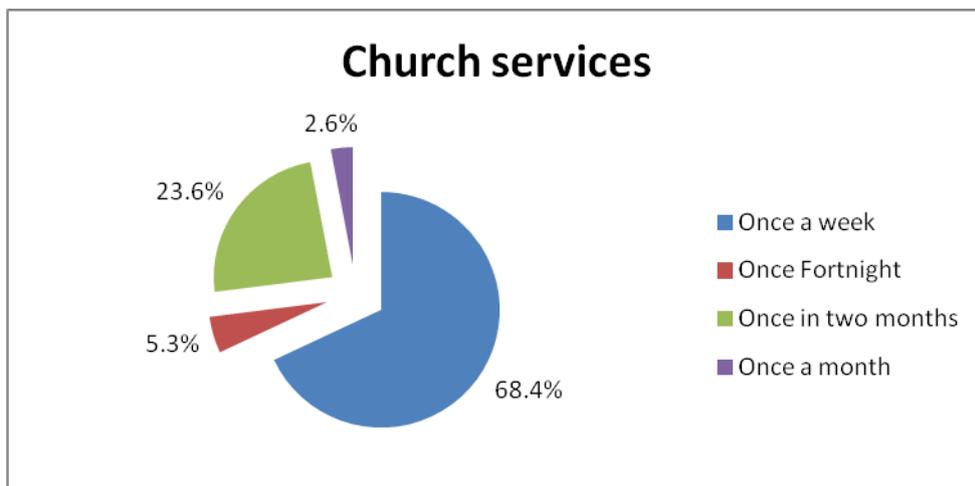


Figure 4.6 Church worship services

4.9.6.3 Church encourages members to conduct Bible studies

Response Item	Frequency	
(i) Not at all	2	5.00%
(ii) Sometimes	9	22.50%
(iii) Always	28	70.00%
(iv) No idea	1	2.50%
(iv) Other_____	0	0.00%
Total	40	95%

Table 4.7 Church encourages members to conduct Bible Studies

Purpose: To investigate if members of the Church are encouraged to conduct Bible studies.

Results: 70% of members who participated in the survey claim that church members are always encouraged to conduct Bible studies as a way of empowering members with mission knowledge. About 22.5% of the members say that the encouragement comes sometimes. 5% of the members who participated in the survey say that there is no encouragement at all for them to conduct Bible studies. Only 2.5% of members have indicated that they have no idea.

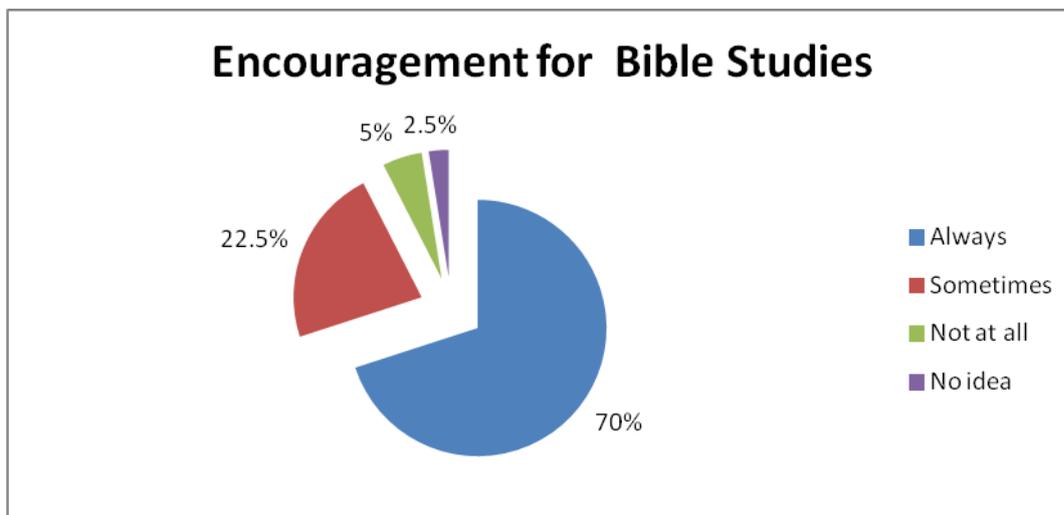


Figure 4.7 Church encourages members to conduct Bible Studies

4.9.6.4 Teachings that aimed to grow the church

Response Item	Frequency	
(i) Not at all	1	2.4%
(ii) Sometimes	3	7.3%
(iii) Always	37	90%
(iv) No idea	0	0%
(v) Other_____	0	0%
Total	41	97.6%

Table 4.8 Teachings that aimed to grow the church

Purpose: To investigate if there are teachings that aim at church growth.

Results: Of the members who took part in the survey, 90% agree that there are teachings that happen with the intention of helping members to be able to teach other people. There is a group of 7% of the people who say that the teachings are intended to help members only sometimes. Only 2% have indicated that the teachings do not help the members at all.

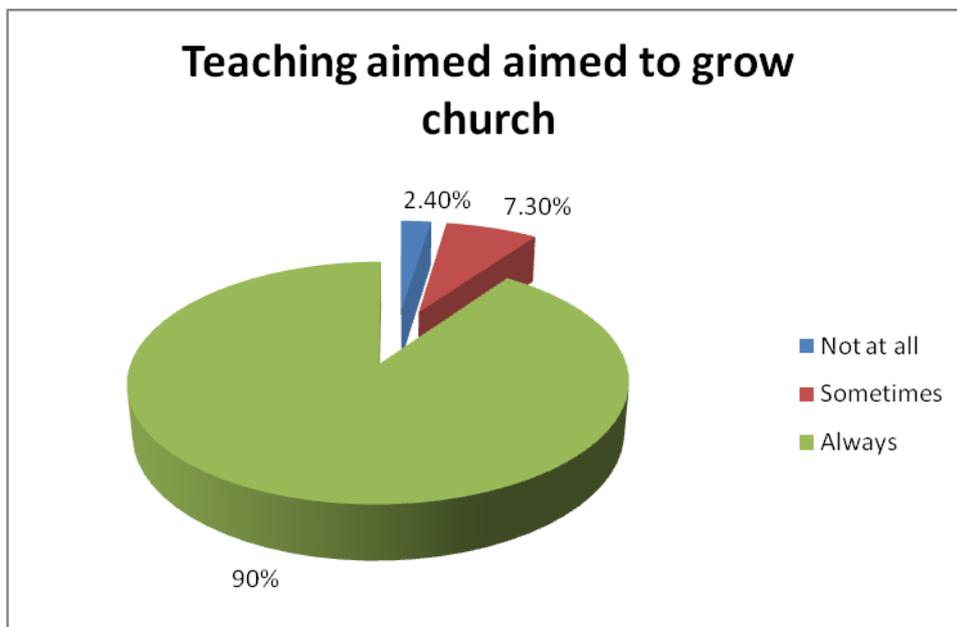


Figure 4.8 Teachings that aimed to grow the Church

4.9.6.5 Availability of welfare programs

Welfare programs	Frequency	
(i) Not at all	2	5%
(ii) Sometimes	19	45%
(iii) Always	21	50%
(iv) No idea	0	0%
(v) Other_____	0	0%
Total	42	100%

Table 4.9 Availability of welfare programs

Purpose: To determine and find out if the church is involved when it comes to helping individuals with clothes, food parcels, health talks etc.

Results: Of the members, who participated in this survey, 50% responded that the church is always helping the people with clothes; food /clothing etc. 45% of the members say that the welfare program happens sometimes. 5% of the people indicated 'not at all'.

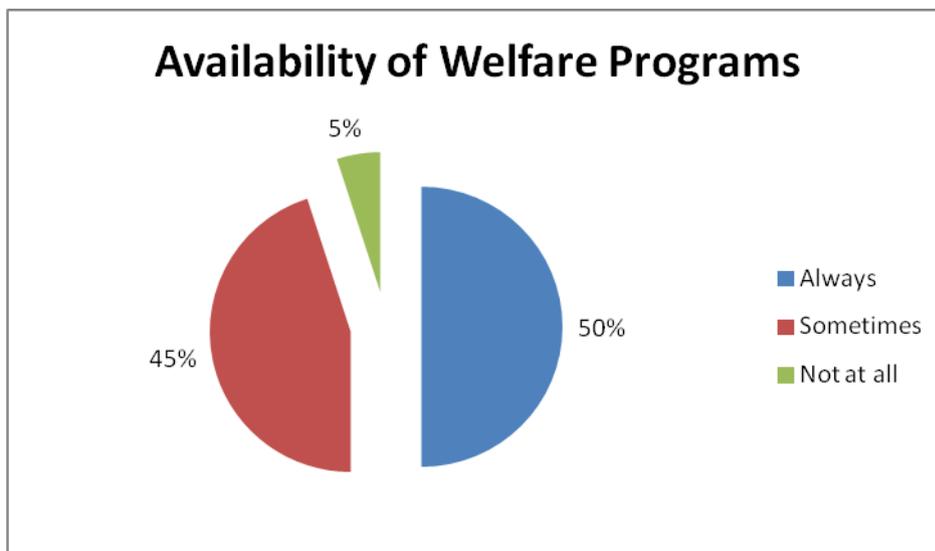


Figure 4.9 Availability of welfare programs

4.9.7 Conditions for growing and nurturing churches around Tzaneen

4.9.7.1 Church shows love to community

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Giving out clothing and food parcels	18	43%
(ii) Visiting the sick	14	33%
(iii) Creating work opportunities	0	0%
(iv) Imparting skills	0	0%
(v) Other _____		0%
Total	32	76%

Table 4.10 Love to community

Purpose: To investigate if the church show love to the community.

Results: 43% of the people who participated have indicated that the church gives out clothing and food to the needy; 33% of participants have indicated that the church visits the sick.

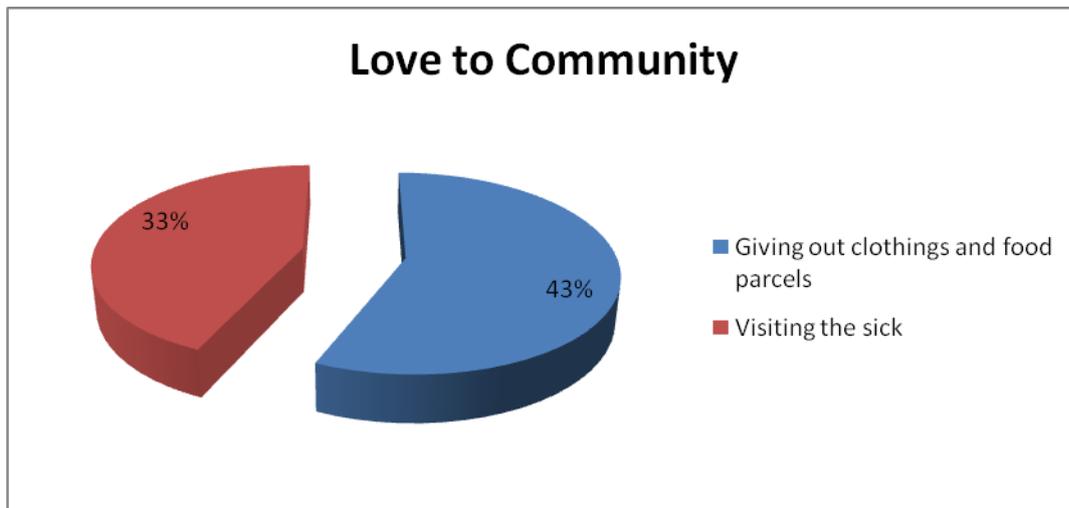


Figure 4.10 Love to community

4.9.7.2 Local language communication

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	19	45%
No	23	55%
Total	42	100%

Table 4.11 Local language communication

Purpose: To investigate amongst the members if they see a need of their leader’s understanding and communicating in a local language.

Results: Of the people who responded to the survey, 45% say that their leaders or pastors can communicate in their local language. The remaining 55% say that their leaders or pastors do not use local language to communicate the gospel.

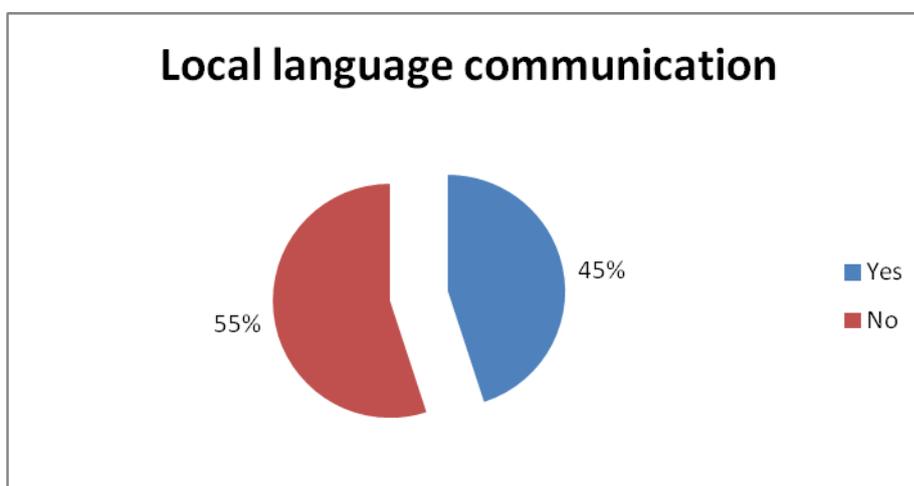


Figure 4.11 local language communications

4.9.7.3 Cultural knowledge

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Always	25	62.5%
(ii) Sometimes	11	27.5%
(iii) Not at all	2	5%
(iv) No idea	2	5%
(v) Other _____	0	0%
Total	40	95%

Table 4.12 Cultural knowledge

Purpose: To investigate and find out if culture helps in spreading the gospel.

Results: 67% of the people who participated in the survey say that knowing the culture of the people always helps when spreading the gospel. 24% of the people say that knowing the culture only helps sometimes. 6% have indicated that they have no idea whether knowing the culture helps when spreading the gospel and the other 3% have indicated that knowing the culture does not help at all.

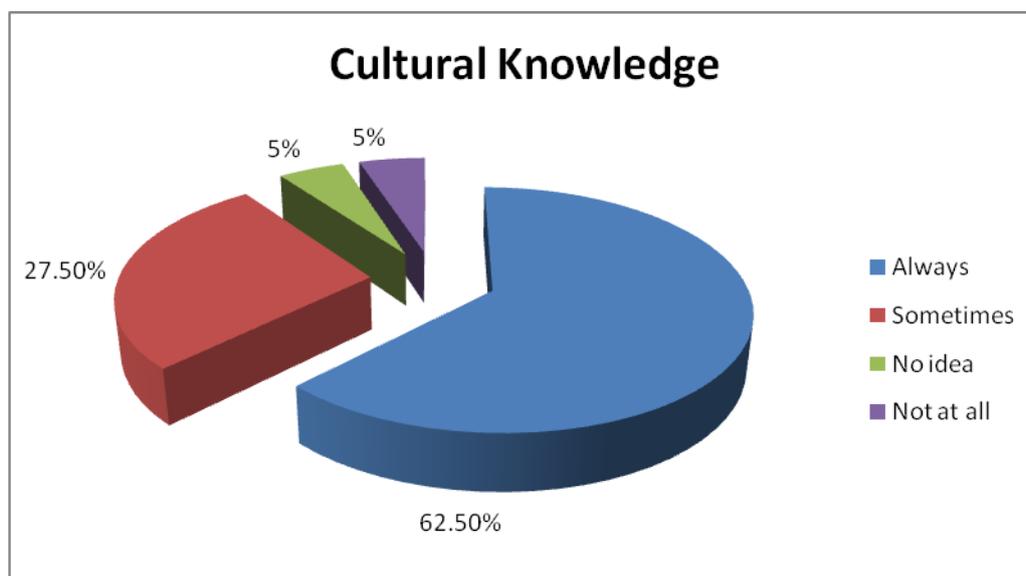


Figure 4.12 Cultural knowledge

4.9.7.4 The use of technology in the church

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Always	10	24%
(ii) Sometimes	24	59%
(iii) Not at all	3	7%
(iv) No idea	4	10%
(v) Other _____	0	0%
Total	41	97%

Table 4.13 The use of technology in the church

Purpose: To investigate amongst the members if they consider technology as an effective means of spreading the gospel.

Results: Of the members who took part in the survey, 24% say that technology is always necessary for the spread of the gospel. 59% of members say that technology helps to spread the gospel sometimes. 7% of the members who took the survey say that technology does not help at all to spread the gospel, while 10% of participants have no idea whether technology helps the spread of the gospel or not.

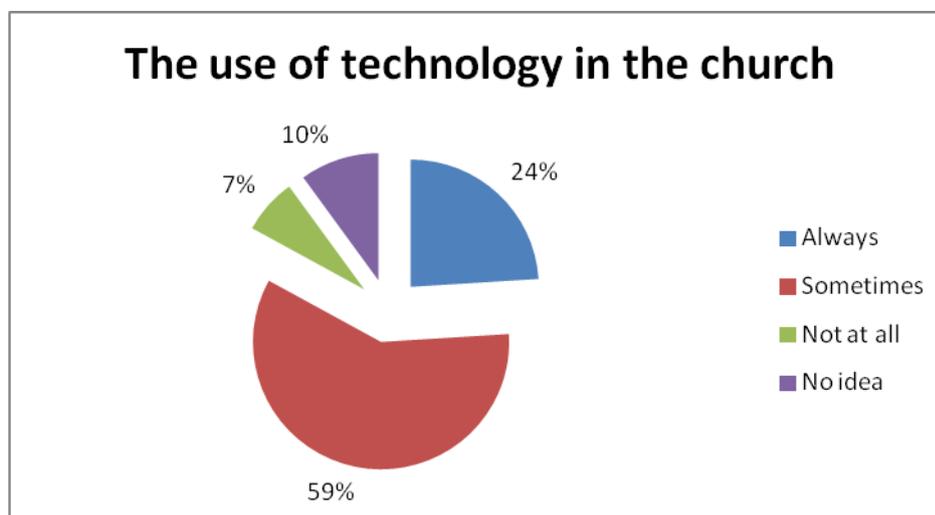


Figure 4.13 The use of technology in the church

4.9.7.5 Social transformation

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) In the process	5	12%
(ii) Not yet	16	39%
(iii) Already	6	15%
(iv) No idea	12	29%
(v) Other _____	2	5%
Total	41	97%

Table 4.14 Social transformation

Purpose: To investigate and find out if the church has moved from the Apartheid system of the past.

Results: 12% of the members who took part in the investigation hold the view that the church is still in the process of transformation. 39% of the members who participated say that the church has not moved from the Apartheid order of the past. 15% of the participants believe that the church has already passed the era of Apartheid, with 29% of the members having no idea whether the church has transformed or not. Only 5% of members have indicated the other reasons not mentioned.

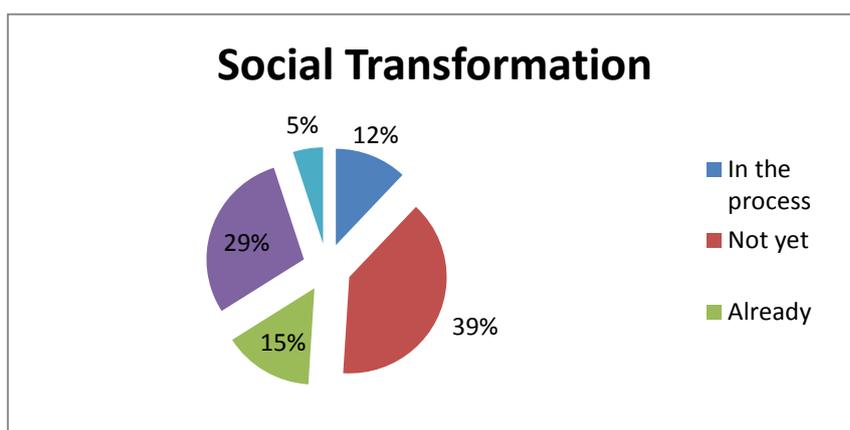


Figure 4.14 Social transformation

4.9.8 Challenges of growing and nurturing churches

4.9.8.1 Unemployment as a hindrance towards church growth

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Always	11	28%
(ii) Sometimes	18	44%
(iii) Not at all	7	18%
(iv) No idea	4	10%
(v) Other _____	0	0%
Total	40	95%

Table 4.15 Unemployment problem

Purpose: To investigate and find out if unemployment is a hindrance towards church growth.

Results: 28% of members say that unemployment is always a hindrance towards church growth. 45% of the people say that unemployment is sometimes a hindrance towards Church growths. 18% of the people say that unemployment is not a hindrance towards church growth. 10% of members have no idea whether unemployment hinders church growths or not.

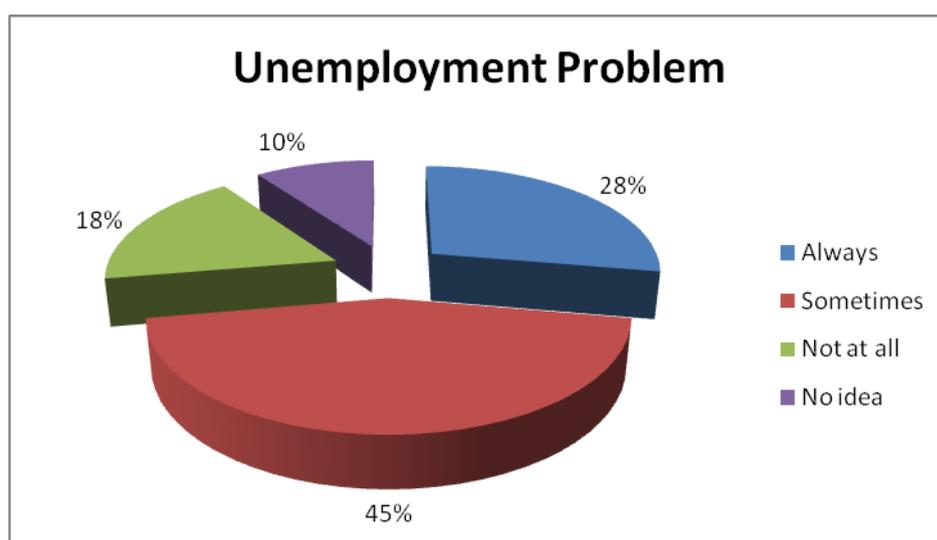


Figure 4.15 Unemployment problem

4.9.8.2 Acceptance of the poor in the church

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Always	29	71%
(ii) Sometimes	7	17%
(iii) Not at all	3	7%
(iv) No idea	2	5%
(v) Other	0	0%
Total	41	97%

Table 4.16 Acceptance of the poor in the church

Purpose: To find out if the poor in the church are accepted and welcomed in the church

Results: 71% of the people who participated in the survey say that the poor always feel welcomed in the church. 17% of participants say that the poor feel welcomed in the church only sometimes. 7% of the members say that the poor do not feel welcomed in the church at all. 5% of the people have no idea whether the poor feel welcomed or not.

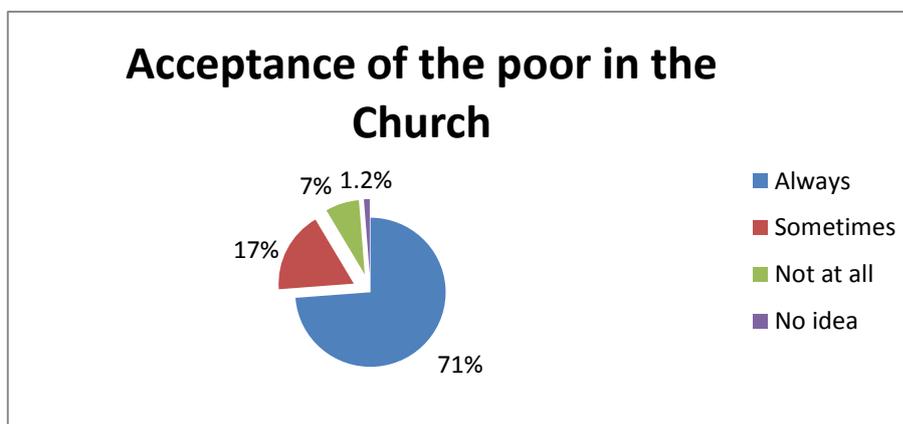


Figure 4.16 Acceptance of the poor in the Church

4.9.8.3 HIV/Aids Stigma

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Always	20	43%
(ii) Sometimes	15	32%
(iii) Not at all	4	10%
(iv) No idea	4	10%
(v) Other	0	0%
Total	42	100%

Table 4.17 HIV/aids Stigma

Purpose: To investigate amongst members if there are teachings about HIV/Aids awareness in the church.

Results: 43% of the members who participated say the church always teaches about HIV/Aids awareness. 32% of the participants say that the awareness of HIV/Aids is taught sometimes. 10% of participants say that HIV/Aids is not taught at all and another 10% of participants have no idea whether there are lessons on HIV/Aids awareness.

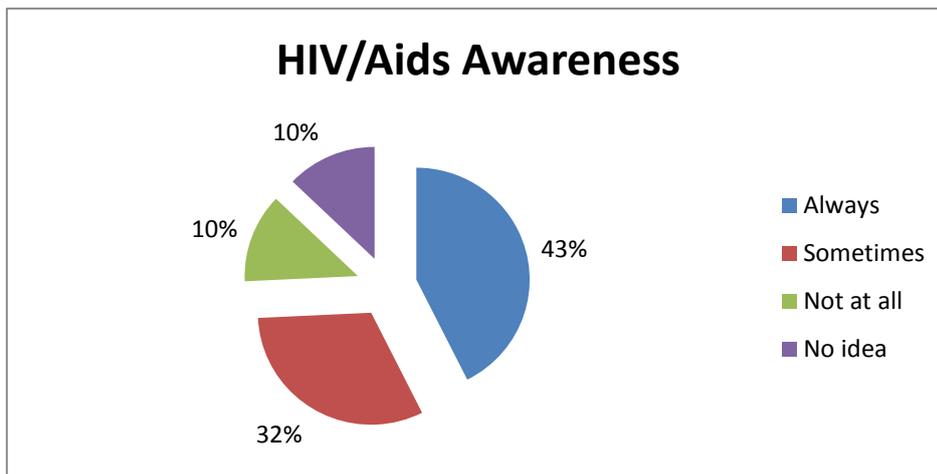


Figure 4:17 HIV/Aids Awareness

4.9.8.4 Racial segregation in the SDA church

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Always	4	10%
(ii) Sometimes	10	24%
(iii) Not at all	24	59%
(iv) No idea	3	7%
(v) Other	0	0%
Total	41	97%

Table 4.18 Racial segregation in the SDA church

Purpose: To find out if there is still Apartheid or racial segregation in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Results: 10% of the people who participated in the survey say that there is always racial segregation or Apartheid in the SDA Church. 24% of members say that there is racial segregation sometimes. 59% of the people say there is no racial segregation in the SDA Church at all. 7 % of the people have no idea whether there still a racial segregation in the SDA Church or not.

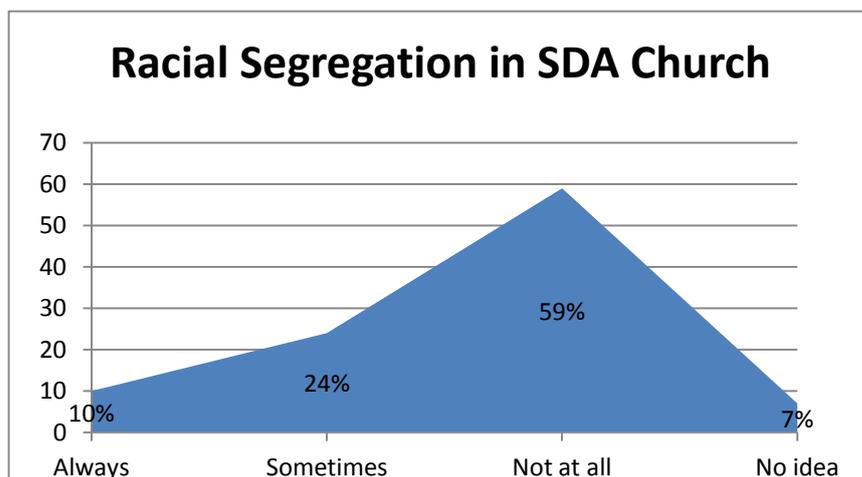


Figure 4.18 Racial segregation in the SDA church

4.9.9 Availability of guidelines to develop strategies for growing churches around Tzaneen.

4.9.9.1 Guidelines such as policies, or manuals.

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Yes there are many	21	50%
(ii) No, there is none	6	14%
(iii) Very few	12	29%
(iv) No idea	2	5%
(v) Other views	1	2%
Total	42	100%

Table 4.19 Guidelines e.g., policies or manuals

Purpose: To establish whether or not guidelines for developing strategies of growing churches are followed.

Results: 50% of the members who have participated in the survey have confirmed there is material or guidelines for church growth; 14% said there is none; 29% admitted there are very few guidelines on church growth; 5% had no idea and the remaining 2% had other views.

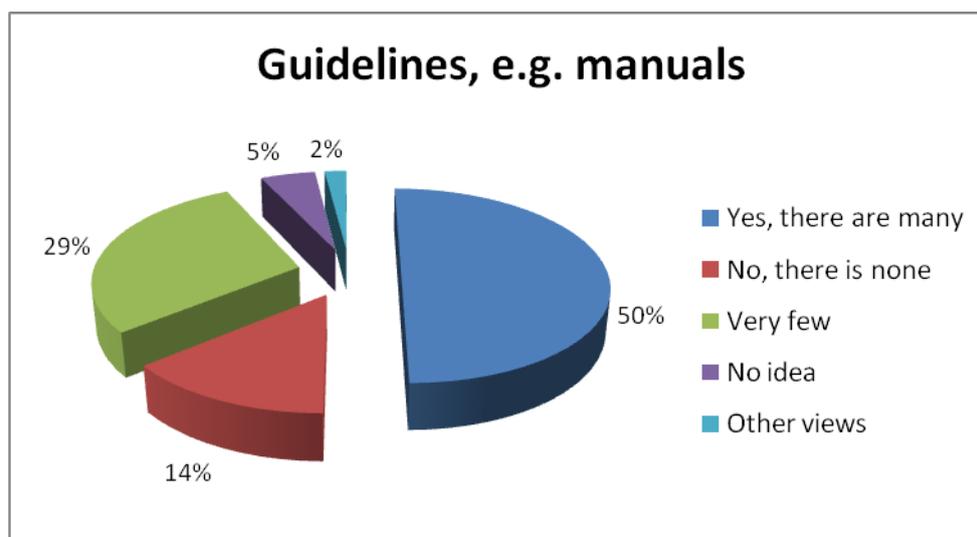


Figure 4.19 Guidelines, e.g. manuals

4.9.9.2 Policies and manuals of the church when developing strategies for church growth.

Response Item	Frequency	Percent
(i) Always	24	57%
(ii) Sometimes	10	24%
(iii) Not at all	7	17%
(iv) No idea	1	2%
(v) Other _____	0	0%
Total	42	100%

Table 4.20 The use of policies and manuals

Purpose: To determine if policies and programs that are in place are being followed when developing strategies for church growth.

Results: In response to the question of whether or not church members followed policies, programs and practices of the church when developing strategies for church growth, a higher percentage agreed that policies, programs and church practices are always being followed. 57% of participants confirmed the following of church programs and policies in applying strategies on church growth. 24% of participants admit that these policies and strategies are sometimes followed and 17% of the participants disagreed. The remaining 2% had no idea whatsoever.

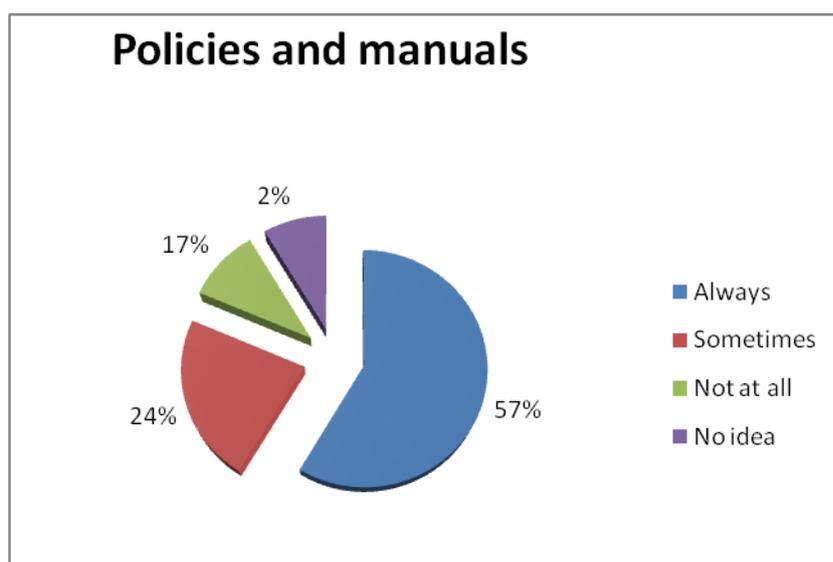


Figure 4.20 The use of policies and manuals

4.9.9.3 Ministry to the disabled

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Always	11	26%
(ii) Sometimes	13	31%
(iii) Not at all	12	29%
(iv) No idea	6	14%
(v) Other _____	0	0%
Total	42	100%

Table 4.21 Ministry to the disabled

Purpose: To find out whether or not the church meets the needs of social inequalities and the physically disadvantaged.

Results: Those who felt the church always met the needs of social inequalities and the physically disadvantaged comprise 26% of the people interviewed, while 31% of participants believed this happened sometimes and 29% of the subjects had not seen this happening. 14% of the candidates interviewed had no idea. The disparity in percentages seems to be minimal here. This makes it difficult for a statistician or researcher to make the right deductions.

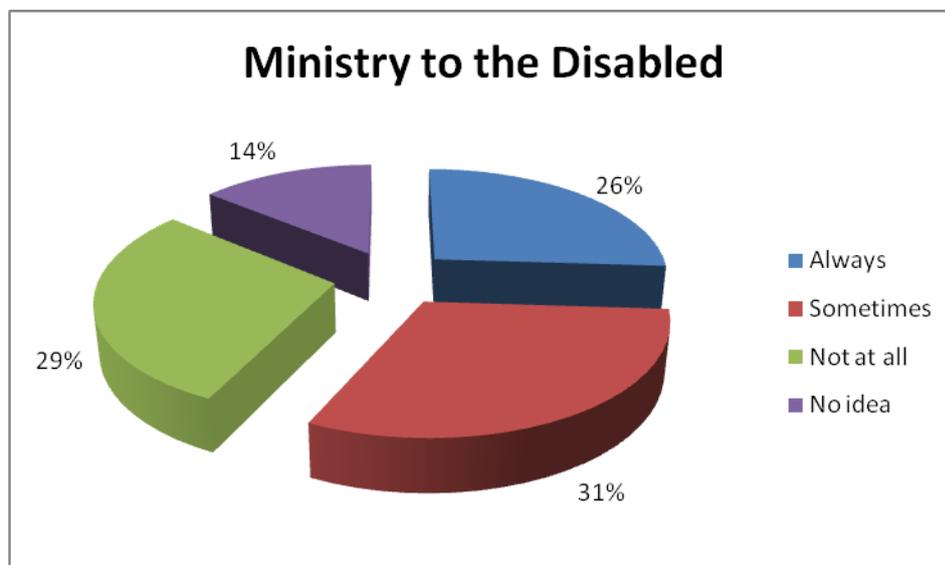


Figure 4.21 Ministry to the disabled

4.9.9.4 Prison ministries

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Always	3	7%
(ii) Sometimes	20	49%
(iii) Not at all	16	39%
(iv) No idea	2	5%
(v) Other	0	0%
Total	41	97%

Table 4.22 Prison ministries

Purpose: To establish if churches are conducting prison ministries.

Results: 7% of the members have indicated that churches always minister to prison inmates. 49% of the members report that churches sometimes conduct prison ministries. 39% of the members have responded that not all churches conduct prison ministries. 5% of the members report that they have no idea about prison ministries concerning the churches.

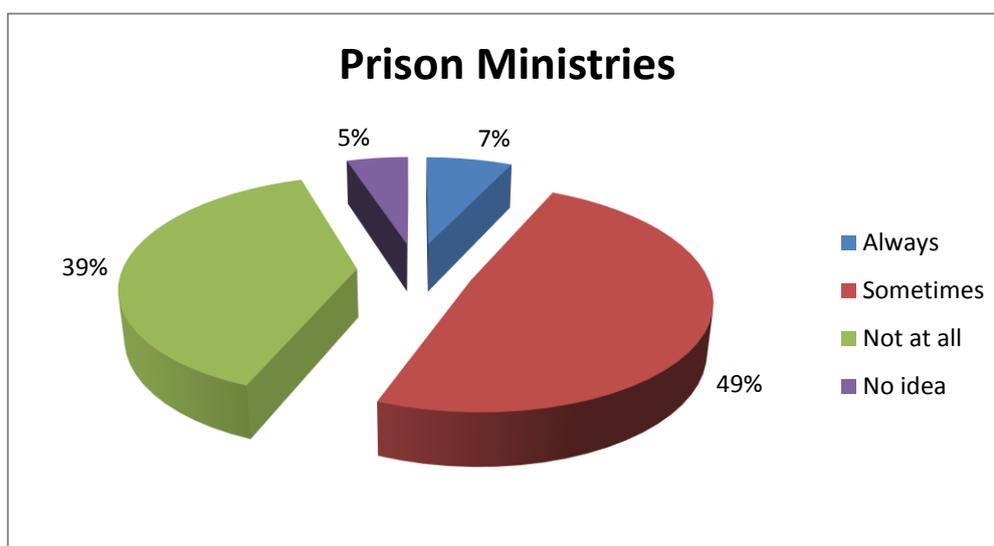


Figure 4.22 Prison Ministries

4.9.9.5 The church's assistance to those in need of basic services such as houses, water and electricity

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Always	3	7%
(ii) Sometimes	20	49%
(iii) Not at all	16	39%
(iv) No idea	2	5%
(v) Other _____	0	0%
Total	41	97%

Table 4.23 Church's assistance with basic needs

Purpose: To verify church involvement in meeting the need to assist the community with basic services such as houses, water and electricity. It is generally believed that people expect such responsibilities as housing, water and electric supply to belong solely to the government, however, the church does have some role to play..

Results: 49% of participants believed that the church sometimes assists in meeting the need for housing, water and electric supply while 7% of participants deem this to always happen. 39% of participants think the church is not meeting the need for basic necessities and 5% of participants had no idea.

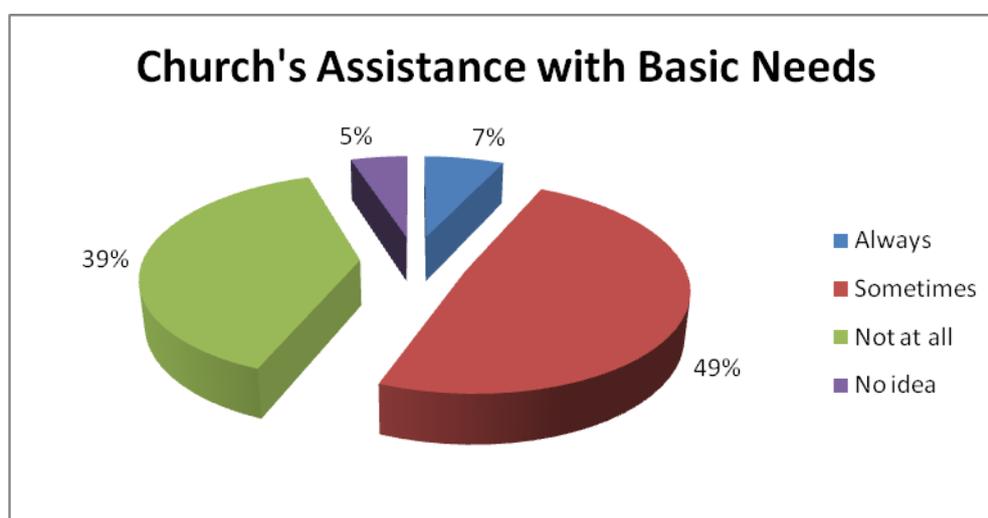


Figure 4.23 Church's assistance with basic needs

4.9.10 Church leaders

4.9.10.1 Average length of service in leadership position.

Period of leadership service	Frequency	Percent
(i) 0 - 5 years	20	47%
(ii) 6 – 10 years	8	19%
(iii) 11 – 15 years	7	17%
(iv) 16 - 20 years	2	5%
(v) Above 21 years	5	12%
Total	42	100%

Table 4.24 Period of leadership service

Purpose: To determine the length of service in leadership in the SDA Church, particularly in Tzaneen.

Results: 47% of the participants interviewed indicated that they served between 0 to 5 years; 19% of participants served between 6 to 10 years; 17% of participants served between 11 to 15 years; 5% of participants served between 16 to 20 years; and 12% of participants served for over 21 years. All the participants were in leadership positions as members of the church board.

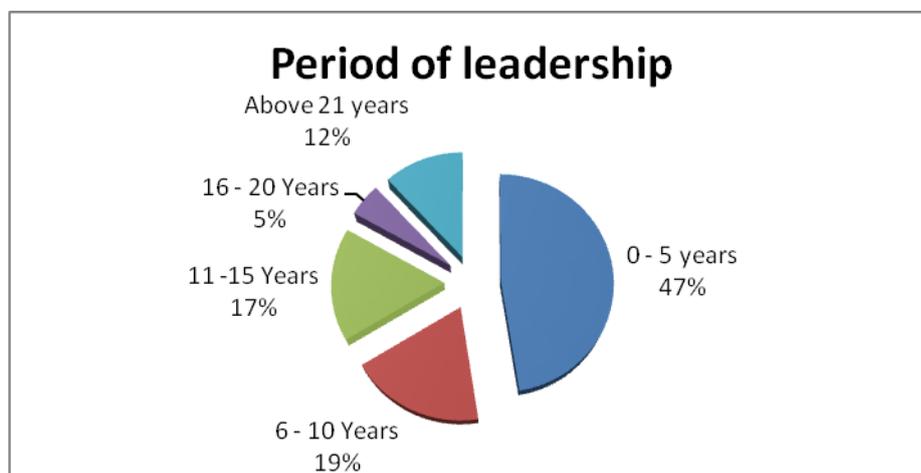


Figure 4.24 Period of leadership service

4.9.10.2 Mission statement

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	30	77%
No	9	23%
Total	39	92%

Table 4.25 Mission statement

Purpose: To find out if members of the church are aware of or have knowledge concerning the mission statement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Results: 77% of the members who participated say that they know that the church has a mission statement. 23% of members say that they do not know about the availability of the mission statement.

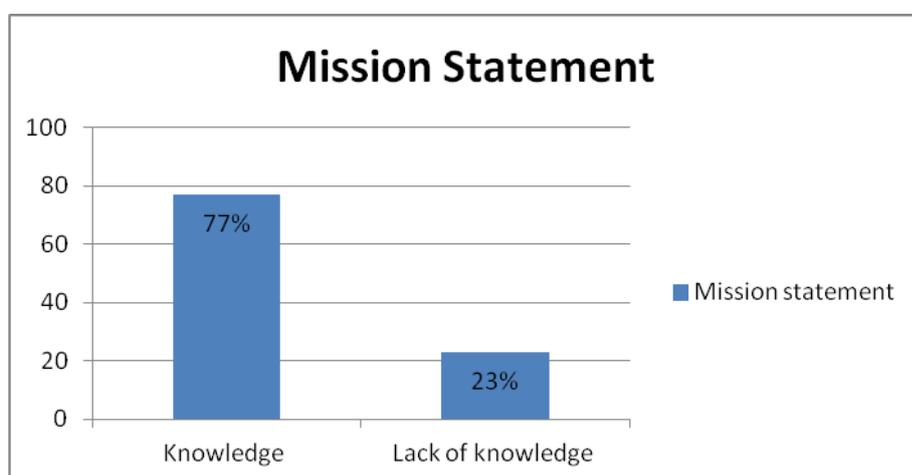


Figure 4.25 Mission statement

4.9.10.3 Strategies used to start the church

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Mass Evangelism	10	26%
(ii) Media Evangelism	0	0%
(iii) Literature Evangelism	10	26%
(iv) Personal Evangelism	15	38%
(v) Other _____	3	8%
Total	38	90%

Table 4.26 Strategies used to start the church

Purpose: To find out the strategies of evangelism used when starting churches.

Results: 26% of the participants' state that the church strategy used to start their church was mass evangelism. Another 26% of those who participated claim that the strategy used to start their church were literature evangelism. 38% of the people reported that their church was started through personal evangelism. 8% of participants have indicated that the strategy used to start the church was other than the ones mentioned in the table; the option was also provided.

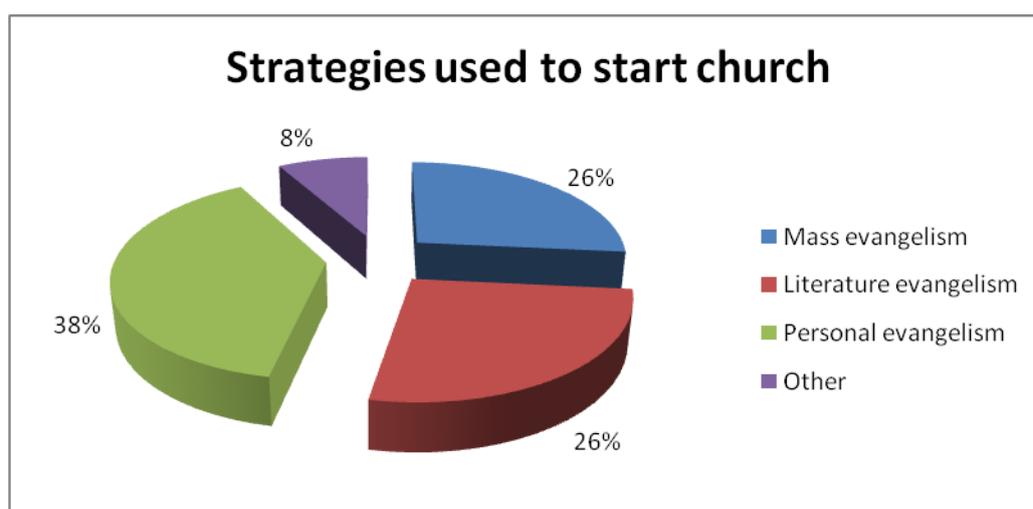


Figure 4.26 Strategies used to start the church

4.9.10.4 Method used to win new converts

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Visitation	4	10%
(ii) Door to door and outreach	22	54%
(iii) Friendship	5	12%
(iv) Film Shows	0	0%
(v) Other _____	10	23%
Total	41	97%

Table 4.27 Method of soul winning

Purpose: To find out from members which method was used to win new souls in the church? Participants were also requested to tick one option.

Results: 10% of the people who took the survey reported that the method used was visitation. 54% of the people say the method used was door to door, outreach. 12% claim that friendship was a method used to win new souls. 23% of the people state that the method used was other than the ones they were asked about.

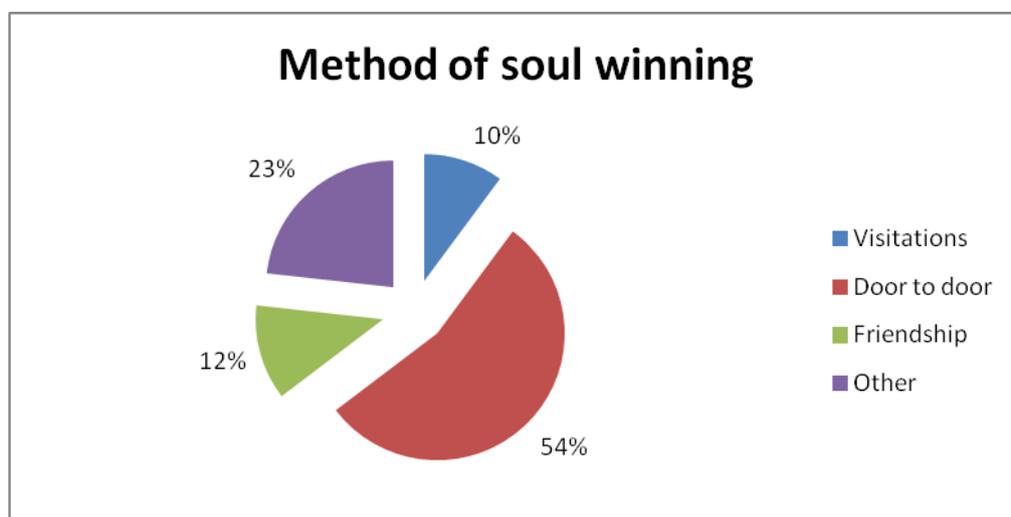


Figure 4.27 Method of soul winning

4.9.10.5 Challenges the church faces when planting churches in the area

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Poverty	7	17%
(ii) Non participant members	9	22%
(iii) No Church building	6	15%
(iv) Lack of finance	12	29%
(v) Other _____	4	10%
Total	38	90%

Table 4.28 Challenges of church planting

Purpose: To find out about the challenges the churches are facing when planting new churches.

Results: 17% of the people say that there are challenges related to poverty. 22% of the people said that the challenge is the non-participation of members. 15% said that it is because there are no church buildings. 29% of participants point at the lack of

finance as a challenge to starting new churches. Only 10% of participants have indicated other reasons not asked by the researcher.

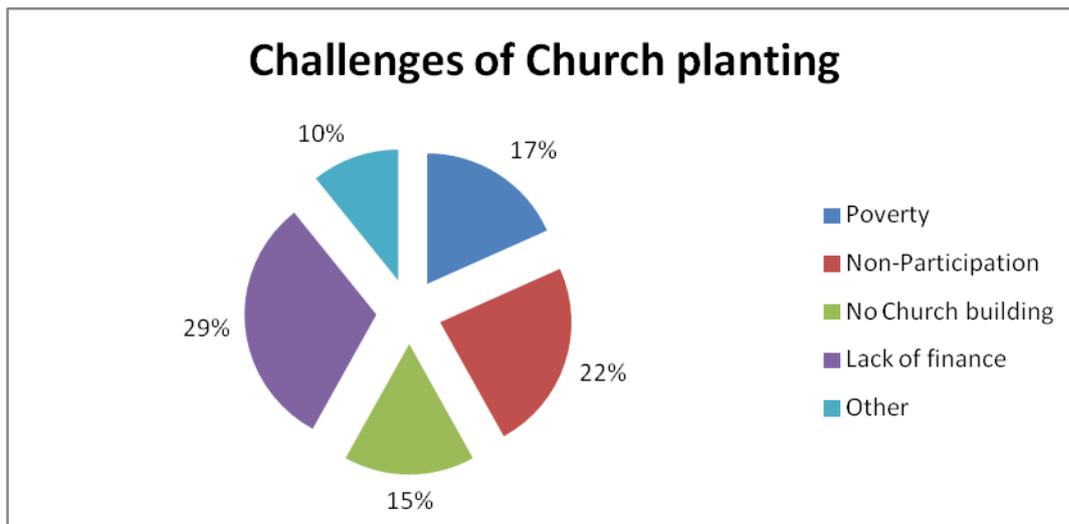


Figure 4.28 Strategy used by the church

4.9.10.6 Strategy used by the Church to gain access to none members

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Embracing the culture	3	7%
(ii) Criticizing the culture	1	2%
(iii) Technology and modern lifestyle	2	4%
(iv) Loving the people	12	28%
(v) Other_____	7	16%
Total	25	59%

Table 4.29 Strategy used to access none members

Purpose: To find out the strategy used by the Church to gain access to none members

Results: 7% of the people said that the strategy used to reach none members is that of embracing the culture. 2% have indicated that the strategy of reaching to the people is that of criticizing the culture. 4% of the people say that technology is the strategy that is used to reach those who are none members. There are also 28% of the people who say that the strategy to reach outsiders is by loving the people. The 16% have indicated that there are other strategies that were used which the tool did not provide in the options.

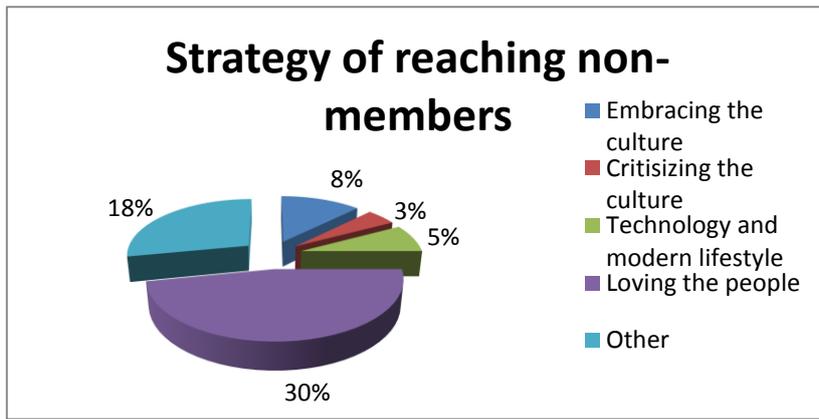


Figure 4.29 Strategy used to access none members

4.9.10.7 Language used to communicate the gospel

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Tsonga	18	43%
(ii) English	12	28%
(iii) Selobedu	10	24%
(iv) Afrikaans	0	0%
(v) Other_____	2	5%
Total	42	100%

Table 4.30 Language used to communicate the gospel

Purpose: To find out what language is commonly used to communicate the gospel.

Results: 43% of the people use Xi-Tsonga when communicating the gospel. 28% of the people are using English as a medium of teaching the gospel. 24% of the participants are using Selobedu to communicate the gospel; while only 5% are using other languages not indicated in the options.

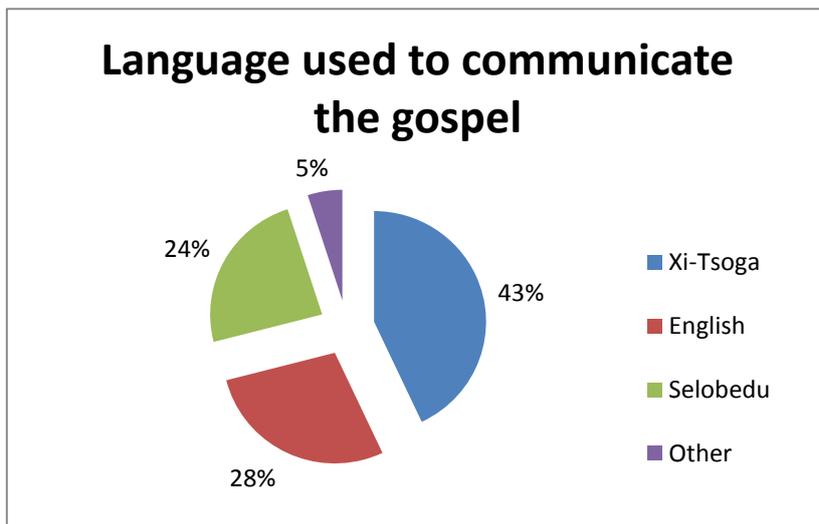


Figure 4.30 Language used to communicate the gospel

4.9.10.8 The assistance to the poor

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Food parcels	23	56%
(ii) Clothing	5	7%
(iii) Finance	3	2%
(iv) Social needs	5	8%
(v) Other _____	1	2%
Total	37	88%

Table 4.31 The assistance to the poor

Purpose: To find out what the churches are using to attract the ordinary among ordinary citizens.

Results: 56% of the people said that the distribution of food parcels are used to attract the ordinary citizens like the poor; including the 7% who also confirm that giving out clothing assists when ministering to the poor. 2% said finance is the key to reaching out to the poor. 8% mentioned the use of the social needs as the key to ministering to the poor. Only 1% indicated other means not mentioned in the category.

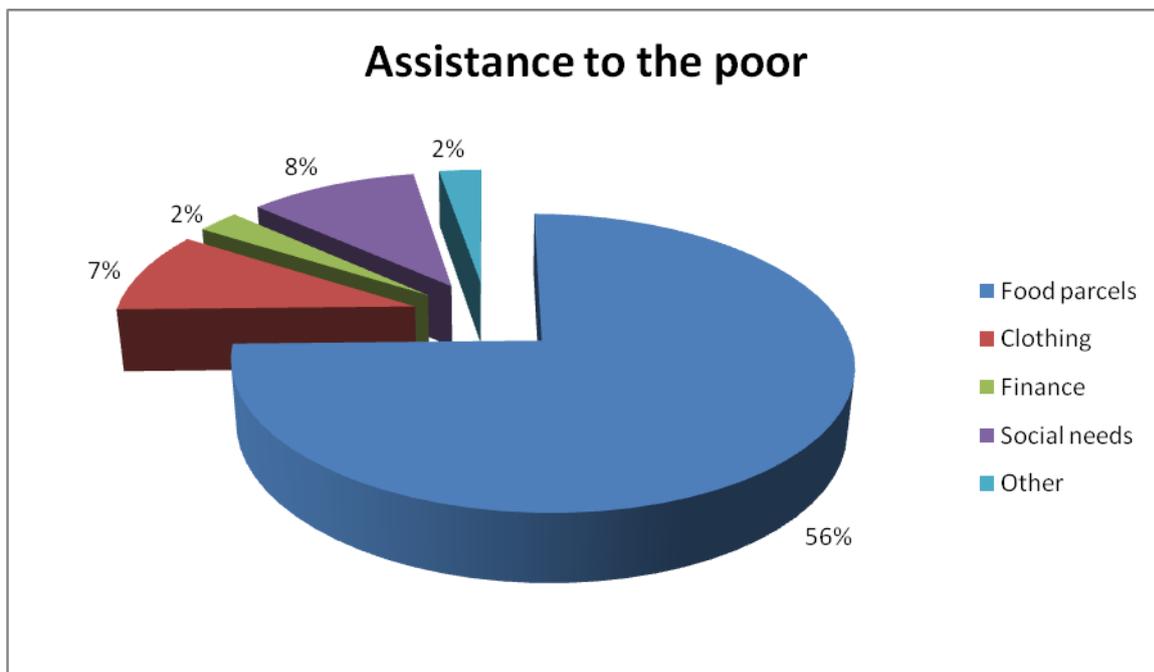


Figure 4.31 The assistance to the poor.

4.9.10.9 Years of church structures

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) 0 - 5 years ago	5	13%
(ii) 6 - 10 years ago	15	39%
(iii) 11 - 15 years ago	6	16%
(iv) 16 - 20 years ago	9	24%
(v) Other	3	8%
Total	38	90%

Table 4.32 Years of church structures

Purpose: To find out how many years ago the structures were erected.

Discussion: 13% of the people who participated in the survey say their structures were erected 5 years ago. 39% have reported that the structures were erected 10 years ago. 16% said the structures of their churches were erected 15 years ago. 24% claim that the structures were erected 20 years ago. There are 8% of the people who have indicated that the ages are other than the ones indicated in the range posted in the table.

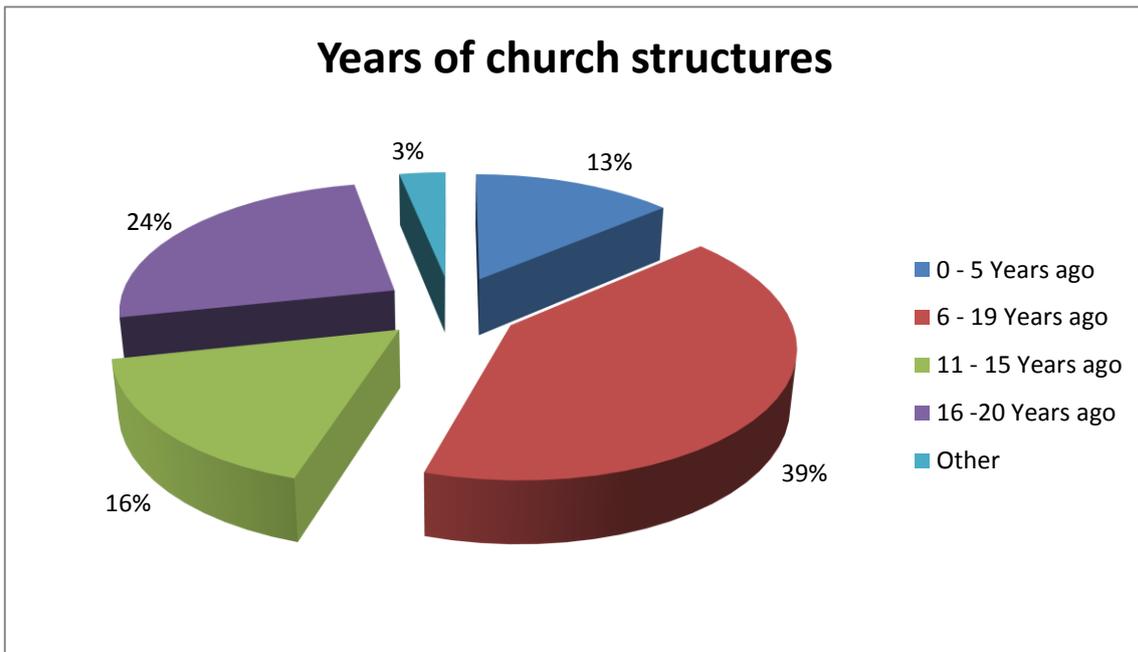


Figure 4.32 Years of church structures

4.9.10.10 Worship venues

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Own structure	29	69%
(ii) Hired Structure/ School	11	26%
(iii) Temporary Structure	1	2%
(iv) House	0	0%
(v) Other state here _____	0	0%
Total	41	97%

Table 4.33 Worship venues

Purpose: To find out where the church services are held.

Results: 69% of the people are worshipping in their own structures. 26% of participants are using hired structures such as schools for worship. 2% of the people indicated that they are using temporary structures for worship services.

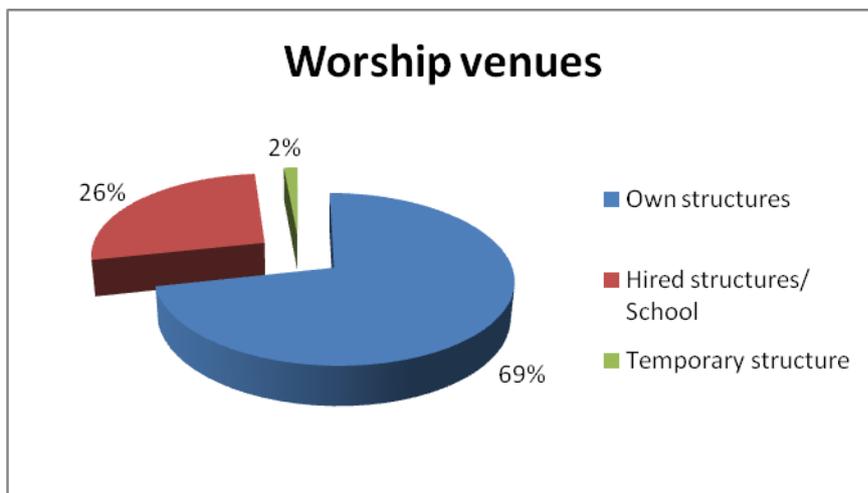


Figure 4.33 Worship venues

4.9.10.11 Effective strategies for planting churches in the area of Tzaneen

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Learn the language of the locals	7	17%
(ii) Live amongst the people	11	26%
(iii) Show hospitality	21	50%
(iv) Appear to be a stranger	1	2%
(v) Other _____	0	0%
Total	40	95%

Table 4.34 Effective strategies for planting churches

Purpose: To establish the effective strategy for planting churches around Tzaneen.

Results: 7% of the people said the effective way is to learn the language of the locals. 26% said that living amongst the people is effective for church planting. 50% said that showing hospitality is the best strategy for effective church planting. Only 1% said that one should appear to be a stranger for effective church planting.

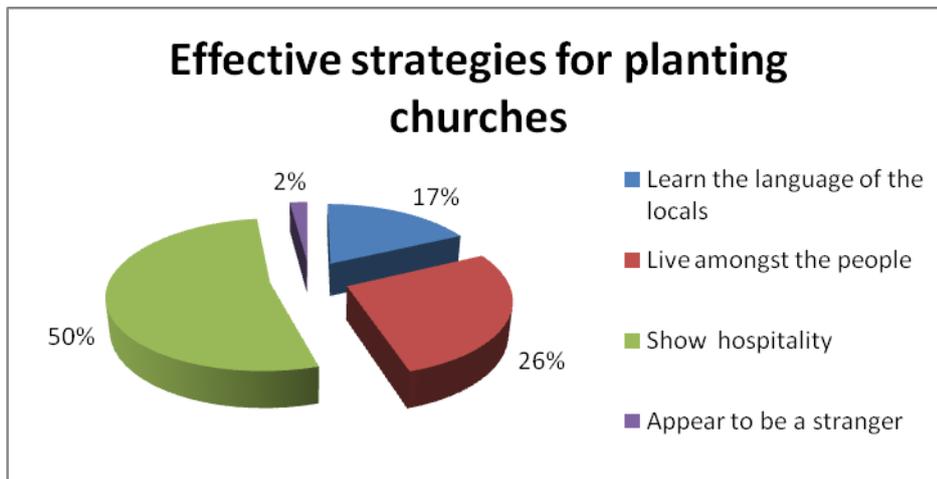


Figure 4.34 Effective strategies for planting churches

4.9.10.12 Church growth

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	23	55%
No	19	45%
	42	100%

Table 4.35 Church growth

Purpose: To find out from members if their church is growing.

Results: Of the people, who responded to the question, 55% said yes, their church is growing; 45% of those who responded said no, their church is not growing. These results confirm what chapter 3 ascertains in that there is a minimal or no significance growth of membership.

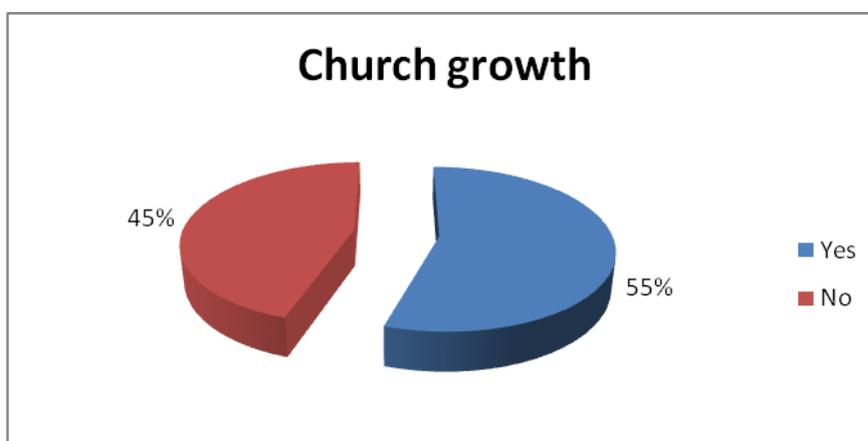


Figure 4.35 Church growth

4.9.10.13 Reasons for church growth

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) To reach baptismal target	13	31%
(ii) Increase finance	0	0%
(iii) To be able to serve the community better	23	55%
(iv) To satisfy Leader's salaries	1	2%
(v) Any other _____	4	10%
Total	41	97%

Table 4.36 Reasons for church growth

Purpose: To find out from members if they know the reasons for church growth.

Results: 31% of participants indicated that the reasons for church growth are baptismal target; 55% of participants reported that the reason for church growth is to be able to serve the community better. 2% of participants indicated that the reasons for church growth are to satisfy leadership salaries. 10% of participants have indicated other reasons not mentioned in the item of choice.

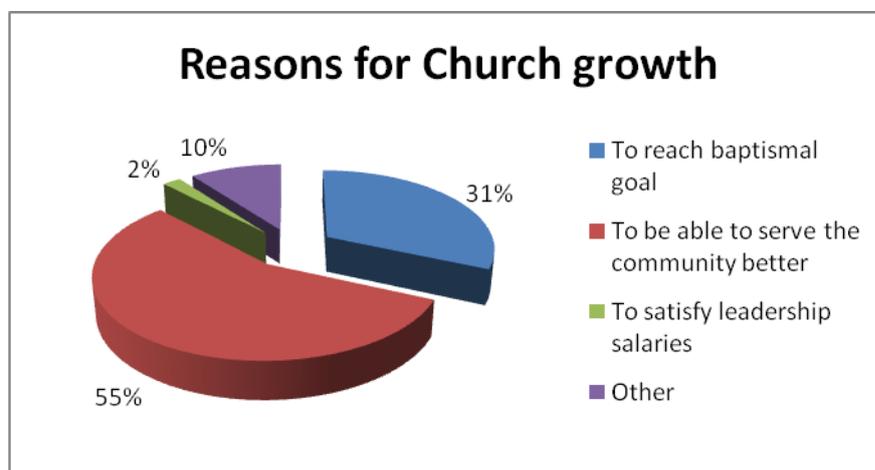


Figure 4.36 Reasons for church growth

4.9.10.14 Challenges towards church planting in Tzaneen

Response item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) HIV & Aids	0	0%
(ii) Unemployment	19	53%

(iii) Poverty	9	25%
(iv) Illiteracy	4	11%
(v) Other _____	3	8%
Total	35	83%

Table 4.37 Challenges towards church planting in Tzaneen

Purpose: To establish if there are challenges experienced when planting churches around Tzaneen.

Results: 53% of the participants said that unemployment is the challenge concerning church planting. 25% of participants indicated that poverty is the hindrance towards church planting. 11% of participants indicated that illiteracy is the challenge; the 11% is significance for this study because, the IDP of Tzaneen speaks to the illiteracy that exists within the municipality. Only 8% of participants have indicated that there are other factors which are a challenge for church planting.

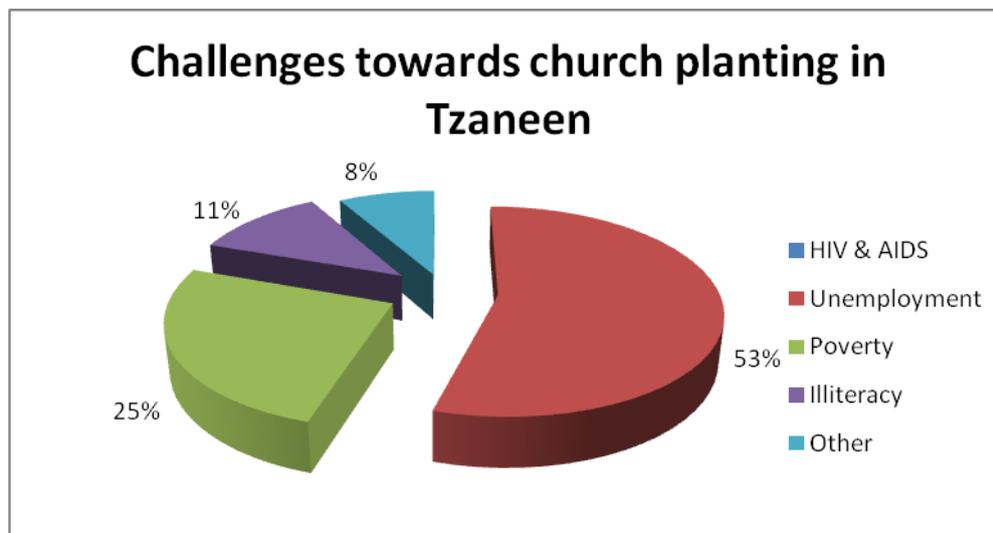


Figure 4.37 Challenges towards church planting in Tzaneen

4.9.10.15 Opportunities for doing evangelistic work in the area of Tzaneen

Opportunities	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Language	17	43%
(ii) Culture	4	10%
(iii) Technology	2	5%
(iv) Transformation	10	25%
(v) Other _____	4	10%
Total	37	88%

Table 4.38 Opportunities of doing evangelistic work in the area of Tzaneen

Purpose: To find out if there are evangelism opportunities in the area of Tzaneen.

Results: 43% of participants said that language is an opportunity for doing evangelism; 10% of participants said that culture is an opportunity. 5% of those who participated claim that technology is an opportunity for doing evangelism in the area; 25% of the people said that transformation is an opportunity of doing evangelism; and 4% of participants indicated other reasons not stated in the items of response as reasons of doing evangelism.

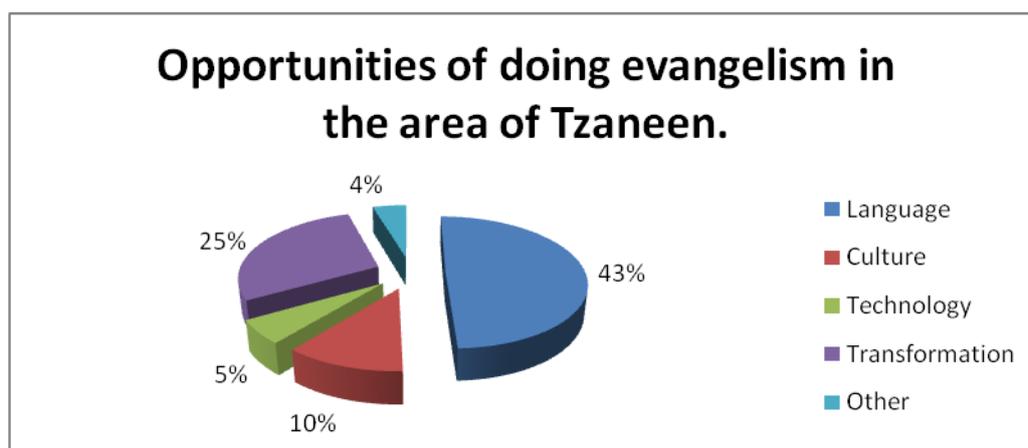


Figure 4.38 Opportunities of evangelism

4.9.10.16 Dynamics of church growth

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Member's participation in witnessing	17	41%
(ii) Supplying social needs	2	5%
(iii) Building structures which attract the masses	0	0%
(iv) Preaching relevant messages	17	41%
(v) Other(s) _____	0	0%
Total	36	85%

Table 4.39 Dynamics of Church growth

Purpose: To investigate amongst the members of the church if they are aware of what makes the church grow.

Results: 41% of the people raised the member's participation in witnessing as a factor that makes churches grow. 2% of participants said that if you supply social

needs, the church will grow. 41% of participants said preaching relevant messages makes churches grow.

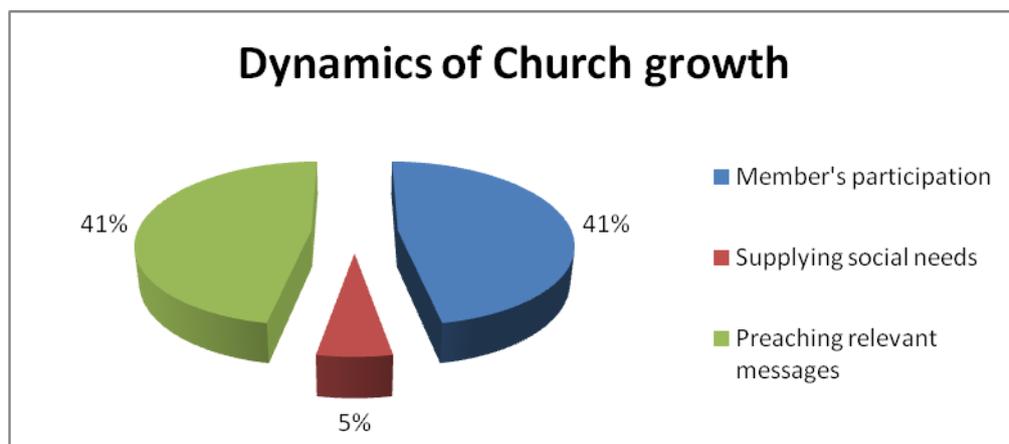


Figure 4.39 Dynamics of church growth

4.9.10.17 Evangelism support in the area of Tzaneen

Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	17	43%
No	23	58%
	40	95%

Table 4.40 Support of evangelism program

Purpose: To find out if the churches receive support from head office when doing evangelism in the area of Tzaneen.

Results: 43% of the people said yes, there is enough support when doing evangelism in the area of Tzaneen. 58% of participants said no, there is not enough support for doing evangelism in the area of Tzaneen.

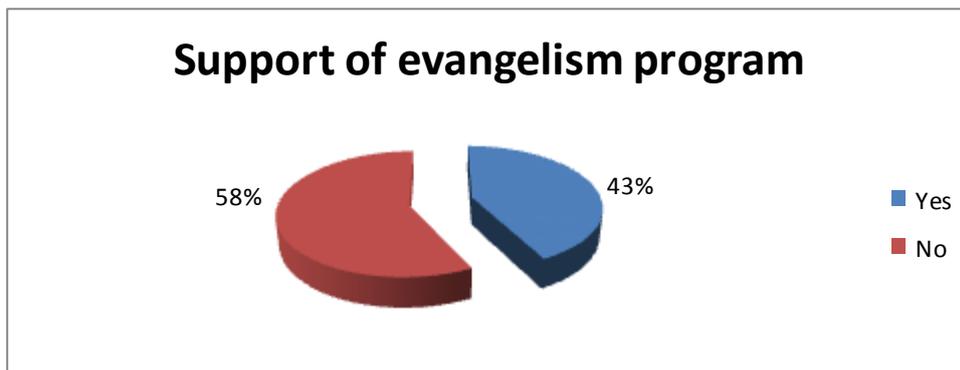


Figure 4.40 Support of evangelism program

4.9.10.18 Support received by churches for evangelism

Support for Evangelism	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Financial support	5	14%
(ii) Man power / Human Resources	1	3%
(iii) Literature, books, policies and manuals	6	16%
(iv) Spiritual Support	19	51%
(v) Other _____	3	8%
Total	34	81%

Table 4.41 Means of evangelism support

Purpose: To investigate what means of support do churches receive when doing evangelism works in their area.

Results: 14% of participants said that the churches receive financial support when doing evangelism. 3% of those that participated said that the churches receive man power/ human resources when they engage in evangelism. 16% of participants said that they receive literature, books, policies and manuals when doing evangelism work. 51% of participants confirmed that they receive spiritual support when they do evangelism work. 8% of participants indicated that they do receive other support besides those in the item of response; participants mentioned donations and those who volunteer to help.

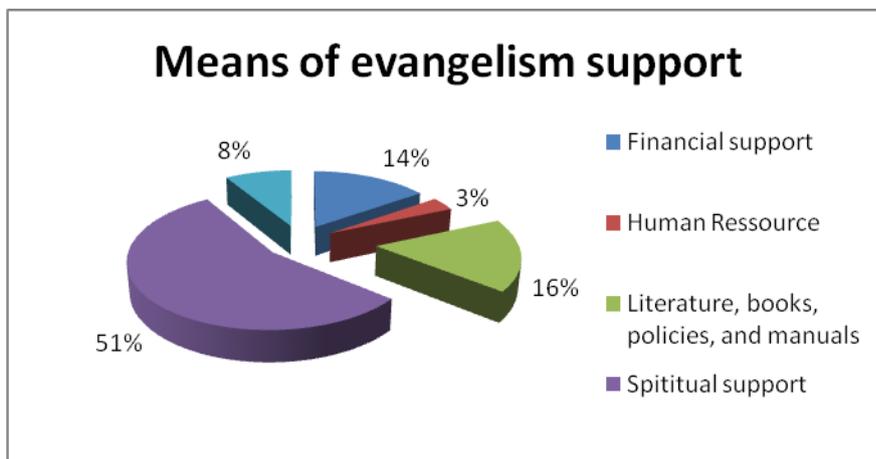


Figure 4.41 Means of evangelism support

4.9.10.19 Church plan of evangelism

Code	Response Item	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	32	78%
2	No	9	22%
Total		41	97%

Table 4.42 Plan of evangelism

Purpose: To find out if churches have the plans of evangelism.

Results: 78% of those who responded have said yes, churches have a plan of evangelism; 22% of the people said no, there is no plan of evangelism.

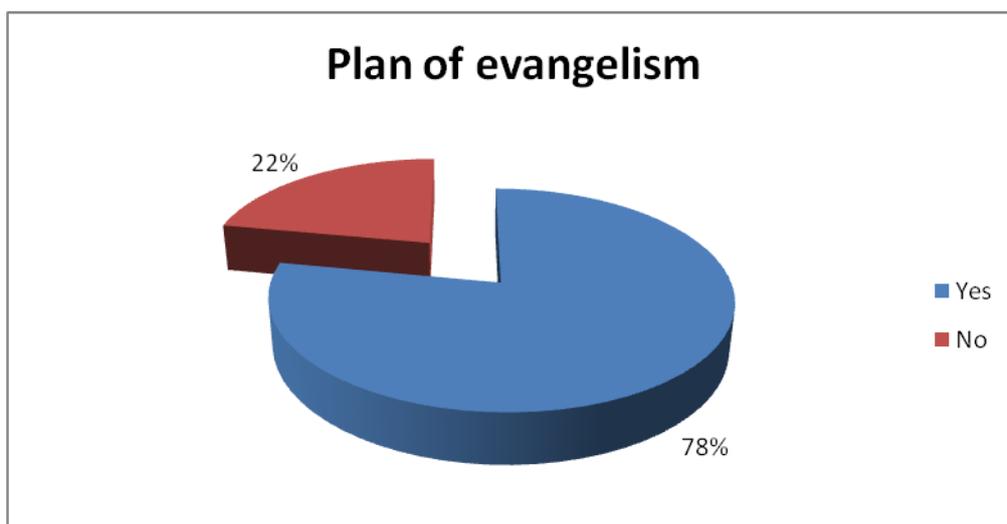


Figure 4.42 Plan of evangelism

4.9.10.20 Effective plan of evangelism

Response items	Frequency	Percentage
(i) Very well	15	38 %
(ii) Not so well	5	13%
(iii) Not working	12	31%
(iv) It's fine	4	11%
(v) No idea	3	7%
Total	39	92%

Table 4.43 Effectiveness of the plan of evangelism

Purpose: To find out if the plan of evangelism is working well.

Results: 38% of the members who took part in the survey said that the plan of evangelism is working very well. 13% of the members said that the plan is not working so well. 31% of the people have reported that the plan of evangelism is not working. 11% of the people said that the plan is fine. 7% of the members have no idea whether the plan of evangelism is working or not, as a result the pastor or anyone who wants to plant a church in the area of Tzaneen has to be aware of such dynamics.

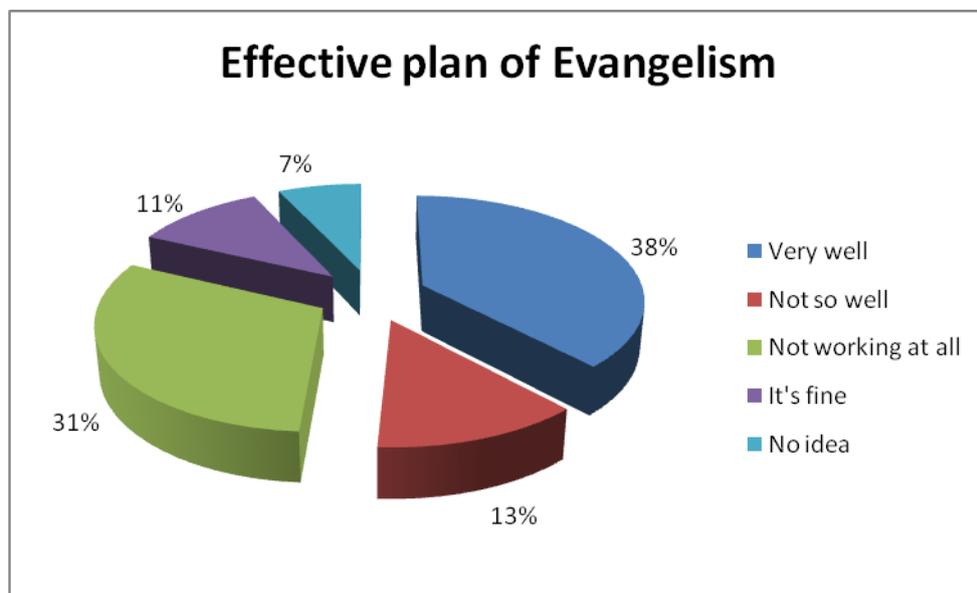


Figure 4.43 Plan of evangelism works

4.10 Conclusion

After the survey was conducted with the Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders and the data had been analysed, the researcher came to the following conclusions.

4.10.1. Biographical information

The biographical data reported that of 42 individuals who participated in this research survey, majority of the participants (50%) are females compared to the males who comprise of 45%. Only 5% of the participants did not want to indicate as to which gender they belong.

Majority of those who were chosen to participate in the survey study, at least had a primary level of education – Grade 7 and above. None of the participants had only formal schooling; this informs the objective set by the researcher; to interview only those who have been to a formal school. However, Statistics SA (2011) had indicated that the Greater Tzaneen Municipality has a high number of people (44 075) who have not been to a formal school. This challenge is significant in that while planning to plant or grow churches in the area of Tzaneen, one needs to be prepared to bring the gospel also to persons without formal schooling and who may in some cases be unable to read the Bible for themselves.

The National Census (2011) had indicated that the number of people who are unemployed is 14503 with 46618 people as discouraged work seekers and are not economically active. So the level of poverty is high, which may well explain why the study revealed that poverty is a concern in the church and of the respondents. 71% of the people who participated in the survey say that the poor always feel welcomed in the church. This scenario may be counted as a strategy to be adopted by the church. A church community in a rural community such as Tzaneen has to take care of the needs of the poor; because they have nowhere to turn to for their needs.

4.10.2 Responses about strategies for growing churches in Tzaneen

A larger majority of members have indicated that the church meetings happen once every week; however the ideal will be to encourage members to meet as often as

possible. Some meetings can be scheduled for mid-week prayer meetings and some days set aside for women or youth activities. Such meetings can be a center of attracting new souls.

90% of members do agree that there are teachings or doctrines with an intention of helping them to teach others. This is a strong hold of the church; those who participate in these Bible studies remain in church for a long time.

There are a significant number of people who say, the welfare programs are available in the church. The survey has revealed that 50% of those who responded stated that the church is always helping the people with clothes; food /clothing etc. 45% of the members said that the welfare program happens sometimes. There is a need here to promote such ministries like Dorcas, AWM/YAWM, and Youth because they are advanced in reaching people with food distribution, clothes and cleaning campaigns.

4.10.3. Responses related to conditions for growing and nurturing churches in Tzaneen

The majority of the people, 62.5% of those who participated, think that knowing the culture of the people plays an important role in proclaiming the gospel. While the other, marginally less, percentage of 27.5% thinks that it is only sometimes that the culture plays an important role when one plans to do an evangelistic work in Tzaneen. With reference to what other missionary writers say about the issue of culture, it can be verified that knowing the culture is indeed important for spreading the gospel of Jesus. The researcher agrees with Shenk (1999:125) who says that, "It is with the promise of discovering new insight that we now turn to the cross-cultural mission of these past two centuries with a view to asking what we can learn that will be useful to the renewal of the church in the West". So knowing the culture is an ideal towards developing effective strategies for growing viable churches.

A significant number at 59% of participants, which is a higher percentage, said that technology sometimes helps to spread the gospel.

It is noted here that leaders have indicated that the church has not yet moved or transformed with the times from the Apartheid past. This larger group surpasses all other groups with 39% compared to 29% that have indicated that they had no idea

and 15% of participants indicated that the church has already moved past racial segregation.

The churches' political transformation is crucial, especially in Tzaneen, and within the Republic of South Africa where the race issue is still debated.

4.10.4. Responses on the challenges for growing and nurturing churches

There is a feeling that unemployment is sometimes a hindrance towards church growth. A higher percentage indicated that the poor feel accepted in the church with a lesser percentage who indicated that the poor feel accepted sometimes.

A bigger percentage of the members who participated said the church always teaches about HIV/Aids awareness. Whereas a lower percent say that the awareness of HIV/Aids is taught sometimes. The rest of the people indicated that they have no idea and others indicated that they do not know. It is this lack of knowledge or awareness about HIV/Aids, compared to those who have no idea and those who do not know, that becomes a worrying factor because HIV/Aids is a modern day killer disease. Churches ought to have full knowledge of this and take an active part in teaching the awareness of HIV/Aids.

4.10.5. Responses on the availability of guidelines for doing mission work in Tzaneen

Leaders do agree that that there is a reasonable enough material and guidelines for doing mission work in the church.

50% of the leaders who have participated in the survey have confirmed there is material or guidelines for church growth; 14% said there is none; 29% admitted there are very few guidelines on church growth; 5% had no idea and the remaining 2% had other views. If guidelines such as policies or manuals are available and the membership of the church is not growing yet, there is a need to explore other means that can contribute to the growth of the church such as this study seeks to address.

A higher percentage of the people do confirm that they do follow the guidelines, policies and practices of the church when developing strategies for church growth. This advances the researcher's argument that if guidelines; policies and practices of

the church are followed when developing strategies for church growth; then there is a need to seek other explanations why the church is not growing. The answers to the above leads to consideration of other alternatives such as visiting the sick, the discouraged and being relevant in teaching and preaching of the word.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations on the strategies for growing churches in the rural areas of Tzaneen. Based on the findings of the preceding chapters, this chapter gives the conclusion and recommendations on what is to be done and how to facilitate church growth in the rural areas.

5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 Biblical perspective on healthy church growth in rural areas

Biblical perspectives on healthy church growth in rural areas is a unique attempt by this research document aimed at addressing a need of understanding the gospel from the stand point of the less privileged or disadvantaged community. Understanding the missionary passion as indicated by the two passages, Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21 which formed part of this research document will lead to growing Christian communities. Considering that the two passages were drawn from totally different worlds, it was important to study the two passages to grasp the church growth perspectives that they promote.

Understanding the historical background of the texts, genre, and setting will lead the reader to a deeper understanding of the work of the Messiah in Isaiah 61:1-2 and the work of Jesus in Luke 4:16-42. These two passages, one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament carry a message of hope to the people of God living in different contexts. The finding is that mission flows from the work of Christ and has to be holistic and should be embarked on with the conviction that it will be fruitful. The perspective that emerged is the close relationship between the missions of Jesus Christ as the Messiah and aspects of his work.

5.2.2 Conditions around Tzaneen that could be conducive for healthy church planting and balanced church growth

Tzaneen has a great potential for church planting and nurturing the churches. The use of the available resources including human, institutions and community structures, can enhance and facilitate the growth of the church in the area. The availability of schools, prisons, hospitals and clinics can help as the centres of evangelism. The church in the area around Tzaneen would do well not to forget the poor and their plight. Bosch (1991:436) records that, "After Constantine, and as the church got richer and more privileged, the poor were neglected or treated condescendingly. Yet even then powerful voices, particularly from the circles of the monastic movement, continued to stress the Christian's inescapable responsibility in this regard".

Usually, communities in the rural areas are known to have limited resources which may limit the spread of the good news. It is important for anyone who is interested in church growth to take a brief overview on the issues relating to the health of the church, and nurturing the church and leading the church to grow. The finding in this regard is that those working with the aim of growing churches around Tzaneen must make use of the resources and institutions at their disposal. The poverty and level of unemployment in the area should motivate them to operate holistically and therefore to use these realities as motivation for their work and view them as opportunities for doing something meaningful for the communities.

Larson (1999:439) suggest that, "Inevitably the missionary come to realize that he or she must first be acceptable by local standards, and to be acceptable, local community members must first find them teachable". Missionaries need to learn to be students first before they can be teachers of the good news. The learning may take some time, since one has to learn the culture, language and lifestyle of the community so as to gain faith amongst the people. Leaders would do well to attend some short courses as a way of improving their understanding on matters of scriptures.

5.2.3 Some of the challenges to be faced when planting and growing churches around Tzaneen

There are some challenges that one needs to consider when planning to do evangelistic work in the area of Tzaneen. Such challenges may include, and are not limited to unemployment, poverty, HIV/Aids and the image of the church to the public. These factors are classed together in this document so as bring to the attention of the readers about the challenges that may hinder church growth in rural areas like Tzaneen. It is important to consider the challenges that are likely to be experienced by church growth workers. Some challenges do not have an immediate solution, but they should be taken into considerations when one plans to do evangelistic work or missionary work in rural areas. Scholars would do well to consider what Lonsdale (2002) says, "If mission churches and farm capital followed different patterns of growth, the Kikuyu saying, that missionary and settler were the same, had more truth in another sense. Both were hostile to African strategies of community, seen as 'tribal'".

5.2.4 Insights from Tzaneen leaders on the strategies for growing viable churches in rural areas

Amongst the strategies for growing viable churches, leaders in Tzaneen have suggested the use of the ones that are effective since their environment is unique from any other area. Whichever strategy the church can adopt, the church should stick to those strategies which will help grow the church. Such strategies should be holistic, as Anderson *et al.* (1998:442) in his research also states, "Holistic mission strategy often emphasizes the humanitarian aspects of the gospel that must accompany direct witness".

The church should not forget the poor, the needy and the disadvantaged community. The churches in Tzaneen which seek to employ effective strategies for growing churches should be as natural as possible. Let the church use what is available and possible within their area. Leaders need to take note of the church policies, manuals and constitutions that the church uses when doing evangelism. Leaders should try by all means to follow such useful guidelines found in the policies and manuals of the church when considering strategies for growing and nurturing churches.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Biblical perspective on healthy church growth in rural areas

This research has raised many questions in need of further investigation on the strategies for growing viable churches in rural areas. The researcher recommends a proper biblical perspective on healthy church growth in rural areas to include a study of scriptures with an intention to help members of the churches, together with their leaders, understand the dynamics of scriptures used to grow churches. The said scriptures need to be studied with intention of finding the text's authorship, historical context, literary structure and setting of the text.

5.3.2 Conditions around Tzaneen that could be conducive for healthy church planting and balanced church growth

This research has revealed that there are conditions around Tzaneen that can present challenges or opportunities as one plan to establish or grow churches in the area. Therefore, more information on the conditions around Tzaneen that could be conducive for healthy church planting and balanced church growth would be required as a way of improving understanding about the area.

5.3.3 Some of the challenges to be faced when planting and growing churches around Tzaneen

In view of the challenges such as unemployment, illiteracy and poverty, HIV/Aids, and a divided church presented in this research; it is suggested that the association of these factors are investigated in future studies. Knowledge of these conditions would help increase an opportunity for growing viable churches in the rural areas.

5.3.4 Insights from Tzaneen leaders on the strategies for growing viable churches in rural areas

In light of the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders have an interest in how to grow churches; an implication of these findings is that leaders and members should be taken into account when it comes to developing or implementing strategies for growing churches in the rural areas of Tzaneen. Moreover, more information should be made available to leaders as Hiebert and Mieneses

(1995:233) in their findings state that, planting and growing rural churches does not only take time but that those that do so properly also have to operate within principles that are relevant to the unique circumstances of such rural communities. A reasonable approach to tackle this issue is to focus on what is available at hand, using the resources that are ready and available, such as the ones recommended by this research findings.

5.4 Recommendations for further study

The research is not exhaustive, because of the nature and the size of this study, some concerns and topics could not be addressed in this research. Therefore, the following topics are recommended for further study.

- The involvement of the youth in soul winning.
- Opportunities and challenges of pastoring rural churches.
- How the church can effectively create employment amongst members.
- The impact of illiteracy in the churches.
- Communicating the gospel using the modern tools.

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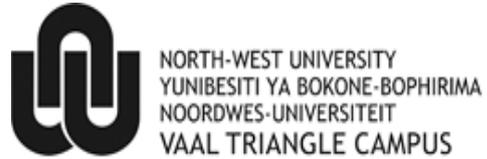
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ANNEXTURE A



QUESTIONNAIRE: CHURCH LEADERS AND CHURCH MEMBERS

Please complete the questionnaire by answering all questions. We guarantee the confidentiality of this questionnaire. The data obtained will be used in a summarized format for research purposes.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Your gender? (tick the appropriate one)			
(i) Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ii) Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. What is your age? [select your age group]			
(i) Below 30 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ii) Between 31-40 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Between 41-50 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	(iv) Between 51-60 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
(v) Above 60 years	<input type="checkbox"/>		
3. What educational level have you got? [tick]			
(i) Was never at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ii) Only primary education	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Completed Matric	<input type="checkbox"/>	(iv) College level	<input type="checkbox"/>
(v) University level	<input type="checkbox"/>		
4. Which category do you fall in [tick one]			
(i) Employed	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ii) Pensioner	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Medically unfit	<input type="checkbox"/>	(iv) Student	<input type="checkbox"/>
(v) Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>		

B. QUESTIONS RELATED TO STRATEGIES TO FACILITATE CHURCH GROWTHS

5. How did you as a new member first make contact with the SDA church?			
(i) Through parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ii) Through other relatives	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Through other members	<input type="checkbox"/>	(iv) Through religious tracts	<input type="checkbox"/>
(v) Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>		
6. How often do you meet for church services			
(i) Once a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ii) Once per fortnight	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Once a Month	<input type="checkbox"/>	(iv) Once in two months	<input type="checkbox"/>
(v) Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>		

7. My church encourages members to conduct Bible studies as a way of empowering members with mission knowledge. (choose the most appropriate answer)			
(i) Not at all		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Always		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			
8. My church teaches its members the message of God with an intention to help them teach others.			
(i) Not at all		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Always		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			
(9) My church helps its members in terms of welfare (e.g. clothing distribution) and health (eg. Health talks).			
(i) Not at all		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Always		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			

C. QUESTIONS RELATED TO CONDITIONS FOR GROWING AND NUTURING CHURCHES AROUND TZANEEN.

10. Does your church show love to the community by practicing any of the following?			
(i) Giving out clothing and food parcels to the needy		(ii) Visiting the sick	
(iii) Creating work opportunities		(iv) Imparting skills	
(v) Other _____			
11. Do the evangelists or Pastors in your area speak the local language fluently?			
Yes		No	
12. Does knowing the local culture help when spreading the gospel?			
(i) Always		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Not at all		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			
13. Does the use of technology (social media) help when spreading the gospel in your Church?			
(i) Always		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Not at all		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			

14. Is your church racially transformed?			
(i) In the process		(ii) Not yet	
(iii) Already		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			

D. QUESTIONS RELATED TO CHALLENGES OF GROWING AND NURTURING CHURCHES.

15. Is unemployment a hindrance towards church growth in your area?			
(i) Always		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Not at all		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			
16. Do the poor feel accepted in your church?			
(i) Always		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Not at all		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			
17. Does your church teach awareness on HIV & Aids?			
(i) Always		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Not at all		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			
18. Is apartheid or racial segregation still an issue in your church?			
(i) Always		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Not at all		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other views _____			

E. QUESTIONS RELATED TO AVAILABILITY OF GUIDELINES TO DEVELOP STRATEGIES FOR GROWING CHURCHES AROUND TZANEEN.

19. Are there guidelines such as policies or manuals that are relevant for developing strategies of growing churches in your area?			
(i) Yes there are many		(ii) No, there is none	
(iii) Very few		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other views _____			

20. Do you as a member of the church follow the policies and practices of your church when developing strategies for church growths?			
(i) Always		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Not at all		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			
21. Does your church minister to the disabled?			
(i) Always		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Not at all		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			
22. Does your church minister to prison inmates?			
(i) Always		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Not at all		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			
23. Does your church provide assistance to those in need of basic services (houses, water, and electricity etc.)			
(i) Always		(ii) Sometimes	
(iii) Not at all		(iv) No idea	
(v) Other _____			

F. QUESTIONNAIRES FOR CHURCH LEADERS

24. How long have you served as a leader in the SDA church?			
(i) 0 - 5 years		(ii) 6 - 10 years	
(iii) 11 - 15 years		(iv) 16 - 20 years	
(v) Above 21 years			
25. Do you have a mission statement in your church?			
Yes		No	
26. What strategy was used to start churches around your area?			
(i) Mass Evangelism		(ii) Media Evangelism	
(iii) Literature Evangelism		(iv) Personal Evangelism	
(v) Other _____			
27. Which method do you and your church use to win new converts?			
(i) Visitation		(ii) Door to door, outreach	
(iii) Friendship		(iv) Film Shows	
(v) Other _____			

28. What are some of the challenges that the church faces when planting new churches in your area?			
(i) Poverty		(ii) Non participant members	
(iii) No Church building		(iv) Lack of finance	
(v) Other _____			
29. What strategy do your church use to gain access to those outside the church in your area?			
(i) Embracing the culture		(ii) Criticizing the culture	
(iii) Technology and modern lifestyle		(iv) Loving the people	
(v) Other _____			
30. When communicating the gospel, which language do you use?			
(i) Tsonga		(ii) English	
(iii) Selobedu		(iv) Afrikaans	
(v) Other _____			
31. In your opinion, when ministering to the poor; do you need to assist with the following?			
(i) Food parcels		(ii) Clothing	
(iii) Finance		(iv) Social needs	
(v) Other _____			
32. When was your church structure erected?			
(i) 0 - 5 years ago		(ii) 6 - 10 years ago	
(iii) 11 - 15 years ago		(iv) 16 - 20 years ago	
(v) Other (please specify) _____			
33. Where do you worship?			
(i) Own structure		(ii) Hired Structure/ School	
(iii) Temporary Structure		(iv) House	
(v) Other state here _____			
34. What in your opinion would be the effective strategy for planting a church in around your area?			
(i) Learn the language of the locals		(ii) Live amongst the people	
(iii) Show hospitality		(iv) Appear to be a stranger	
(v) Other _____			
35. Is your church growing?			
Yes		No	

36. Any reason why your church needs to grow?			
(i) To reach baptismal target		(ii) Increase finance	
(iii) To serve the community better		(iv) To satisfy Leader's salaries	
(v) Any other _____			
37. What are the challenges towards church planting in Tzaneen?			
(i) HIV & Aids		(ii) Unemployment	
(iii) Poverty		(iv) Illiteracy	
(v) Other _____			
38. What are the opportunities of doing evangelistic work around your area?			
(i) Language		(ii) Culture	
(iii) Technology		(iv) Transformation	
(v) Other _____			
39. In your opinion what makes a church to grow?			
(i) Member's participation		(ii) Supplying social needs	
(iii) Building which attract masses		(iv) Preaching relevant messages	
(v) Other(s) _____			
40. Do you have enough support when doing evangelism in your area?			
Yes		No	
41. What kind of support do you receive as a church when doing evangelistic work in your area?			
(i) Financial support		(ii) Human Resources	
(iii) Literature		(iv) Spiritual Support	
(v) Other _____			
42. Does your church have a plan of evangelism?			
Yes		No	
If yes please elaborate _____ _____			
43. Do you think your plan of evangelism is working?			
(i) Very well		(ii) Not so well	
(iii) Not working at all		(iv) It's fine	
(v) No idea			
44. Do you have any strategies you think could help when doing mission work or outreach evangelism? Please explain here. _____ _____			

45. What are the conditions that are conducive to growing and planting churches in your area? Please explain.

46. What are some challenges to be faced when planting and growing churches around Tzaneen? Please explain.

47. Mention some guidelines to be considered by leaders as they develop strategies for church growth in Tzaneen?

NB: The information given above is confidential and is not for political reasons. Only data required for by the University will be given thereof per request.

ANNEXTURE: C

NAMES OF CHURCHES THAT PARTICIPATED AND THEIR LEADERS.

M'wamitwa SDA Church	Elder E. Mongwe Pastor M. Lukwhareni
Nkowankowa SDA Church	Elder V. Nkuna Pastor N.J. Ramugumo
Kgapane SDA Church	Elder S. Maringa Pastor R. Makuya

ANNEXTURE D

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to call all people to become disciples of Jesus Christ, to proclaim the everlasting gospel embraced by the three angels' messages (Revelation 14:6-12), and to prepare the world for Christ's soon return.

OUR METHOD

Guided by the Bible and the Holy Spirit, Seventh-day Adventists pursue this mission through Christ-like living, communicating, discipling, teaching, healing, and serving.

OUR VISION

In harmony with Bible revelation, Seventh-day Adventists see as the climax of God's plan the restoration of all His creation to full harmony with His perfect will and righteousness.

Identity and Implementation of Our Mission

OUR IDENTITY

The Seventh-day Adventist Church sees itself as the remnant Church of end-time Bible prophecy. Members of the Church, individually and collectively, understand their special role as ambassadors of God's kingdom and messengers of the soon return of Jesus Christ. Seventh-day Adventists have enlisted as co-workers with God in His mission of reclaiming the world from the power and presence of evil, as part of the Great Controversy between Christ and Satan.

Therefore, every aspect of a Church member's life is influenced by the conviction that we live in the last days described in Bible prophecy and the return of Jesus Christ is imminent. Seventh-day Adventists are called by God to live in this world.

Every action of the Christian life is done “in the name of Jesus” and to advance His kingdom.

IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR MISSION

Seventh-day Adventists affirm the Bible as God’s infallible revelation of His will, accepting its authority in the life of the Church and of each believer, and its foundational role for faith and doctrine. Seventh-day Adventists believe that the Holy Spirit is the power that transforms lives and equips people with abilities to advance God’s kingdom in this world.

Called by God, guided by the Bible, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, Seventh-day Adventists, wherever we live in the world, devote ourselves to:

1. *Christ-Like Living*—illustrating the lordship of Jesus in our lives by moral, ethical, and social behaviours that are consistent with the teachings and example of Jesus.
2. *Christ-Like Communicating*—Realizing that all are called to active witness, we share through personal conversation, preaching, publishing, and the arts, the Bible’s message about God and the hope and salvation offered through the life, ministry, atoning death, resurrection, and high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ.
3. *Christ-Like Discipling*—Affirming the vital importance of continued spiritual growth and development among all who accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour, we nurture and instruct each other in righteous living, provide training for effective witness, and encourage responsive obedience to God’s will.
4. *Christ-Like Teaching*—Acknowledging that development of mind and character is essential to God’s redemptive plan, we promote the growth of a mature understanding of and relationship to God, His Word, and the created universe.
5. *Christ-Like Healing*—Affirming the biblical principles of the well-being of the whole person, we make healthful living and the healing of the sick a priority

and through our ministry to the poor and oppressed, cooperate with the Creator in His compassionate work of restoration.

6. *Christ-Like Serving*—Following the example of Jesus we commit ourselves to humble service, ministering to individuals and populations most affected by poverty, tragedy, hopelessness, and disease.

This statement was voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee at the Annual Council Session in Silver Spring, Maryland on October 13, 2014.