

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

*A Missiological Study of the Ministry Experiences of Evangelical
Missionary Society in Muslim Evangelism in Northern Nigeria*

BY
YAKUBU BULUS BAKFWASH

*A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of
Divinity (Missions Studies)*

JULY 2005

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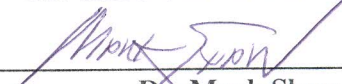
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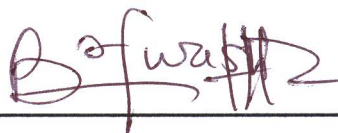
July, 2005

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

**A MISSIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE MINISTRY EXPERIENCES OF
EVANGELICAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN MUSLIM EVANGELISM IN
NORTHERN NIGERIA**

**I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other
college or University for academic credit.**

**The views presented herein are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical
Graduate School of Theology or of the Examiners.**



Yakubu Bulus Bakfwash

July, 2005.

ABSTRACT

This study describes the ministry experiences of the Evangelical Missionary Society in Muslim evangelism in Northern Nigeria. A qualitative research design employing phenomenology was used for the study. Data was collected using face-to-face open-ended interviews that were recorded and transcribed. The findings indicated that EMS missionaries used friendship evangelism, teaching strategies, healing and electronic media as evangelism tools and strategies.

They were overwhelmed with various ministry challenges which included low self-esteem, suspicion by the Muslims, confrontation, fear of death, culture shock and ritualistic worship. There is interwovenness between their ministry experiences and strategies used. Therefore based on the findings, EMS missionaries will benefit from coming together to form strong interpersonal and management partnerships among themselves, improve their research and writing area and be encouraged to learn by living and working with the Muslim people. These steps should improve their effectiveness in Muslim evangelism.

The researcher recommended that EMS should review the training aspect of preparation for ministry, consider what a Christian response to the question of Shariah should be and work towards strengthening the organizational effectiveness in facilitating EMS mission work.

DEDICATION

To my dear and loving wife Diana who has greatly supported me during my training. You have been a source of inspiration, and a true friend. Our children Nenrit, Faith and Nenrot .You are our great companions in God's vineyard. And to all cross-cultural missionaries whose hearts are yearning and bleeding to evangelize Muslims with the good news of our LORD Jesus Christ.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I remain thankful to Dr. Caleb Chul-Soo Kim for being my mentor and supervisor and providing guidance throughout this research. I am also thankful to Dr. Mark Shaw for patiently reading through the scripts and giving helpful advice.

I also wish to acknowledge the support and encouragement of Rev. Bob Cook and his wife for providing tuition for our children. Special thanks to my parents Baba Bulus and Mama Hanatu Bakfwash who greatly sacrificed so much to provide their widows mite towards my ministry training. I cherish every bit of your support to make me what I am today. I say a big thank you to all mission faculties for giving me the missiological tools I need for ministry in Northern Nigeria.

I remain grateful to my wife Diana for her encouragement and support to the whole period of my study without which it would have been very difficult. My sincere and deep gratitude to our daughters namely, Nenrit, Faith and Tryphena for their support and patience during my training. May God continue to shine his face upon the three of you!

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Evangelical Missions Society (EMS) of Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA), which is a cross-cultural mission agency, faces many challenges in presenting the gospel to different religious groups. One such group is the Muslims of Northern Nigeria. Various challenges have created a huge stumbling block to the task of fulfilling the Great Commission. As the indigenous missionary arm of the church, EMS is mainly involved in cross-cultural evangelism and church planting. In her work, Fuller (2001, 75) observes that

EMS was probably the oldest mission originating from Nigeria. EMS was started in 1949 as African Mission Society (AMS) by Serving In Mission (SIM). In 1953 the full responsibility for the AMS was taken over by the churches founded by the SIM. These churches were organized as ECWA in 1954. Then the name of AMS was changed to EMS, Evangelical Missionary Society. By 1977 EMS had 127 missionary couples. By 1980 there were 230 couples, and by 1993, 400 couples. EMS has over 1600 missionaries. However, what is of most importance about EMS is not just the high number of its missionaries, but the fact that they work in unreached areas of Nigeria, Ghana, Republic of Benin, Niger Republic, Chad and also have a missionary to Nigerians in London, U.K.

The church in Northern Nigeria has in recent times witnessed sporadic clashes between Muslims and Christians, which have resulted in the destruction of lives and property particularly in the North. Since the governor of Zamfara State in Northern Nigeria declared the implementation of Shariah law in January 2000, religious conflicts have not only become endemic, but also continue to claim thousands of lives in Africa's most populous nation. On September 7, 2001, rioting in the Plateau's capital city of Jos led to the death of an estimated 5,000 people. This research was

done in the researcher's home area. He witnessed the rioting in Jos. The conflagration was sparked by a group of Muslims who barricaded a road leading into an area inhabited by Christians. A recent upsurge of violence saw a total of 48 people murdered in Yelwa, Plateau State. These people were hacked to death during an early prayer service on February 24, 2004. In September 2003, 11 churches were razed to the ground by Muslims who killed an undisclosed number of Christians in Kazuare, Jigawa State. In all of these incidents some ECWA churches planted by EMS were destroyed and pastors killed.

These events in Northern Nigeria raise the following questions:

1. Is the uprising by Muslim fundamentalists in Northern Nigeria a form of resurgence to Usman Dan Fodio jihad?
2. Did the gospel carriers (Evangelical Missions Society) fail to influence the Muslim community which it has known and lived with for many years?
3. How can the Muslims feel the impact of the good news that Christ loves them if there are no gospel carriers living among them?

To answer the questions objectively, EMS missionaries need to become neighbors with Muslims whose language and culture they may not be familiar with. Thus, neighborliness becomes a bridge through which Northern Nigerian Muslims can be understood before they are reached for Christ.

In 1950, EMS (then AMS) began their outreach to the Muslim dominated areas of Northern Nigeria and sent out their first missionary couple to Tsanyawa, Kano Province (now Kano State). EMS continued sending out missionaries to other places in the north to live among Muslims and share the Gospel of Christ with them (EMS of ECWA Brochure, n.d). This strategy puts the church missionaries into direct

contact with Muslims thereby creating an opportunity for relationships to develop. Aldrich wrote, “When Christians live in an established community, they may still confront, but most importantly they can relate....To relate is much more natural and less stressful” (1983, 81).

Concerning the word “neighbor,” Aldrich notes that it comes from a root word which means “to be near, or close by...to draw near, or become near” (1983, 67). Further, “a healthy presence [within a given community] increases the impact of the proclamation of the gospel” (1983, 83). Missionaries like EMS are called to be “fishers of men, or sent to catch fish” (1983, 83). As fishers of men they first need to be like “frogmen who dive under water and swim with the fish, thus [make a catch by] making their ‘presence’ known” (1983, 83). Aldrich concludes it is therefore possible that missionaries can relinquish their priority of becoming fishers of men to become keepers of the aquarium instead.

Problem Statement

Missionary ventures amongst Muslims of Northern Nigeria have had tremendous challenges for indigenous missionaries attempting to evangelize Muslims. This study describes the ministry experiences of EMS missionaries in Northern Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The intent of this phenomenological study is three-fold. Firstly, it explores the experiences EMS missionaries face as they minister amongst Muslims. Secondly, it describes the strategies used by EMS missionaries in Muslim Evangelism. Thirdly, it offers missiological implications for EMS in Muslim evangelism in Northern Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What are the ministry experiences of EMS missionaries in evangelizing Muslims in Northern Nigeria?
2. What strategies do EMS missionaries use in Muslim Evangelism in Northern Nigeria?
3. What missiological implications do these experiences and strategies have for EMS in the evangelization of Muslims in Northern Nigeria?

Significance of the Study

The study is to provide an important help to EMS missionaries who have ministered among Muslims in Northern Nigeria. It is hoped that the outcome of this research is to contribute to the building of a body of knowledge concerning EMS experiences for effective ministry among Muslims in Northern Nigeria. This way, the study becomes significant not only for EMS alone, but for all Christians and missions-bodies that are involved in Muslim evangelism in Northern Nigeria.

Delimitation

This study confined itself to discovering the experiences that EMS missionaries undergo in their effort to evangelize Muslims in Northern Nigeria.

Definition of Terms

The following two terms have been useful to this research.

Ummah-this term is used to refer to the Muslim community which ensures that no Muslim becomes converted to Christianity.

Shariah-this literally means the road that leads to the watering place. It generally refers to Islamic law.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Much has been written on the subject of Muslim evangelism or on methods and strategies that are suitable for utilization by missionaries, but not much on specific ministry experiences of missionaries working in particular contexts and employing certain methods. The attention that this subject is receiving is validated by the enormity and urgency of this task. Drawing from 13 years of mission experience in the predominantly Muslim contexts of Lebanon, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia, Woodberry (1989, 89) observed that Islam is the largest non-Christian religion in the world, is the only faith to supplant Christianity in large geographical regions, and has proved the most resistant to Christian missions since its rise in the early 7th century.

Woodberry indicates that the Arab world remains the heartland; a majority of Muslims live in Asia – the largest numbers in Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, and Central Asia (1989, 90). However, it is likewise true that there are places in Africa that are predominantly Muslim. The Northern parts of Nigeria are a case in point. Yet, very few studies have been done with regard to specific ministry experiences of indigenous cross-cultural missionaries working in Muslim communities in this region. The challenge is self-evident; Christian mission needs to take Islam seriously, and be willing to re-think her superficial understanding of the Gospel, so that Muslim hearts and minds can be touched effectively.

Barriers to Muslim Evangelism

Islam poses various challenges and barriers to cross-cultural mission agencies like EMS in reaching the Muslims with the good news of salvation. Muslims have been the most resistant faith community to Christian evangelism for a number of reasons. Woodberry (1989, 78) writes

Aside from the spiritual obstacles, the hindrances are first, sociological: group solidarity leads to family and community ostracism and persecution of the convert. The Law of Apostasy can lead to death. Secondly, they are theological: since Islam is the only world religion to rise after Christianity, Muslims believe that all that is of value in Christianity is already in Islam, and they commonly hold that the Bible has been corrupted. The Qur'an is understood to deny the Trinity and Christ's incarnation, Sonship, and crucifixion. Thirdly, the obstacles are political: since Islam applies to every area of life including the political, non-Muslims are normally considered second-class citizens where Muslims are a majority. Despite the ancient churches in many Muslim lands, Muslims commonly associate Christianity with the West. Fourthly, the frequent association of Christianity with the West has often raised cultural barriers: Western forms of worship and church structure have been utilized without the realization that almost all Muslim forms of worship have been adopted or adapted from Jews and Christians. Finally, the barriers are historical: much of the contacts between Muslims and Christians militarily, politically, and religiously have been hostile.

On his part, Seamands (1981, 203) identifies four challenges or barriers: the historical, the cultural, the religious, and the theological barriers. It is significant to examine our approaches to the evangelization of Muslims in light of these challenges and barriers if we hope for an Incarnational life of witness. Let us briefly note these barriers.

The Historical Barrier

With regard to historical barrier both Seamands (1981, 203), Kane (1973, 150-160) and Keay (1958, 11) note that down through the centuries the relationship between Christians and Muslims has not been cordial. Muhammad, the founder of the Islamic faith, received false impressions about Christianity from his various contacts with Christians in Arabia. As a result, Muhammad misunderstood the idea of the Trinity. To him, the Trinity of the Christian faith consists of God, Mary and Jesus, as opposed to the truth, that is, God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit (Seamands 1981, 203; Keay 1958, 11): the lack of clear grasps of Christian truth about Trinity by Muhammad and his followers. Such a misunderstanding may have been inherited throughout Muslim history, and it has posed a great historical barrier in terms of Christian relations with Muslims. EMS missionaries must also bear in mind that more theological barriers have actually been developed and intensified more through historical encounters between the two worlds than through theological encounters as such.

The Cultural Barrier

According to Abdul-Haqqi, Islam is more than a religion; it is both a “social and political system” as is the case with Iran (1978, 72). Seamands notes that in Islam there is little distinction between secular and sacred, between mosque and state. The result is a tightly-knit society that does not allow people to convert from Islam to any other religion. Converts are ostracized, severely persecuted and, sometimes put to death (1981, 204). In the same light Woodberry explains further that such acts will also lead to “family and community ostracism” (1989, 99). It is important for

Christians to notice that such a socio-politically tight Muslim society hardly ever allows its members to be exposed to other cultures. For this reason, cross-cultural missionaries must first seek to understand the worldview that underlies such a religiously and culturally consolidated society. Thus, Muslims are to be won into Christianity within their cultural settings (Musk 1989, 257-273), so cultural elements should not be their hindrance in accepting Christ. Further, Massih (1979, 85-92) argues for Incarnational witness as a tool to overcome cross cultural barriers such as Islam. Massih says

Incarnational witness across cultural barriers to the Muslim demands that it be a witness of love motivated by love. The disciples in John 4 were shocked to discover Jesus bridging the cultural gap between himself as a Jew and the Samaritans (John 4:9, 27). The Samaritans held wrong doctrines, had polluted their race with Gentile blood, and were the enemies of Jews. The Jews called them dogs. Jesus touched them deeply in love. He completely identified with them, even to the point of sleeping in their beds and putting his fingers in the same bowl with them at mealtime (John 4:40). Could there be a more beautiful example of an Incarnational witness... Paul too said, "I have made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more" (I Cor. 9:19). "To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ)" (I Cor. 9:21). Paul is saying that in respect to culture, the messenger must change, rather than the hearer of the message. Paul is saying that the living message must be spelled out in a cultural-time-space setting. Christ must become incarnate in specific cultural forms.

Although culture, can be regarded as a barrier to cross-cultural missionaries, it is a major factor in the Incarnational witness as noted. Is not this the true meaning of Christ's incarnation? At this point every cross-cultural missionary in EMS should know that God is aware of all the cultural implications in a given society. To illustrate this point further, Massih notes that cross-cultural missionaries should know that God sent his Son into a Jewish cultural setting. For Jesus, Incarnation meant a Jewish expression of his human nature. It meant a Jewish lifestyle in Jewish culture with Jewish customs and a Jewish family setting. Paul sums it up succinctly: "For I tell you

that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth..." (Rom.15:8 NIV). This should be the desire of all cross-cultural missionaries, especially those working among Muslims.

The Religious Barrier

Muslims are basically loyal to their faith. To them "Islam is the final truth and is superior to all other religions" (Seamands 1981, 204). If a Muslim accepts the Salvation that Christ brings and embraces Christianity, the Muslim community will not only ostracize but possibly put that person to death. Since Muslims have a distorted view about Christ and the Bible, it is difficult for Muslims to cross this religious barrier. Nonetheless, armed with truth and love, with humility and tact, Christian witness can effectively lead them to the foot of the cross (1981, 214).

The Theological Barrier

Seamands says there are certain theological ideas in Islam that cut across the basic truths of the gospel message such as: the validity of the scriptures, the nature of God, the person of Jesus Christ and the doctrine of atonement (1981, 205). However, to Muslims, it becomes a problem when certain "contradictions" are discovered in the Bible with regard to what the Qur'an is teaching. Keay notes, "unless one understands the Muslim's idea of God he cannot understand the Islamic creed, judge his philosophy, or intellectually communicate the Christian idea of God to him" (1958, 11). This has created a barrier to Muslims, and as a way of overcoming this problem, Muslims have come to believe that the Greek manuscripts have been corrupted, and the result is that the Christian Bible in its present form is unreliable.

The present position of the Muslims concerning the Christian's Holy book (the Bible) poses a barrier to reaching them. In addition, there are other barriers like intellectual, emotional and the "will" (Khair-Ullah 1975, 818). In order to win a person's heart Musk says, "Mission to Muslims is not necessarily so much a matter of trying to convey primarily intellectual information, against most of which the Muslim is already inoculated" (1989, 250). Drawing from Kraemer (1967), Morrison (1938), and Anderson (1966), Keay states that one strong "unifying force of Islam is not in its ritual or ethics, but its fanatical grasp of one great truth: monotheism. Islam is then one religion which presents a definite theological barrier in the teachings of the Qur'an to the teachings of Christianity" (1958:11). Contributing on theological barrier as one hindrance to cross-cultural missionary experience among Muslims, Conn (1978, 102) puts forth an important question.

Who is offended by the cross, *Muslims or Christians?*

Everything is offensive to the Muslim so (we) *Christians* change it all. But what shall we do with the cross? We cannot translate it, we cannot change it. It will always remain an offense. There is a danger of our becoming men of anthropology, sociology, and culture but failing to be men of the Spirit. The motifs of Islam and Christianity are opposite...the hijra and the cross. Thus the differences are more than terminological...they are profoundly theological and practical.

Therefore, cross-cultural missionaries first need to sort out this fundamental question in their mind before they venture into missions among Muslims.

Strategies to Muslim Evangelism

Following a review of the barriers, we then will review some literature on strategies on evangelizing Muslims as well as the importance of Incarnational witness. In this section, I will examine literature using three categories: friendship evangelism, literature evangelism, and Incarnational approaches.

Friendship Evangelism

Nehls (1991, 272-275) believes that the only way we can communicate the gospel intelligently to a Muslim is through a comprehensive communication based on “the building of relationships in a friendly...and conducive atmosphere” (1991, 272). Friendship evangelism involves establishing and developing friendship with a Muslim through hospitality, without pressing him to make any commitment to follow Christ. Certainly, the very first step for the Christian to take is prayer, asking God to direct him/her (Center for ministry 1992, 6).

Nehls says that friendship evangelism in an Islamic context is to be carried out between people of the same sex (1992, 33). If a Christian lady is aware of a Muslim man who needs some help spiritually, she should introduce the man to a Christian brother. In light of this, Reyburn (1970, 5) says, “Every human relationship balances delicately between acceptance and rejection, but rejection is accomplished with less effort.” The attitude with which one approaches another person will determine to a large extent how effective a relationship one can establish. The majority of Muslims are simply looking for a friend they can trust, as Nehls affirms (1992, 33).

Furthermore, Nehls says, “friendship evangelism in the Islamic context are largely mutually exclusive” (1991, 257); through friendship evangelism a Muslim friend can be reached with the message of the cross. Similarly, Famonure (1993, 25) notes that sincere love expressed through Christian witness towards the lost person does not hold back the truth about eternal condemnation that awaits any Muslim friend. Therefore, Christians are to first eradicate the fear factor in their heart. Only by that can they demonstrate a genuine love of Christ to a Muslim friend and the gospel can be understood.

Therefore, in an attempt to be close to Muslims, the local indigenous missionary agency, EMS, has employed a non-threatening approach to contacting Muslims. This gives ECWA an access to Muslims so that missionaries can dialogue with them without any fear. Also, it has given the EMS missionaries a lot more courage to witness and interact freely with Muslims in Northern Nigeria.

In the introductory remarks, Saal (1993, 56) underscores the insight gained by genuine friendship and concern. He suggests:

In the midst of conversation, what Muslims believe generally is not nearly as important as what your friend believes. As you come to understand those heart issues, God can provide unique opportunities to introduce His truth...it will effectively expose your friend to the Bible and allow the Holy Spirit to break down religious and cultural barriers and convict the heart. You can take this basic model and adapt it to fit your situation and personal style of witness.

Similarly, Peters (1970, 11) contends that:

Individual Muslim behavior is usually controlled by society, leaving little scope for independent action. So our Muslim neighbors may be unaccustomed to making the sort of individualistic decision associated with acceptance of the gospel. Hence, there is need to become acquainted with family members and work through the dynamic of their relationships; doing so may prove critical to effective witness. Develop a sensitive approach to Muslim family or household evangelism, remembering that converted family units are essential to the formation and stability of the local church in Muslim society.

So, whatever model cross-cultural missionaries adapt, it does call for discernment.

Literature Evangelism

Gospel tracts can serve as ‘contact makers’ and can arouse curiosity. Therefore, Nehls affirms that “through a systematic distribution of literature in an organized fashion most Muslims in many countries can be reached in a skillful

manner” (1992, 282). It is a well-known fact that many Muslim converts have determined their conversion after they contacted literary materials that explained more about Jesus from the Gospels. Nehl’s emphasis on the use of literature should be heeded by all EMS missionaries.

Incarnational Approaches

Kraft (1979, 114-115) wrote,

When God sought to communicate with the Hebrews, he did not first demand that they learn a language and culture that allowed them, for example, to better understand his lovingness. He employed Hebrew linguistic and cultural forms in spite of their inadequacy in this respect. He even went to the extent of endorsing at least major portions of Hebrew culture as it was... This appears to account for the fact that God chose to work with Hebrews in terms of a culturally known covenant relationship... When God sought to reveal himself more completely, he did not reject human culture and language as either too evil or too imperfect to serve as the vehicle for his Incarnation. He, rather, employed a thoroughly human culture which is imperfect and limited as the vehicle of his supreme revelation of himself to human beings.

Further, Kraft notes that this relationship between God and culture is not a required relationship in the sense that God is bound by culture. Rather, on the contrary, God is absolute and infinite. He freely chooses to employ human culture to limit himself to the capacities of his interaction with people. Therefore, this is an indication that God is aware that his word, the gospel truth, will encounter different cultures as the disciples seek to carry out the task of cross-cultural evangelism (1979, 115).

Famonure evaluated nineteen evangelism methods and came up with interesting findings. Street evangelism, open-air crusades and market evangelism were found to be unsuitable in Muslim contexts. The Christian books approach, literary class evangelism, drama and music, and free bible distribution have been used sparingly but were fairly suitable. She recommended that the three Ps of evangelism –

Presence, Proclamation and Persuasion should be the focus of evangelistic effort. Identification with people involves understanding their culture, worldview and language. This can only be done effectively through immersion into the people's lives (1993, 78).

Review of Related Literature

Recounting their ministry experiences, Arensberg and Niehoff (1971, 169)

note that:

An evangelist who tries to begin talking about the serious matters of the Gospel too soon could rapidly ruin his effectiveness. The style which the evangelist uses in presenting the Christian message can greatly affect the meaning which the Muslim attributes to that message. Part of our task as effective evangelists is to seek the removal of any other "stumbling blocks", whether cultural or social or ideological, so that the Muslim may fall on Christ alone. The use of timing to introduce an innovation requires that the evangelist know a fair amount about the local scene.

In summing up Arensberg's and Niehoff's ministry experiences, it is obvious to say that one prerequisite every cross-cultural missionary working among Muslims needs is to be very critical about knowing his/her context well enough. That way, missionaries serving in predominately Islamic areas can communicate tangibly to a Muslim friend. On attitude, Parshall (1982, 88) believes that it behooves the evangelists to leave their attitudes of superiority behind them when they go forth to serve Christ in the Muslim world. With regard to felt needs, Watt (1953, 170) holds that:

An awareness of the felt needs of *a given community* helps the evangelist understand where the people are... that the future of the Christian church will depend on its success in providing a faith which will meet the personal needs of the people. *Therefore*, the evangelist cannot stop *at the level of* their felt needs. It is absolutely necessary that he lead them to an understanding of their ultimate needs as God sees them. The felt-need approach can increase the chances of establishing a mature fellowship of believers and decrease the chances of reversion (*italics mine*).

As one with ministry experiences, Watt has put forth a word of caution to all cross-cultural missionaries seeking to work in Muslim areas. Therefore, the felt need approach is needful in any Muslim area if the goal of Great Commission will be fulfilled. Similarly, Goldsmith (1976, 317) argues that group solidarity need not be viewed as a restriction to Christian conversion, but that this concept can cut both ways only if one has creative enough to take advantage of it. He argues that the community in Islamic culture is a felt need at which the Christian message can be aimed if the evangelist is wise. Nida (1954, 74) contends that a careful and systematic study of any culture can reveal numerous ways in which any mission program can be more effectively oriented to meet the needs of the people and to bring them in a more meaningful way the life-transforming significance of the Good News of Jesus Christ. This way cross-cultural missionary can communicate effectively to Muslims.

So, in bringing Christ to Muslims, Bethman (1953, 209) notes that cross-cultural missionaries face a difficulty which is to be met nowhere else. That is, Muslims assume that they know Christ and that their knowledge of him is more accurate than ours. He concludes, by no other religion is Christ's position challenged in such a definite manner as it is in Islam. EMS missionaries are a case in point. Similarly, Nida and Taber (1969, 24) hold that:

An increased awareness of the diversity of motivations in coming to Christ and of the comprehensive character of the gospel of the Kingdom means also that the communicator need not ever restrict himself to one formula in the presentation of Christ as Savior and Lord. The call to conversion in culture is a call to present the message in such a way that people can feel its relevance... and can then respond to it in action.

Drawing from this thought, indigenous local missionaries like EMS of ECWA can be better equipped in their various attempts to bring Christ to Muslims in Northern Nigeria.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In an attempt to address EMS ministry experiences in Muslim evangelism, the researcher employed a qualitative research method. Strauss and Corbin assert that “qualitative research attempts to understand the meaning or nature of experiences of persons, and this involves getting out into the field and finding out what people are doing” (1998, 11). Further, a qualitative research involves a distinct methodological tradition of inquiry that explores a problem. This approach uses the phenomenological strategies of inquiry. Creswell says this approach involves the collection of open-ended, emerging data primarily for developing themes from the data (2003, 18).

Phenomenological research has its origin in a philosophical movement founded by Edmund Husserl. In this kind of study, a small number of informants are studied (Creswell 2003, 15). According to Creswell, the study of three to ten informants is appropriate (Creswell 1998, 122).

Entry Procedure

The researcher is a member and a licensed Pastor with Evangelical Churches of West Africa (ECWA) -the umbrella under which EMS operates. For that reason, a letter of introduction was not required. However, he explained the need for the research to the EMS director who then facilitated the research by assigning him the five areas that the data was collected from.

Instrument Design

To collect the data for this study, the researcher used questions. According to Lienhard, seeking clarifications on observed phenomena, the research can best be done “through in-depth, open-ended interviews where people share their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge” (2000, 71). Similarly, Creswell says that this tool “requires asking general questions and developing an analysis from the information supplied by participants” (2003, 190). The EMS couples appreciated the opportunity to tell about their experiences on the field.

Library Research

The library research was aimed at gaining some insights into the ministry experiences missionaries had in their effort to evangelize Muslims. This information was measured against the findings from the researcher’s field work. The researcher’s sources of information included books, journals, magazines, websites, theses and the like. Tony Wilmot Memorial Library at NEGST, Catholic University of East Africa, Nairobi International School of Theology, Byang Kato Research Library in Jos, and University of Nairobi among others are the researcher’s libraries for resource materials.

Research Design

This study employed a field research method. Spradley wrote, “Field work is the hallmark of cultural anthropology” (1979, 3). In this qualitative study, the researcher employed both ethnographic interviews in form of a questionnaire to guide the conversation (see Appendix A for details). Spradley wrote, “A journal represents another side of fieldwork; which includes reactions to informants and the feel you

sense from others” (1980, 80). A field work journal was used to record supplementary data during the interviews. It included the direct quotes about the missionaries’ ministry experience and other observations that are used in this report.

Population

The population of this study consists of all EMS Missionary couples in Nigeria involved in Muslim evangelism in locations inhabited by Muslims. According to the prayer ministry coordinator at the EMS headquarter in Jos Plateau State, there were no up-to-date records on the total population of EMS missionaries at the time of data collection. The coordinator estimates that the current active ones are fewer than one hundred missionaries.

Sampling

Phenomenological sampling design requires between three and ten informants (Creswell 1998, 122). Two missionary couples involved directly with Muslim evangelism from each state in Northern Nigeria, to make up a total of ten couples. This was to ensure that respondents would provide relevant information as compared with those missionaries who spent a lot of their time in offices, hence are not fully aware or not in touch with situations on the field. The Northern Nigeria in this research consists of five District church councils, namely, Bauchi DCC, Gombe DCC, Kano DCC, Kaduna DCC, and Jos Plateau DCC. Each DCC has one EMS missionary coordinator. The identification of the two missionary couples involved in this study was based on each coordinator’s referral, given the requirements of the study.

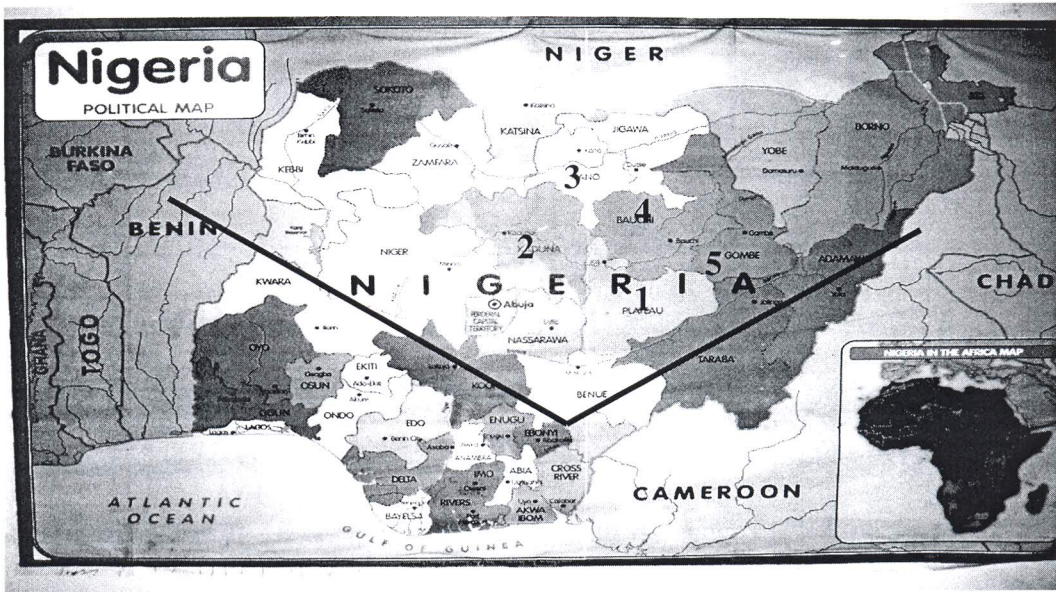


Fig. 1. Map of Nigeria showing the areas (in numbers) in which the research was carried out.

Source: Ahmed Umar Gogori Da Rabi Umar Gogori. D168 Sabon Gari Market. Kano, 2004.

Key: 1. Jos Plateau 2. Kaduna 3. Kano 4. Bauchi 5. Gombe

The map above shows the general area of Northern Nigeria, which is bordered by the Niger River on the West and Benue River on the East that merge to make Lokoja River. The black line shows the general division of Northern and Southern Nigeria.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The intent of this phenomenological study it was three-fold: Firstly, it explored the ministry experiences of EMS missionaries working amongst Muslims in Northern Nigeria. Secondly, it describes the strategies used by EMS in Muslim Evangelism. Thirdly, it offers missiological implications for EMS experiences in Muslim evangelism in Northern Nigeria. The data was collected based on the mission work done over ten years (1994-2004) by ten EMS couples. It was hoped that the length of time under study would portray a comprehensive picture of the EMS mission work.

Data was collected through face to face interviews with ten respondents. Each respondent was asked to respond to the research questions. This chapter presents the researcher's findings and interpretation.

Table 1 below summarizes their prior ministry among Muslims. The finding shows that the highest number of converts through an EMS missionary couple was thirty five and the lowest zero, the average number generally range between one-four.

Four couples live among Muslims, six live away, five had no initial ministry experience, four were born into Muslim families and three had initial ministry experience. The respondents were randomly assigned labels A-J but were then sorted to show the highest conversion figures.

Table. 1 EMS Missionary Ministry Orientation

Respondents	Prior Ministry among Muslims	Proximity to Muslims	Total Conversions
E	Both had initial ministry experience with Muslims	Both live among Muslims	35
F	Both were born into Muslim families and had initial ministry experience	Both live among Muslims	30
A	Both were born into Muslim families and had initial ministry experience	Both stay away from Muslims	4
C	Both had no initial ministry experience	Both stay away from Muslims	3
I	Both had no initial ministry experience	Both stay away from Muslims	2
D	Both were born into Muslim families	Both live among Muslims	2
J	Both had no initial ministry experience	Both live among Muslims	1
B	Both had no initial ministry experience	Both stay away from Muslims	0
G	Both were born into Muslim families	Both stay away from Muslims	0
H	Both had no initial ministry experience	Both stay away from Muslims	0

EMS Missionaries Ministry Experiences

Research question one focuses on the ministry experiences of EMS missionaries in evangelizing Muslims in Northern Nigeria.

Table. 2 Summary of EMS Missionary Ministry Experiences.

Categories of Ministry Experience	No. of Respondents (Couples)
Low self-esteem	10
Fear of death	10
Suspicion	9
Confrontation	8
Culture Shock	7
Ritualistic Worship	7

The ministry experiences of EMS missionaries can further be explained by the figure below.

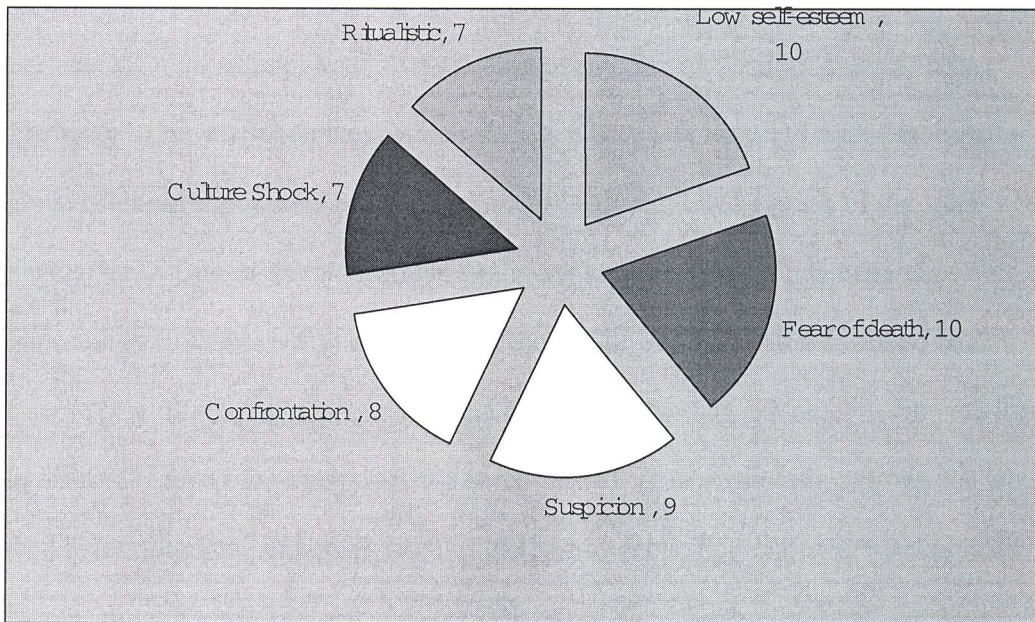


Fig. 2. Missionary Experiences

All ten missionary couples experienced low self-esteem and fear of death. Seven missionary couples reported that they experienced culture shock and discomfort with the Islamic form of worship which is ritualistic. This section is devoted to a descriptive report of EMS missionary experiences. They consisted of low self-esteem, fear of death, suspicion, confrontation, culture shock and discomfort with ritualistic worship.

Low self-esteem

All ten missionary couples reported that as a result of accusations made against them by Muslims, they had developed low self esteem. The accusations focused on the dress code of Christians. Muslims felt that Christian evangelists were like Westerners who had nothing to offer to the Islamic community. Their manner of dress betrayed them. Muslims accused Christian men and women of being half-naked in the way they dressed publicly. Such a dress code by Christians aroused anger

among Muslims. One of the respondents said, “We (EMS missionaries) spend most of our energy in an attempt to correct a wrong perception of Western dress as being Christian”. One respondent explained that each time he interacted with Muslims he always felt not adequately prepared for them. “I do not have a grasp of the teaching of the Qur’an”. One of them added his testimony as he narrated, “Each time I had an opportunity to interact with a Muslim, at the end of our discussion I walked back with a sense of guilt, feeling discouraged and defeated. This has personally made me look like a fool”. One of the respondent’s complained that lack of getting allowance when its due left him and his family discouraged and in debts. For example, he explained, “Twice my wife had a miscarriage for lack of good medical assistance”. Another respondent said that for the last eight years of ministry among the Muslims, he felt like quitting for lack of getting converts from Islam to Christianity.

The dress code, personal preparation, lack of proper understanding of the Qur’an, lack of constant payment of missionaries’ allowance, lack of medical assistance to missionaries and their families in terms of emergency, discouragement from lack of converts, and the like, hampered witnessing among Muslims on the one hand, and created low self esteem on the other hand.

Fear of Death

All ten missionary couples reported that they have lived in constant fear of death due to frequent violence in Northern Nigeria. For example some of the respondents narrated that since the governor of Zamfara State, Alhaji Sani Ahmad introduced Shariah in Northern Nigeria in January of 2000, “our lives and that of our families have been characterized by fear of death”. One of them shared that his life and “that of my family’s has been threatened by Muslims especially in the last three

years”. He said, “in the face of religious violence missionaries are the first causalities”. Another respondent narrated that “the conversion of one Muslim to Christianity provided an occasion for whole Muslim communities (*Ummah*) to stir up religious violence”. One missionary stated, “At one time the dress code of a Christian lady, who walked by the site where Muslims were praying, with parts of her body uncovered as purported by Muslims during Muslim time of prayer on Fridays provoked violence”. One respondent said it was God who protected him from being harmed by the angry Muslims.

One other missionary said that with the introduction of Shariah in Northern Nigeria violence was to be anticipated. Moreso Shariah prohibits any form of Christian witness among Muslims. EMS missionaries have had to keep watching on their lives in the event of sudden violence.

Suspicion

Nine of the missionary couples stated that most Muslims treated EMS missionaries with suspicion. A respondent said that once he began to make contact or establish relationships with Muslims, his relatives or friends developed an attitude of distrust towards any missionaries making frequent contacts with Muslims. One missionary shared his experience that on more than four occasions he noted his Muslim friends who were seen to be making close friendship with him, were cautioned by other Muslims not to have any relation with an infidel. Another respondent explained that once his Muslims friends appeared to be turning towards Christianity, they are simply removed by *Ummah* community or the relatives and ostracized. He said that this was to prevent any association with the missionary in any form. At other times one of the informants asserted, “Missionaries were simply

prevented from associating with members of the Islamic community. Seclusion of Muslim women makes it difficult for missionaries and their wives to give any form of assistance to Muslim women”. These gave Muslims an opportunity to keep a distance from EMS missionaries, a situation one missionary described as “not favorable for ministry”.

Confrontation

Eight missionary couples shared that most of their discussions between Muslims and Christians always generated confusion. Disagreement and confrontation characterized every single dialogue, especially if the dialogue was religious. Two of the informants narrated that EMS missionaries were referred to “as cowards by Muslims if they failed to respond to challenges to their satisfaction”. Five missionaries affirmed, “Muslims disagree with the Christian doctrine of Jesus as the Son of God”. Seven respondents agreed that the Christian doctrine of Jesus generates anger Muslims. Such differences in theological persuasion between Muslims and Christians have become the foundation of confrontation that has separated Christians and Muslims in Northern Nigeria.

Another informant said that EMS missionaries have actually contributed to some degree to the confrontational behavior of Muslims. It seems that all the respondents agree that their formal training in Muslim evangelism was inadequate. One of them explained that those who had received any form of training were deployed as EMS coordinators who spent most of their time in the headquarters. The ground work was left to certificate holders whose only training in Muslim evangelism was part of a more general course called “False Religion” taught in Hausa and called *Adinun Karya*. Two missionaries affirmed that to some extent, the manner in which

they communicated the gospel led to confusion and confrontation with Muslims. One respondent argued, “My problem basically was not the absence of theological content in presentation of the gospel; rather, the problem was the lack of proper communication skills in communicating theological content”. One other informant said, “My presence into the mission field among Muslims was two-fold; one is out of zeal to evangelize Muslims, and the other is through the regular missionary’s posting. But those who have zeal like me was without proper and adequate knowledge”. Another respondent shared his experience which was characterized by the lack of proper understanding of the Qur’an on his part as a missionary.

The clear communication of the Christian doctrine of Trinity has also been a source of confrontation. One informant testified that his experience for the most part showed that:

The ways in which he and his colleagues (EMS missionaries) have communicated the doctrine of the Trinity have been confrontational, simply because he and his colleagues were not open to questions from prospective converts. The result he explained has been one of bitter and sour relationships with Muslims, because Islamic worldview does not accommodate contrary doctrinal positions.

Another missionary said, “Lack of understanding of Islamic worldview has greatly incapacitated me to be an effective witness to Muslims in Northern Nigeria”. One respondent shared that his experience in working among Muslims “taught him that for Muslims, God who is sovereign cannot die an ordinary death on the cross. Jesus can not be the only way to heaven, since Jesus was not the final prophet of God”. Another informant said, “Though Muslims acknowledge Jesus as one of the prophets, also they reject the idea that God has a Son”.

Culture Shock

Seven missionary couples reported that they experienced culture shock in their dealings with Muslims. For instance, even during emergencies like sickness Muslim women were not allowed to leave the house. Their movement was so restricted that they were not allowed to visit neighbors on their own. In addition, the Muslims were quite nihilistic in their approach to faith and saw nothing of dying for their faith. Everything was “insh Allah” which means “if it is Allah’s will” The missionary couples were taken aback because they were not prepared to face these experiences. This means that they need to rethink their strategies, if they wish to be effective in their ministries.

Ritualistic Worship

Seven missionary couples reported that they were uncomfortable with Muslim style of worship which was ritualistic. Prayer times were strictly adhered to. They stopped even when driving, to go for prayers. It did not make sense to them because Muslims could in one moment be involved in violence and killing and the next be in prayer. The recitation of Qur’anic verses was part of the prayers. One missionary felt that Muslims recited verses but did not understand some of them or show the effect of those scriptures on their lives. Recitation was something that they did; the words don’t influence who they were.

Ministry Strategies

Research question two focuses on strategies used by EMS missionaries for Muslim Evangelism in Northern Nigeria. The following pie chart shows the range of strategies cited by the researcher's respondents.

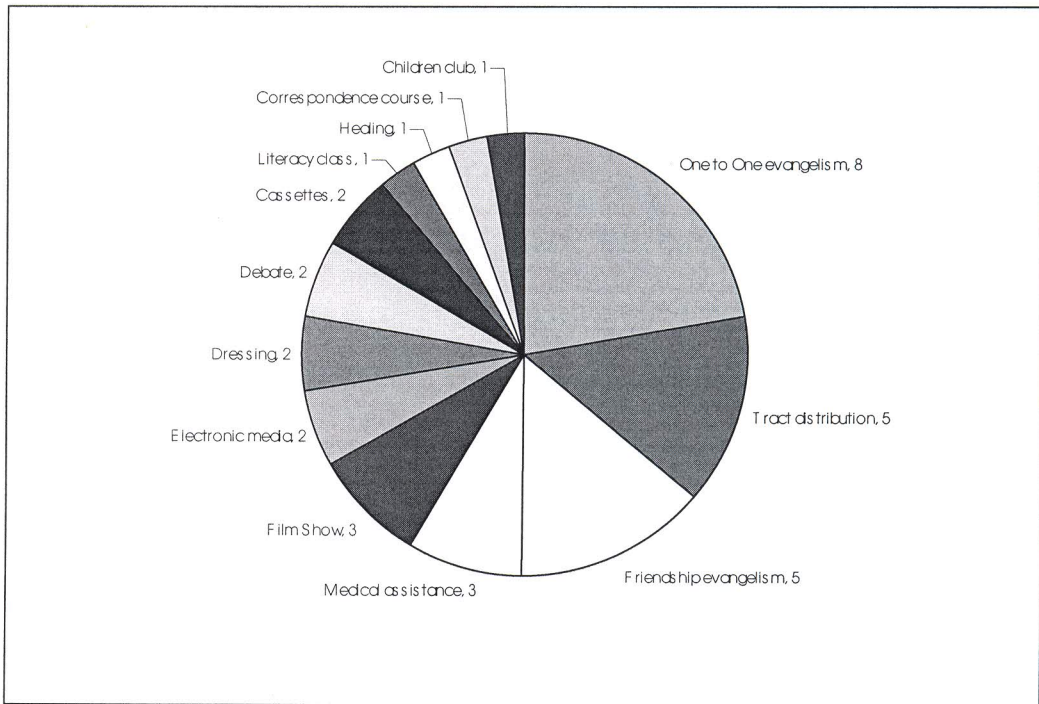


Fig. 3. Strategies to Muslim Evangelism

In response to research question two, the finding shows that one-to-one evangelism was the most frequently used approach, while the least used methods appeared to be Literacy class, Healing, Children's club and Correspondence courses. Tract distribution and Friendship evangelism were the second most used approaches by EMS missionaries.

For purposes of discussion, the raw data above was grouped in the following manner. Film show, Cassettes and Electronic media were grouped under the title "Electronic media." Debate, Literacy class, Correspondence course, Tract distribution and Children's club were grouped under the title "Teaching Strategies." Medical

assistance and Healing were grouped under the title “Healing.” Dressing had its own category while Friendship evangelism and one-to-one evangelism were collapsed into one group called “Friendship Evangelism.”

Friendship Evangelism

A successful mission venture largely depends on the approach adopted, also taking into account the immediate context. Two missionaries said, “We (EMS missionaries) understand the benefit of a long and genuine friendship”. Other missionaries felt that friendship enabled them to establish authentic love that portrayed the practical care needed by the Muslim who sought the truth and helped to break the antagonistic rejection that Muslims had over time.

Another missionary described the present situation as “hostile and not conducive for any friendship evangelism”. The missionaries felt that even though as EMS missionaries they clearly knew the benefit of engaging in reaching out to Muslims through friendship evangelism, the situation had long changed since Shariah was introduced in Northern Nigeria because Shariah prohibits any form of Christian witness to Muslims.

One of the informants shared his experience that although there was some degree of danger in one-to-one evangelism among Muslims, missionaries’ attitude of love and concern for them opened contact and drew Muslims closer to the missionaries. Another respondent shared that with one-to-one evangelism Muslims got attracted by acts of self-giving service especially when it was combined with genuine love which helped to break the world of suspicion and hostility.

Teaching Strategies

The finding also shows that tract distribution was another most effective approach EMS missionary used to reach out to Muslims. One missionary explained of benefits of tract distribution. “On the one hand, it helped to minimize confrontation and suspicions of missionaries. On the other hand, tract distribution was limited where the illiteracy rate was high”. Another respondent said, “Tracts were very limited in supply and the very few ones I used seemed not to address relevant issues dealing with Muslim felt needs”. One missionary expressed, “I wish I could be able to write and develop tracts for my ministry; if I did I would be glad”. Four informants said about their situation, “We are limited in terms of writing tracts that would reflect the contentious issues we face daily, because of our educational background”. Finance was another big challenge in order to get the material to be produced.

Children’s clubs were mainly in schools where the missionaries were given opportunity to teach in their localities. Literacy classes were in places where there were no government schools or where they were far between. This allowed the missionaries opportunities for ministry. For those who could read, reading material was taken to their houses for them to read on their own. Answers to questions in the material were mailed back to the missionaries. This increased the missionary actual area of coverage without their having to travel to all areas frequently. The debate method was not found to be very common because they needed to avoid confrontation.

Electronic Media

Recorded sermons done mainly by Western preachers were distributed. For instance “Call of Hope” is a Muslim ministry based in Germany whose material is distributed. The “Passion of Christ” film which is on DVD was also distributed to wealthy Muslims who did not want to be exposed. Film shows were shown in open air preaching meetings to attract the people’s attention. Life Ministry’s Jesus film was the main film shown in these meetings.

Healing

Though rare, two missionaries organized for medical camps for their localities, in conjunction with District EMS office once a year. Some of the missionaries specialized in the prayer ministry. In critical situations like sickness, Muslims approached missionaries who were their neighbors for prayers. This was also rare because of existing antagonism and was heavily dependent on the level of relationship built.

Dressing

In the North, missionaries have to constantly wear the *kanzu* which is the Muslim male attire for men. The women missionaries wear the *hijab* which is the Muslim female attire. This opens them up for conversation because their dressing is not offensive.

Missiological Implications

Research question three focuses on missiological implications: namely, what missiological implications do these ministry experiences and strategies have for EMS in Muslim evangelization in Northern Nigeria? As indicated earlier on, the findings revealed a number of experiences that EMS missionaries went through in their ministry as they sought to work among Muslims. In this respect, it should be necessary for EMS missionaries to learn from the ministry experiences of precedent missionaries who at one point served as cross-cultural missionaries among Muslims. In this way EMS missionaries will be better equipped for the ministry in the context of Northern Nigeria.

According to the EMS of ECWA brochure the missionary call has been to win Muslims to Christ. From 1950, EMS as a missionary body reached out to the ancient city of Tsanyawa (the present Kano State). The first missionary couples began to share the gospel among the Muslims dominated areas of Northern Nigeria. Fifty five years later EMS is still focused on this pursuit. To do this effectively, EMS missionaries could borrow leaf from Raymond Lull who not only used traditional approaches but became a prolific writer. A good point of departure would be to write their ministry experiences, from where they would be able to respond to crucial issues facing them in practical areas of their ministry and to better understand that Muslim evangelism differs from one location to another. They would also understand more the felt needs of Muslims.

Raymond Lulls' personal ministry experience teaches us that hard work, perseverance and a willingness to suffer for Christ are requirements for ministry in such volatile areas. Effective ministry in a given context requires that missionaries study hard, write and share personal ministry ideas and strategies and learn from

working in the field. Lull faithfully ministered among Muslims while the horrible inquisition was taking place. He preached incessantly, he personally wrote hundreds of books, and was imprisoned, reviled, and cast out of cities. For a year before his death he labored among a small group of Muslim converts that he had won to Christ. On June 30, 1315, he was stoned to death by an angry mob outside the city gate of Bugia, North Africa, while he was opening preaching in the market place about the love of Christ. At any point in his long life, he could have moved into a revered and comfortable position in academia. Instead, he chose to press on patiently, with little tangible fruit, in the great task of Muslim evangelism (Kim 2002, 118-120).

In addition, from the ministry experienced by Lull it is apparent that in the face of difficulty he remained faithful and committed without losing focus. He was personally involved in writing books to aid his effectiveness in his area of ministry. Lull could have given up but he decided to persevere. EMS missionaries need to know that missionary ventures among Muslims must be performed with a holy patience. Despite negligible results, or near-death moments, EMS missionaries as faithful reapers should continue on in the tenacious faith in Him who has called them. “Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass” (I Thess. 5:24, N.I.V.).

EMS missionaries should hold on in patience to the belief that God will do the improbable-if not the impossible-and bring Muslims to Himself as He has done in the past. It is evident from the present findings that some EMS missionaries are tempted to quit and go to seek a more fruitful ministry just like Lull was tempted at some point. EMS missionaries should be encouraged to read about other missionaries so as to know that others like Lull had once also felt the way they do. So they should pray and ask the Lord to give them extra patience to remain working among Muslims.

Seeing the fruit of these past few years would seem to verify the wisdom of hanging in even when there is so little encouragement.

Hesselgrave sees the expression of God's love, on the part of the missionary, as a key strategy towards effective witnessing to Muslims. "To a degree unparalleled in other parts of the world, the missionary to Jews and Muslims must win a hearing by demonstrating Christ-like qualities of integrity and love. Only then can the missionary begin to communicate the God of the Bible who is truth and love personified" (1978, 18). Zwemer adds his testimony, "After forty years of ministry experience, I am convinced that the nearest way to the Muslim heart is the way of God's love, the way of the Cross" (1929, 20).

Contextualization teaches that even though EMS missionaries are involved in Muslim evangelism in Northern Nigeria, they need to constantly keep in mind the areas of their individual ministry. Just as each of them stays in different locations, so they should know that the people also differ and thus have varying felt needs. Each context should be seen as an entity for ministry. Each context should determine what should be done. As Zwemer noted earlier on, "The nearest way to Muslim heart is the way of God's love, the way of the Cross," EMS missionaries also need to be able to retell the message of "God's love, the way of the Cross" with a renewed passion and a new strategy. I now turn to ministry strategies used by other cross-cultural missionaries so that EMS can learn from their success and failure as well.

Khair-Ullah (1979, 566-77) decries a cold, logical strategy to Muslim evangelism that:

The intellectual, the social, the emotional barriers may be overcome but unless by the grace of God we touch another heart with love, it may never really come to know the much greater and wonderful love of God for him. A recent convert who was struggling with the social and intellectual barriers, while still a Muslim wrote these words, "It is stimulating to think that cases of

conversion through sheer reasoning between dogmas of two religions are very rare, perhaps nonexistent. In cases of conversion where prosperity, social status, security, vengeance against native society, emotional experimentation and the like, are not the motives, the change of faith is motivated perhaps infinitely more frequently by love for charming virtues of a magnetic person, or love for a group of lovable associates than by cold religious arithmetic.

Drawing from Khair-Ullahs' wealth of ministry experience, it is possible for EMS missionaries to overcome low self-esteem. One way is that EMS missionaries' service among Muslims in Northern Nigeria should show or demonstrate the grace of God by touching another heart with love. In this way, Muslims and other non-Christians can be won through love. Further to Khair-Ullahs' earlier assertion for a logical strategy to Muslim evangelism, Kim's discussion on "missionaries to the Muslim World" summarizes some of the various strategies of other missionaries who had worked among Muslims over the years (2002, 116-122).

St. Francis of Assisi's (1181/2-1226) approach to winning Muslims was focused on "presence evangelism" in which he emphasizes the existence of Christians in a community acts as "light to the Gentiles" where Christian community is interacting with its co-residents, who observe and are impressed by it. William of Tripoli's (1220-91) idea of winning Muslims to Christ was focused on using the Qur'an and aspects of Islamic doctrine, where there were Biblical parallels, helped to win favors for him in those years.

Raymond Lull's strategy for the service of Christ among Muslims was centered on writing apologetics books, founding schools for missionaries' training, and giving one's life as a martyr. Although his other strategy of open air preaching in market places was vehemently rejected, his passion and act of writing was appropriate. Abdul Masihs' (1811-1827) passion to winning his brothers (Muslims) to Christ was characterized by his strategy of promoting contextualization of the

Christian message, as was evident in his composition of hymns set to indigenous tunes. Samuel Zwemers' (1867-1952) passion for winning Muslims to Christ used his prolific writing skills as his strategy.

Another important lesson to learn includes the fact that EMS missionaries should seek to employ and promote contextualized Christian messages through personal hymns that reflect and should seek to address the particular felt needs such as hungry, disease, AIDS, and the like, on the part of the Muslims.

Integral to the success of EMS mission work is preparation. The missionaries need on the job training to help them answer the questions raised on the field. In addition, they need a stronger financial support base so that their work is not hindered by the lack of funds for basic personal needs and regular ministry expenditure. The prayer ministry should also be encouraged. Prayer should be a central part of the preparation and sustenance of all mission work. In praying for Muslims, the missionaries should not restrict themselves from praying from afar; they should come close to the Muslims. Touch is an important aspect of healing that communicates unconditional love.

Fear of death decreases the opportunity for meaningful contact between Muslims and Christians. Group support among the missionaries would help them to remain strong in the face of persecution. Prayer would keep them dependent on God's power to sustain them. EMS missionaries must be unapologetic about their mission of converting Muslims to Christianity. However, evangelistic methods must be well thought out and presented in a process that allows for potential converts to consider the intricacies of their spiritual journey.

In terms of explaining contentious areas of doctrine, competent Christian apologists must be available to lead the work. Seminary and bible school training

could be supplemented by regular discussion forums that would aid in biblical exegesis. Other general topics of discussion like culture shock would help them strategize on how they could continue living among the Muslims and to understand their worldview and culture. It would help them understand why Muslims behave as they do. For instance, in terms of ritualistic worship, EMS missionaries need to understand that Islamic belief is expressed in strict adherence to pillars of faith. These are the actions that give evidence of submission to Allah.

The most frequently used evangelism strategies were friendship evangelism and tract distribution. Friendship is one of the methods that have been used for a long time. This method should be used wisely so that the friendship facilitates evangelism. While methods like the children's club is not used much, it is a good foundation that should be used more because it has longer term implications over the lives of the children.

Tracts and cassette messages that have been made in Western countries are not the best because they are not contextualized. Missionaries on the ground should learn how to prepare relevant tracts that appeal to their particular audiences. Stories that depict local situations would be a good medium within which lessons can be found. They should reflect the burning issues of their ministry and give the biblical response to them.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research has achieved its purpose in that it has described the significant phenomenon of EMS ministry; it has identified the strategies used, and offers the missiological implications for EMS ministry in Muslim evangelism in Northern Nigeria. It is hoped that these findings have added credence to the EMS ministry among the Muslims.

The experiences of the EMS missionaries show that they can be encouraged by the examples of missionaries in the past. Ministry among Muslims has always been difficult and often times dangerous. Rom 5:3-5 says “but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us” (NIV). For them to increase their effectiveness in Muslim evangelism, they must be willing to pay the price.

Another crucial aspect of preparation for ministry lies in the area of reading, personal reflection and writing. To the extent that these missionaries can articulate the issues they face and provide for themselves a missionary support group for the exchange of ideas, they will grow in the understanding of ministry in their particular context. EMS missionaries function under a formal body. They must be encouraged to take advantage of the existing infrastructure to bring them together so that each can benefit from the corporate resources of the whole group. The challenge of Muslim

evangelism demands that Christian missionaries come together to form a strong and united front.

Deployment of missionaries has traditionally been based on privilege and not gifting or experience. To focus on the needs of the different areas, each missionary needs to do extensive research on the particular felt needs of the Muslims in their locality. This would equip them to respond more specifically and appropriately. This shows that theological training with an emphasis on Islamic studies is a necessary extension of field work. An understanding of the Muslim world view would decrease their apprehension and ignorance and provide the foundation for appropriate evangelism methods. Certainly, those who were trained in ministry to Muslims and who lived and worked among the Muslims seem to have better results than those who didn't, judging from the conversion figures.

It was also the researcher's conclusion that though the missionaries had head knowledge about the different strategies they must use, they were yet to integrate them into their mission work. Their low self esteem was evidence of the overpowering sense of inadequacy that they felt in the face of the daunting task.

The evidence of friction brought about by the cultural differences between Muslims and Christians shows clearly that EMS missionaries need to consider ways in which the gospel could be contextualized to the Muslim culture without compromising on the basic tenets of scripture. Abdul Masih's composition of hymns set to indigenous tunes is one example that helped his people to enjoy worship of God in familiar ways.

Recommendations for Further Studies

It is the recommendation of this researcher that EMS investigate the curriculum needs of Bible schools and seminary education geared towards reaching Muslims so that those who are deployed on the field are sufficiently prepared for the people that they seek to reach. Scholars in Missions and Christian education would come together to produce instruction that would equip missionaries for the task.

Another area of study would be a Christian response to the question of Shariah. The tension between Christians and Muslims shows that the EMS missionaries were intimidated by the Muslim aggressive nature and did not have a good response for the fundamental questions that they raised.

A crucial area of study concerns the management of mission boards. How can EMS improve the work being done in Nigeria? Internal problems in sending agencies contribute a great deal to the failure of missionaries in performance on the field. By extension, how can the church and the Para-church come together to strategize on Muslim evangelism?

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EMS MISSIONARY COUPLES

The questionnaire was design to give specific guide for the researcher in his interviews with the respondents.

Name.....

How long have you served with EMS:.....years.

How long have you served among the Muslim.....years

Your position in EMS, are you a Coordinator/full time missionary.

Please tell me about your **POSSIBLE** ministry experiences you face as you seek to witness to the Muslims [in other words when you are face to face with a Muslim]?

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Please, **ONLY** tell me about the approaches you are **CURRENTLY USING ON THE FIELD** as you seek to witness to Muslims? **Please Skip** if there is no approach or strategy in use at the moment. Please do not tell me about what others are doing.

- 1..... 2.....
- 3..... 4.....

5..... 6.....

What is the conversion rate of Muslims for the last 1 year, 5 years, and 10 years of your ministry?

.....
.....

Please tell me about the approaches you are **PERSONALLY** using in conducting discipleship of the Muslim convert you have? [Please Note: Don't tell me what others are doing that you know of. Tell me about what you are personally involved in right now on the field].

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Please tell me whether or not you had any prior ministry exposure to Muslims before you began working with EMS among the Muslims?

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Please tell me about your level of theological training?

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Please list for me some of the courses you took in Bible collage/Seminary that you think equipped and prepared you for Muslim evangelism?

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Please tell me about the level of your proximity to your target group for the period that you have spent for Muslim evangelism?

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Please madam tells me about the level of your involvement in witnessing to Muslim women?

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.....

Please madam tells me about your level of training that equipped and also prepared you for ministering to Muslim women?

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Please madam can you list for me the courses you took that prepared you to ministry among Muslims women?

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.....

Please madam tell me the level of you exposure in Muslim evangelism before you and your husband became Missionaries with EMS?

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.....

Do you think both of you [I mean you and your wife] were fully equipped and prepared for Muslims evangelism in your Bible school/Seminary?

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.....

If **No**, what will be your suggestion to ECWA leadership and EMS director in order to better equip you for this great task, and also for those who are still in Bible schools or Seminary?.....

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What hindrances do you face in your effort to reach Muslims with the gospel?

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Please list for me what has been the response (s) you normally get from Muslims as you seek to evangelize them?

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Please explain to me how the different approaches you listed above contributed to your effort in reaching the Muslims?

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.....

From your perspective as a missionary on the field, would you consider the following as a problem (s) or hindrances to Muslims Evangelism?

- a. Muslim Culture
- b. Muslim Language
- c. Muslim Worldview

YES it's a problem as well as a hindrance to Muslim evangelism.

NO it's not a problem; therefore it's not a hindrance to Muslim evangelism.

If **YES**, please briefly explain how you overcome each of these problems or hindrances listed above.

Culture.....
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Language.....
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Worldview.....
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.....

VITA

PERSONAL DATA

Name: Yakubu Bulus Bakfwash
Date of Birth: August 27, 1968
Marital Status: Married
Gender: Male
Nationality: Nigerian

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

2005 Master of Divinity (Mission), NEGST
2000 Bachelor of Arts Theology (Missions & Evangelism) Jos
ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS)
1993 Diploma in General Agriculture, College of Agriculture Lafia,
Nigeria
1983 Certificate in Agriculture, Lafia Agricultural Training School
Lafia, Nigeria

PROFESSIONAL EXPERINCE

2000-2002 Senior Pastor and Head of Chaplains ECWA Evangel
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1994-1995 Agricultural Research Assistance Jos,