AFRICA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

A STUDY ON THE USE OF CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE
STORYING AS AN EVANGELISTIC TOOL AMONG
BORANA MUSLIM WOMEN IN KARIOBANGI

BY
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A Thesis submitted to the Graduate School in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts in Mission Studies

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Student Declaration

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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 the Examiners

(Signed)_____
Everlyne Wanjiru Gitau

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to gain understanding of Chronological Bible Storying as a strategy for Muslim evangelism and the relevance of this approach in evangelising the Muslim Borana women in Kariobangi.

The research method chosen for this task was qualitative since it tried to understand CBS strategy and its relevance from the experience of the Borana Muslim women and the missionary storyer. The informants included women who had attended the storying sessions at Kariobangi and the missionary storyer who prepared and taught in the storying sessions. The sample selection was done using purposive sampling. The researcher chose to use participant observation and interviews to collect data. The data gathered through taped interviews was transcribed and reviewed looking for words, phrases or key words that gave information relevant to the research. These were picked out and coded for analysis. The condensed notes taken during the research were typed up and then coded. The data from both collection methods was then analysed thematically.

The study found that Chronological Bible Storying was a relevant evangelism tool for Borana Muslim women in Kariobangi. The women were found to be most functionally illiterate and therefore considered to be oral communicators, making storying the best way to communicate the gospel. Since the Borana women are in need of economic empowerment, this strategy was found to be appropriate as it goes hand in hand with the framework of common interest created by a self help group.

To

Magdalene,

A woman of strength and faith,

Who taught me to value passion, education,

And a well turned phrase;

Who lived loud, laughed hard and loved well,

For whom the edible toad,

Was always the fat one.

May your memory be eternal.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The message of the Bible is that of a God who is on a mission of love to save his creation that is lost and hopeless in the grip of sin and its effects. To love and proclaim the good news of the gospel makes up the great commission and the great commandment. Our service in sharing the gospel of Christ is to be based on the love that we have received and in overflowing love share the good news with others.

Ministry to Muslims is fraught with theological challenges. As a religious system, Islam has put up formidable barriers to the gospel with polemic arguments claiming the corruption of the bible and the denial of the deity of Christ among others. These systems of belief are deeply rooted and changing their worldview a difficult endeavour. However, alongside there are bridges that could be exploited to bring about a better understanding of the gospel. In order to reach Muslims, there is need for a strategy that can crumble the barriers and exploit the opportunities.

Illiteracy is a challenge for reaching any people group. The gospel message has to be explained in a format that oral learners are able to grasp, respond to and share with others. According to Eric, this is the appropriate way to engage the illiterate is through the use of narratives (Eric 2000, 4). This allows the truth to be cloaked in a form that they understand easily and one they can reproduce later. It is not only important as a learning strategy but also as a bridge to speak into their worldview.

Muslim women are diverse in their backgrounds. However, their shared religious and cultural influence through Islam makes them vulnerable to similar challenges based on their position in society and their common concerns as women. Amongst a

larger group of Muslim women, Borana Muslim women exemplify a group that would display both the barriers of a rival religious system and illiteracy. The Borana community is predominantly resident in Northern Kenya, a region that is generally underdeveloped. Cultural, social and economic factors contribute to lower literacy among Borana women.

In Nairobi, Borana women live in their communities that are found in low-income areas such as Kibera, Kariobangi, Bulbul, and others. As Muslims, Borana Muslim women already have a competing theology that has to be challenged wisely. In her research among the urban Borana, Murumba found that the women ranged between semi-literate and illiterate (Murumba 2008, 80). This means that missionaries have to find effective tools/ strategies for communication of the gospel if they are to be reached.

This research will investigate Chronological Bible Storying as a tool in communicating the gospel to Borana Muslim women in Kariobangi.

Thesis

This research revolves around the thesis that Chronological Bible Storying is an appropriate ministry strategy for communicating the gospel to the Borana Muslim women of Kariobangi.

Problem Statement

Islam as a religious movement provides not only a religion but also a culture based on the Qur'an and Sunna. Over the centuries, it has been fortified against Christianity by polemic arguments and fundamental teachings that put them at odds with the message of the gospel. The barriers are firmly set. An added dimension to this challenge is the low level of education among the poor in Kenyan society. Thus

evangelism in low income areas involves dealing with illiterate or functionally illiterate individuals who function within an oral society rooted in their cultural backgrounds. This research therefore seeks to study the use of Chronological Bible Storying as a strategy of evangelism among the Borana Muslim women in Kariobangi who are part of an oral society.

Purpose Statement

The researcher intended to gain understanding of Chronological Bible Storying as a strategy for Muslim evangelism and the relevance of this approach in evangelising the Muslim Borana women in Kariobangi.

Significance of Study

This study is an exploration of Chronological Bible Storying as a strategy for ministry. The relevance of this method in reaching people overcoming the barriers of religion and illiteracy will be a notable contribution to missions in Kenya. This is important because for many years missionaries assumed that for one to understand and grow in their faith, they had to be literate. This logic led to the establishment of schools that would teach reading skills so that they could understand and respond to the gospel. By looking into the relevance of this method to the ministry among Borana Muslim women, the approach will be put to the test to see how it surmounts theological, cultural and literacy barriers.

Research Questions

1. What is the understanding of Chronological Bible Storying?

2. How is Chronological Bible Storying used in evangelizing Borana Muslim

women in Kariobangi?

3. What is the relevance of this approach in communicating the gospel to Borana Muslim women?

Research Objectives

The researcher intends to:

1. Understand Chronological Bible Storying as a tool of Muslim evangelism.

2. Find out how Chronological Bible Storying is being done with Borana Muslim women in the Kariobangi.

3. Find out if this tool is relevant to the Borana Muslim women in the Kariobangi.

Delimitations

This study will be limited to a limited number of storying sessions provided for Muslim Borana women attending a sewing school in Kariobangi. The women in this research will be from an urban context and therefore the research findings may not be directly applicable to a village context.

Definition of Terms

The word Chronological describes an arrangement of events or things in the order in which they occur in time. Bible Storying is the practise of sharing the truths in the bible through telling bible-based stories. An individual using this method of communicating the gospel is referred to as a "storyer" and the time used in the endeavour a "storying session" (Thomson 1996, 7). The term Borana in this study

refers to a branch of the larger Oromo people group of Southern Ethiopia. It is also inclusive of the Burji community, a minority group that lives among them and has assimilated the Borana culture and language.

Abbreviations

CBS: Chronological Bible Storying

CBT: Chronological Bible Teaching

MBB: Muslim Background Believer

NAKWSP: New Ark Kariobangi Women Self-help Project

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Substantive Literature Review

In this section an attempt was made to interact with available literature around the topic of this study. The areas of interest included material on Chronological Bible Storying, the Borana people group, and women in Islam.

Chronological Bible Storying (CBS)

Story telling as a method of teaching and communicating truth is by no means new. The Gospels portray Jesus as a teacher who taught his disciples and other listeners using parables. The substance of his communication was embedded in a story or sayings and his audience got his message by deciphering meaning from them. Traditional societies are value the art of storytelling. It is through this and other oral strategies that younger generations are taught and enculturated (CBStorying).

Chronological Bible Storying is a communication strategy that relies upon the use of story to convey the gospel message in a chronological order from creation to Christ followed by a dialogue session (Colgate 2008a, 221). The credit for the resurgence and popularization of this method of instruction within mission circles is given to Trevor McIlwain of the New Tribes Mission. McIlwain began to use story as a teaching aid in the 1970s for his target group in Philippines in an effort to combat syncretism. The stories were chosen chronologically and were followed up with a teaching session and thus he called this method Chronological Bible Teaching (CBT)

(Lovejoy 2000, 3). However, in CBT, the emphasis was on exposition of the word and thus the strategy was more suited to the literate mind. The oral strategies of learning through story were rarely exploited and as such missed the goal of effective communication among oral cultures.

Based on McIlwain's approach, Jim Slack and J.O. Terry of the International Mission Board (formerly known as Foreign Missions Board) came up with a slightly different approach. This put a lot more emphasis on the story, eliminated the expository teaching section replacing it with dialogue, and for purposes of differentiation referred to it as "storying" (Lovejoy 2000, 3-4). Chronological Bible Storying thus emerged borrowing the chronology aspect of the previous method and utilising oral communication strategies instead of exposition. This improvement gave CBS accessibility to oral communicators since in a sense; storytelling is commonplace in their societies.

Rationale for Chronological Bible Storying

CBS is used in missions because it addresses three challenges that missionaries have to deal with in communicating the gospel cross-culturally i.e. worldview, orality and effective communication.

Worldview

Worldview refers to the underlying assumptions that people hold on which their beliefs and perceptions of reality are anchored (Kraft 1996, 52). This underlying framework is constructed within the individual's mind during the process of enculturation where an individual is taught to think, emote and act in specific

culturally appropriate ways. Underlying these habits are the values and assumptions that make up a lens through which they see and experience the world.

Wright provides an interesting perspective in suggesting that people's perception of the world is embedded in a narrative framework. He argues that story is at the very core of worldview as a formative and transformative agent (Wright 1992, 38-40). In effect, Wright argues that the worldview of a community or individual is ensconced in a meta-narrative into which values and perceptions are slotted. If, as Lovejoy claims, the story core of worldview is concerned with answering the fundamental questions of identity, the causes of evil/suffering etc (Lovejoy et al. 2005, 33), then it follows that any change has to start at the story or worldview level. One would have to agree with Wright when he argues that a different story framework has to be introduced to give alternative answers that quietly undermine the old worldview assumptions (Wright 1992, 40). If worldview is entrenched in a story, it gives CBS a niche as an evangelism strategy since it would give the overarching story of the bible and the worldview therein as a substitute for any previous story.

The gospel message is a supra-cultural one and any interactions it has with any culture should result in change. This change comes with the attempt of individuals and communities trying to conform to the truth revealed to them. However, for genuine culture change to be achieved, it has to begin from the worldview level (Kraft 1996, 65). A challenge to any culture's worldview is met with resistance as it threatens their way of life and reality. Using storying as a method of issuing a veiled challenge to a previous contrasting worldview allows the receptors to test the two stories for validity without overt confrontation (Wright 1992, 42). Confrontation closes the door to any meaningful communication. Each party becomes preoccupied with defending a position rather than listening or understanding the other.

CBS is arguably a viable evangelism strategy for two reasons. It challenges worldview in a non-confrontational way seeking to supplant previous beliefs albeit covertly. However, any meaningful challenge needs to be sustained for a period. CBS builds up an argument through a story sequence that reinforces the previous with the latest one thus building a case for the suggested worldview in a stealthy and relentless assault. One can therefore conclude that CBS could provide an important tool for missions since it is based on solid biblical truth that presents a Christian theology as a worldview in its own right (Wright 1992, 1:132-3).

Literacy

The gospel as presented to the African receptors was based on a text. Missionaries in the past assumed that Christian maturity is dependent upon literacy. It is this belief that led to the foundation of mission schools as missionaries tried to put the Word of God into the hands of their target groups. They believed, that for one to mature in faith there must be an exposure to the truth found in the text of the bible (Klem 1995, 59-60). However, access to it was believed to be solely through reading. In recent years, this assumption has been challenged to the effect that this position has become slightly nuanced.

The leading cause of this change according to Colgate is a closer examination of strategies employed in communicating the gospel to the illiterate (Colgate 2008b, 136). Questions have been raised regarding the effectiveness of introducing literacy before the gospel both in winning souls of individuals and in creating church planting movements. Insistence on literacy before the presentation of the gospel has come to be viewed as inefficient and unnecessary since it would take years for populations to grasp the message while others perish in the interim (Lovejoy et al. 2005, 11-2; Eric

2000, 4). The requirement of literacy before the gospel makes the transferability of this method difficult for converts. The use of oral strategies would be efficient not only in communicating the message sooner, but also in equipping converts with reproducible tools for evangelism. Therefore, if a population is oral, the gospel should be communicated using oral strategies instead of waiting to transform them into a literate people.

However, the question of maintaining the accuracy of the gospel message comes to the forefront. It is a well-known fact that oral communication is prone to distortion. Oral strategies have long been instrumental in communication, information storage and education in many traditional societies. The dependence on oral means for the said purposes called orality (CBStorying). Traditionally, oral societies used set oral forms like proverbs, songs and stories. They could not be tampered with since one could not be change them at will and mutual accountability ensured that their integrity was maintained.

It is interesting to note that although modern Christianity, especially that of the protestant variety, is based on a book and has contributed to sustained interest in literacy for centuries, it has not always been literate in nature. Weber argues that the western protestant church movement laid emphasis on intellectual expression and understanding of the Word (Weber 1960, 11). One could indeed argue that the text gained more prominence as the standard of faith during the reformation to counter the excesses of the Roman Catholic Church. The printing press making the scripture more accessible and the enlightenment period characterised by intellectual advances could have been catalysts of this change.

Colgate suggests that the Word of God can be understood in two ways; "Holy Writ" and "Holy Word". He argues that while the scriptures record the instruction of

God in regard to its preservation in written form for future generations, the genres that make up the bible include oral ones like songs and narrative suggesting that scripture is also God's Word spoken (Colgate 2008c, 200-1). This argument finds support in church history since the New Testament contains the records of the ministry of Christ even though he did not commit them to writing. The gospel writers wrote years after the death and resurrection of Christ and even then, the manuscripts were difficult to acquire. Thus during the period of Christ's ministry and a generation after, the Word of God was transmitted orally.

The early monastic and the medieval periods were characterised by an extensive use of oral methods of interacting with scripture (Klem 1995, 59; Graham 1993, 124-5). Although the monks could read, a lot of memorization was encouraged. The lay Christian for most part could not read and thus scripture was in found song, liturgy, chants etc (Graham 1993, 130-1, 142). A good example would be a cursory reading of Anglican liturgical prayers in the Book of Common Prayer left over from its Roman Catholic roots. This reveals a vast amount of scriptures incorporated in prayer. Architecture such as stained glass windows that depicted various scenes in scripture also acted as reminders to an illiterate Christian congregation. Therefore, before the invention of the printing press, Christianity still existed and thrived thus challenging the narrow understanding of scripture as only the written word.

Individuals who communicate and learn most effectively through of oral means are known as oral learners/communicators (Lovejoy et al. 2005, 4; A. H. 2000, 146). Their orality could be simply due to a lack of educational opportunities or merely preference. Slack drew up an illustration that suggests different levels at which individuals could be found within the literacy continuum based on their exposure to literacy and therefore, their corresponding learning preferences.

The illiterate, according to Slack's continuum, are those who cannot read or write at all and learn by oral means. Functional illiterates have had up to eight years exposure to literacy but regress to the level of illiteracy due to a lack of sustained interaction with literate material. Therefore, they can no longer understand literate means thus preferring oral methods. On the mid-point of the scale are the semi-literate who with ten years of education are classified as literate but still prefer oral modes of learning. Those who think and learn best through literate means (e.g. reading text) fall in the literate category. The highly literate fall at the extreme end of the continuum representing individuals who have achieved a tertiary level of education and whose interaction with printed material is a way of life (Lovejoy et al. 2005, 20-1; Eric 2009)

Oral communicators learn using different strategies. They grasp concrete rather than abstract ideas. Memorising is an effective learning method for them. The sequential arrangement of a given lesson and repetition allows them to memorise easily. Learning through example works very well for oral learners since they watch and reproduce what they have observed. Associations are useful to them since objects can be used as a memory prompt for lessons learnt. Interaction or discussion also fixes lessons in their minds (Brown 2002, 19; A. H. 2000, 149; Lovejoy et al. 2005, 49). All of these strategies can be employed in CBS thus increasing the effectiveness of the teaching since the best learning methods of the recipients are targeted.

Effective communication

Sharing the gospel of Christ is a communication process. A communication process is understood to revolve around two parties; senders and receivers. Senders, who are the originators of the message, encode the message and send it through a medium/channel to the receptor who then decodes it. The factors in the

communication process that cause interference within the process are classified as noise. The receptor upon decoding can reverse roles and become a sender communicating feedback to the original messenger.

Ministers of the gospel in CBS are the originators of communication and should bear in mind the perspective of the receptors. This is important because the receptors interpret or assign meaning to the message communicated through the lenses of culture and worldview. Effective communication demands that either the sending agent understand the assumptions of the receptor and adjust the communication to take these into account or vice versa. Hesselgrave argues that since Christians initiate the communication process, it is their job to ensure that the message sent is the one received i.e. receptor oriented communication (Hesselgrave 1991, 163).The aim of the gospel message is a change of life. If people are to be persuaded to change allegiances, they have not only to understand but be convinced (Kraft 1991, 56).

A receptor-oriented communication takes into account the message to be communicated and the media of choice. The adaptation of the communication message and media to suit the recipients is contextualization. CBS can be a valuable tool of communication in oral societies since story is a medium that is familiar and comfortable. It can be adapted to suit the traditional style of storytelling and the worldview of the particular people group making comprehension easier. This however a difficult task since one must understand the message as intended by God and the biblical author to the people within the bible world/culture in the context of one's own culture and then communicate this same message to a third culture in a way that fosters understanding and relevance of the message (Hesselgrave 1991, 107-9). At the same time, one must also have sufficient knowledge of the target culture so that the

chosen forms for contextualization do not cause an attachment of unintended meaning. It is only after proper understanding is achieved that persuasion can begin.

The Storying Process

CBS begins with the selection of stories to be told. The goal of the storying determines the sequential stories that will be picked out for the lessons. Based on the goals of storying, story sets or tracks have been suggested for the purposes of evangelism, discipleship, church planting and leadership training. A story sequence is built around themes that are advanced with the goal of the storying in mind (Lovejoy et al. 2005, 11; Thomson 1996, 11-5; Eric 2000, 24). The evangelism track for example is used to present the gospel message in a holistic sense i.e. understanding creation, the fall, sinfulness of man, God's plan of salvation and the redemption of mankind in Christ's death and resurrection. A recurrent theme like blood sacrifice could be followed throughout the Old Testament as a foreshadow of the New Testament sacrifice of Christ. This may lead the receptors' understanding the need for substitutionary atonement.

Another determinant of a storying sequence is the worldview of the target group. The worldview provides knowledge on the barriers and bridges that the target people's culture holds in regard to the gospel. Bridges are those aspects of culture or experiences in the people's lives that provide a springboard for the gospel. These aspects of culture that mirror biblical culture or values can be used to point people to the truth thus providing ideas of stories that could be used effectively e.g. the patriarch stories would appeal to nomadic pastoralists. The challenges to the gospel message or barriers are those factors that would cause people to reject or not understand and accept the gospel message. Their basis could be social, psychological,

religious, etc. The stories chosen should address these issues repeatedly with the aim of breaking down resistance (CBStorying; Thomson 1996, 20-1).

Many ideas are advanced on the actual management of time in a storying session. However, there are three main segments that emerge in the proposed order of storying lessons: preliminary interaction, storying and discussion. A storying session should begin with a period of social interaction between the storyer and the target group. This allows the formation of relationships, which are essential for the acceptance of the message. A short session on reviewing the last lesson follows encouraging the participants to remember and retell the story and lessons learnt (Eric 2000, 24). This repetition works at helping participants to memorise the story and also set the stage for the story of the day since it builds on the previous one. Thus, the prelude acts as a springboard for interaction and content.

Storying the day's story follows. The style and delivery of the storying depends on the individual and nature of both the receptors and their environment. Based on where fall on the literacy continuum, the storyer then ideally adapts the narration to suit the receptors' needs. Some environments are hostile to Christianity and Christians. Therefore, this means that the storyer could opt to do the storying by memory and have no Bible with them. In more open circumstances, the storyer could refer to it during the narration or even read the story if the receptors are literate.

The main purpose of storying for oral communicators is to give them an oral bible i.e. knowledge of the word, basic theology and implications of these on their daily lives (A. H. 2000, 152). The storying style should be contextualised to fit their traditional strategies both for increasing interest, and for effective communication using familiar channels. Teaching aids like pictures and objects can be used. They serve as illustrative and mnemonic aids (Eric 2000, 22-3). However, they should be

used wisely considering the pictorial content especially among Muslims who may not take kindly to pictures of prophets.

The last session involves discussion and application of the lessons learnt. This part is prepared in a question and answer format that geared towards allowing people to learn through discovery (Thomson 1996, 33). The storyer poses questions that help the receptors to review the story, discover the themes/lessons embedded in the story, and find application of revealed truth to their lives.

Criticism of Chronological Bible Storying

CBS has its critics. There are those who argue that this ministry strategy ultimately has the effect of undermining the important work of translation. One of these is the Discernment Ministries Inc., which launched a scathing attack on this method.

> This new heresy is called ORALITY, which is telling biblical stories based on pictures and images. Orality short-cuts Bible translation and language methods of teaching the Word of God to "people groups." The rationale for this is, of course, the "urgency" in fulfilling the Great Commission "mandate." Orality is by its very nature condescending, treating Third World peoples as "children" who supposedly do not have the "ability" or "desire" to learn to read. It is being touted as an alternative method of evangelism. However, it is very evident that some mission groups have no intention of EVER teaching these people to read, or give them a Bible in their own language (Discernment Research Group, Herescope, entry posted March 8, 2006).

In their criticism of oral strategies, in which CBS belongs, this group destroys a straw man. The definition they give for orality is inaccurate since it refers to a phenomenon characterised by the use of oral strategies for communication and not telling bible stories. The definition given may be applied to storying but even then it is still simplistic and misleading.

The concerns about the potential of damaging translation work though understandable are groundless. According to Lovejoy, the intentions of the proponents of this strategy is to make the truth of the gospel accessible to oral communicators in familiar and contextually appropriate methods alongside bible translation teams. What proponents do not agree with is requiring an oral receptor to attain literacy before presenting the gospel or the translation of the given book before storying it (Lovejoy 2000, 10). The training of oral communicators in literacy as well as bible translation can be done alongside CBS in evangelism but not as a pre-requisite. The assertion that this method is condescending to oral communicators is thus unfair and inaccurate.

The underlying assumption of this critique is that the Word of God is in written form. This mirrors Colgate's description of the perception of literate conservative evangelicals in viewing the Word is the literary piece (Colgate 2008c, 200). Although the Word of God, by God's command and the leadership of the Holy Spirit, was put into writing, confining it to only those who can read was not the intention. The bible itself has references of the Word in written form being made accessible to God's people through reading. God himself in Christ Jesus preferred to use oral strategies to express himself to a largely illiterate Palestinian audience.

An important concern in all this is in keeping the integrity of the Word whilst presenting it in the flexible form of spoken word. This rides on an assumption that pits literate methods against oral ones, which according to Graham, presents a false dichotomy since CBS can be used alongside literate methods. He argues that literate and oral methods are interdependent and have been used as such in Christian history (Graham 1993, 156). On the issue of keeping the orally communicated Word of God accurate, Adeney suggested that those people within an oral community interested in literacy could act as safeguards for the local believers thus keeping the stories in line

with the Word (Adeney 2009). A marriage of literate and oral methods would make for a strategic and comprehensive evangelism strategy. Each of these will reach a population that the other will not. Therefore, CBS as an evangelism strategy is a promising solution to the challenge posed by oral communities.

Borana Religious and Social Overview

The Borana are a branch of the larger Oromo people group who migrated into Kenya from Southern Ethiopia. They are a Cushitic group of which the majority live in the Northern Kenya regions which are classified as Arid and Semi-arid Lands (ASALS). They are a traditionally nomadic pastoralist group.

Arero classifies the Borana into three categories; the core group of Borana that occupy the Marsabit and Moyale regions, the *Waso Borana* of Isiolo and the urban Borana immigrants (known as *Borana dirra* meaning Borana of the townships or *Borana Kenya*). He defines the *Borana dirra* as "a mixed, multilingual group of former nomadic pastoralist Borana people who settled in towns and cities to find alternative means of sustenance" (Arero 2007, 293-4, 298-9). Though linked by language and culture, these groups have developed differences as a result of their adaptation to different environments.

Aguilar suggests that the *waso Borana* converted to Islam because of their isolation from the rest of the Borana. They embraced Islam professed by the neighbouring Somali to replace their traditional *gada* system (Aguilar 1995, 527-8). The rest of the Borana are a mix of Muslims, Christians and traditionalists. However, regardless of their professed religion, the Borana hold on to their traditional beliefs. Murumba found that there spirit possession rituals involving not only Islamic but also non-Muslim (*aayana*) spirits (Murumba 2008, 81-3).

The settlement of the Borana in Nairobi goes back to the Second World War when conscripts in the colonial Kenya chose to settle there with their families with the result being a good population of migrants by the early sixties. At the time, they were classified as Asian and lived in Asian quarters and enjoyed better opportunities than the "Africans". The *Shifta* warfare of the late 1960s impoverished the Borana as they lost their livelihoods and suffered systematic alienation in political, social and economic spheres. Thus, they began to settle in slum areas like Kariobangi, Kibera and others in the 1980s/1990s looking for sustenance and have remained there to date (Arero 2007, 294-8; Murumba 2008, 15).

Although the urban Borana are exposed to a more multicultural environment, they still maintain their communal lifestyle and identity. The Borana in the city live in groups that are divided into sectors in the city where community leadership in form of elders is maintained. Murumba reported that the tribal elders *jarti gosa* and the women leader *jarti abon* take on this task while Arero in his footnotes says that the Borana are divided into communal areas called *ardha* led by an elder called *jarsa ardha* (Arero 2007, 303; Murumba 2008, 100). Though they give different names and ways of organisation, both show the communal lifestyle of the Borana community.

They continue with the practice of *bosa gonofa,* a traditional reciprocal help scheme, where resources are pooled from the community to help the needy and only contributors can benefit in times of need (Arero 2007, 300). Though urban in location, they still have strong links with their rural extended families more so now with mobile phone technology (Murumba 2008, 99; Arero 2007, 299).

The Burji are a people group "imported" by the colonial administration in early 20th century in colonial Kenya from Yavelo in Ethiopia to encourage the growth of agriculture in Marsabit which was populated by pastoralist communities. Their role

was to teach farming and provide food security for the pastoralist communities around. However, the Burji did not have much success and became a minority group in the area. They were greatly influenced by the dominant Borana culture to the detriment of their own (Murumba 2008, 15; Boru 2009).

Borana Women

The Borana women have various life experiences based on economic and religious backgrounds. Religiously, Borana women subscribe to the religion of their family led by the father, or if married, that of their husbands. Early marriage is common among the Borana. A woman may or may not have a choice of marriage partner depending on the family. Circumcision is still widely practised among them aiming at controlling the sexual urges of the female sex since they place high value on virginity before marriage. Depending on their circumstances, Borana women may achieve some level of education. Murumba found that the Borana women she researched were on the lower levels of the literacy continuum. Women of both Christian and Muslim background are also involved in spirit possession cults especially the traditional *ayaana* ritual (Murumba 2008, 78-84). Due to a gap in the availability of literature on this subject, this segment has relied heavily on the research done by Murumba among Borana women.

Women in Islam

Muslim women are recognised by their tendency to wear the veil. This mode of dress is an attempt at achieving modesty as mandated by the Qur'an (Sura 24:31). A veil said to protect women from prying male eyes and wearing it marks one out as a good Muslim. Feminists like Mernissi argue that this is an instrument of male oppression of women disputing the interpretation of the Qur'an to support this practice

(Mernissi 1991, 96-9). The interpretation of what veiling entails however differs from society to society.

Religion

Muslim women are bound to perform the same religious obligations as their male counterparts. They observe *salat* five times a day except during their menses when they are not allowed to. However, unlike the men, women are encouraged to pray in the privacy of their homes. They also observe *sawm*/fasting during Ramadhan. Nevertheless, they cannot observe the fast during their menses, when pregnant or breast feeding (Abdalati 1975, 93). Having missed a fast, an individual is obligated to recoup those days on other occasions. Thus, Muslim women seem to be stuck in a position of trying to keep up with the system. This is part of the deficiency in religion that Muhammad said would cause them to be more numerous in hell than men (Al-Bukhari 2:24.541).

Women also participate in the annual *hajj*. This not only gives them a chance of forgiveness but also enhances their status in the umma. Alms giving/*zakat* is observed by women through the giving away of a portion of their earnings or through the property provided by the husband. Provided in the latter case the woman acts with responsibility, it is looked upon as a source of blessing (Murumba 2008, 20).

Marriage

In Islam, marriage is an important institution since in the Hadith Muhammed is said to have forbidden celibacy and advocated marriage (Al-Bukhari 2:24.541). It is a contract with rights and obligations for both signatory parties. Muslim women therefore grow up with the knowledge that the Muslim community expects them to get married and have children. The choice of marriage partners is dependent on the

woman's family background. Although the Qura'n gives women the freedom to choose a partner, some parents will allow their daughters to choose while others prefer arranged marriages.

Early marriage is common. According to the Hadith, Aisha was married to Muhammad at the age of six and their marriage consummated at the age of nine (Al-Bukhari 7; 62.88). Dowry, in one form or another, is given to the bride before marriage by the groom. The duty of husbands in a marriage is to provide for and protect their wives. Women are to take care of the home and raise the children (Haneef 1985, 94-5). Authority in marriage is given to men in the Qur'an (Sura 4:34) and women are to be obedient to their husbands in recognition of this (Khan 2003, 86). This Sura has been used to argue for the validity of wife beating for disciplinary purposes although it is a contentious issue. Alongside their marital duties women are allowed to engage in business and own property. However, they can only inherit half of what a man does.

Polygamy is practised with men being allowed four wives as the maximum limit on condition of equal treatment of all wives (Sura 4:3). This proved difficult even for Muhammad whose preference of Aisha is documented (Mernissi 1991, 65). Although permissible by religion, no woman would want to share a husband. Therefore, Muslim women live with the constant threat of their husbands taking on another wife.

Divorce in Islamic tradition is referred to as *Talāk.* It is defined as "the repudiation of a wife by the husband" (Gibb and Kramers 1953, 564). Although Allah is said to hate divorce (Haneef 1985, 113), it is a common phenomenon among Muslims. The declaration "I divorce you" said three times, ideally spread out over three months with no sexual contact in the interim, consist an irrevocable divorce. The

point of the period of waiting (*iddat*) after *talāk.* is to find out if the woman is

expectant so that the paternity of the child is established clearly (Sura 2:228-231). It is

easier for men to divorce than it is for women. As the Qur'an reads, the implication is

that the man divorces the woman.

Education

On the issue of Muslim women's education, there is disagreement between

traditionalists and modernists on whether they should be educated (Quinn and Quinn

2003, 115-6). Women in Islam have historically been viewed as inferior to men in

intelligence. This attitude works against them in this field especially when combined

with the paternalistic nature of African society that values the boy child. The boy child

is usually given priority when there are scarce resources.

The shame and honour culture of Islam also comes into play here. The

education of women could threaten the power balance. There are sometimes fears that

education would result in a loss of control over women (Weiss 2002, 135, 7). This

could be in terms of diminishing social control on the individual women as well as on

community honour. Since women hold the honour of the community, they are

protected zealously (Stowasser 1994, 7). There are those who would view the school

environment as dangerous exposure especially in co-educational institutions. Thus,

they choose to keep the girls at home denying them a chance at education.

Some Muslim women get the opportunity to be educated but marriage often

sabotages their progress. Whether through coercion into early marriage or choice on

the part of the girls, the result is that girls drop out of school and take on wifely roles.

In most cases, they thereafter cease to be exposed to any literate material so that they

regress to functional illiteracy levels (A. H. 2000, 147). Thus, their opportunity to join literate society is squandered.

Times are changing with economic realities forcing women to work outside the home, which demands increasing attention on their education. However, in some Muslim communities, Muslim women are still far from achieving complete freedom for academic pursuit.

Ministry Needs of Muslim W omen

Muslim women though diverse in terms of nationality and ethnic backgrounds have similar concerns as women of other faiths. Muslim women are concerned about acquiring and retaining a husband (Amal 2000, 16-7). Their place in the society is cemented through marriage and childbearing, which increases their status. This concern is exacerbated in a community where polygamy and divorce is accepted and practised. Retaining a husband in this case therefore would involve doing everything possible to diminish the possibility of divorce or the acquisition of a rival. This creates fear of rejection from their men and society especially after divorce. Since women share their problems among themselves, Chronological Bible Storying done in groups of women would therefore be helpful if story discussions are centred Abraham, Sarah and Hagar.

For the married Muslim women, issues such as childbearing/childlessness, child rearing, relationships with their spouses and in-laws are quite common. Women desire harmonious relationships within their families and an upset causes considerable distress. Rearing of children in an increasingly complex world also occupies the minds of Muslim women. Their desire is to raise children who are observant of their faith and responsible members of society. CBS done among such women could be

geared toward exposing the relational aspects as well as parenting examples within story; good and bad. These would help stimulate discussions on what lessons the bible has to teach.

Islam teaches the existence of other worldly beings called *jinn*. Muslim women instructed in Islamic theology therefore recognise their existence. The uninstructed Muslim women who practice folk Islam not only recognise the presence of *jinn* but of other non-islamic spirits who could harm them. Thus Muslim women live under constant threat from malevolent evil forces that could cause havoc on their lives if steps are not taken for self and community protection (Ruth 2000, 90). Allah, though powerful, in this instance is no help to them as he is far removed from their daily needs. Muslim women would benefit from the foundational stories that deal with the creation of the world both seen and unseen. Storying through the origin of the spirit world in the bible would be helpful in teaching/demonstrating the power of God over them. Stories on the life and ministry of Christ could also accomplish this with the goal of encouraging the women to trust God to protect them.

Muslim women also desire love and acceptance. This involves getting to know the women and showing loving concern for their problems and being willing to share our joys and sorrows with them as well. Converts to Christianity often attribute their attraction to the love and care of Christians they met and interacted with (Adeney 2000, 101). CBS sessions over a long period could provide a community of love and support. Through this, Christians can reach out through relationships with the Muslim women and live out Christ's love.

Summary

In this chapter, available literature relevant to this study has been reviewed covering the areas of Chronological Bible Storying rationale and process, a religious and social overview of the Borana people group as well as women in Islam.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The focus of this chapter is to explain the strategies employed in collecting the data relevant to this research. Topics included will cover basic research design and other pertinent issues involved in the research process.

Basic Research Design

The research method chosen for this task was qualitative. This is the type of research that is based on information gathered from respondents as experienced in their lives (Creswell 2003, 18). This strategy is suitable for a research that seeks to unearth subjective information from the targeted group. Thus the tool was chosen for this research as it tried to understand the relevance of CBS strategy from the experience of the Borana Muslim women and the missionary storyer.

Approach to Field

The Kariobangi project was chosen after a recommendation from an Life Challenge Africa (LCA) missionary previously involved in a CBS project. It was through this individual that contact was made with the missionary storyer and the head of the Kariobangi project. Since both were previously unknown to the researcher, a preliminary meeting was arranged for introduction and relationship building. Permission was requested for the use their programme for research which was granted without the need for a formal letter of inquiry. Full access was granted to interview the Borana Muslim women and sit in on the storying sessions. The missionary storyer introduced the Borana Muslim women participating in the

Kariobangi project to the researcher through a series of meetings. The interviews with the informants were conducted in their homes and at the sewing project premises.

Population

Mugenda and Mugenda define the term population as "the aggregate of all that conforms to a given specification" (2003, 9). In the area of research, this refers to the targeted informants. The Borana Muslim women formed the core of interest. The informants included nine women who had attended the storying sessions at Kariobangi. The missionary storyer also had prepared and taught in the storying sessions was also targeted for research purposes. These informants helped the researcher understand the relevance of this ministry approach from their perspectives.

Sampling

The researcher used the single-stage sampling design which involves a straight and simple selection of subjects for the research (Creswell 2003, 156). Since the Borana Muslim women attending the sessions were a small number ie eleven, the direct selection of individuals was the logical thing to do. Participants in qualitative research should be chosen based on their ability to provide information relevant and useful to the researcher's understanding of the problem (Creswell 2003, 185). Therefore, for the purpose of this research, sample selection was done using purposive sampling. This involves selecting informants who are most like to provide information relevant to the research (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003, 50). Thus, the researcher's choice was based on their participation of the Borana Muslim women in the CBS programme. The respondents were of a homogenous sample i.e. of the same sex and similar socio-economic backgrounds.

Methods of Data Collection

In order to obtain the required data, the researcher chose to employ interviews and participant observation. According to Nachmias and Nachmias, participant observation is a research method where a researcher becomes a member of the group in question and with their consent acquires information. Therefore the researcher acquires data through individual informants in said group as well as personal or observed experiences (1996, 285). This method allowed the researcher to gain a better understanding of the people and the phenomenon in question through first hand experience.

The researcher chose to attended several sewing classes including some storying sessions. Through sitting in for the storying lessons and the interactions that followed, the researcher was able to make observations and acquire information from casual conversations with the Borana Muslim. Time was also spent with the women in casual conversation beyond the classroom session in a bid to build relationships and increase their confidence.

Interviews are face-to-face encounters in which the researcher obtains information from the participants. According to Creswell, this method has the added advantage of allowing the researcher to get data through both observation and verbal response (2003, 186). The researcher used this method in order to access data on the experiences and opinions of the Muslim women participating in the storying sessions at the Kariobangi sewing project.

The type of interview employed was the unstructured interview. This allows the researcher to tease out useful data from the interviewees through questions or statements that will lead to a discussion (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003, 86). Though this interview strategy is supposed to be free flowing, it is usually tailored along the

guidelines set by the interview guide. To this end, interview guides were prepared for the interview sessions.

The Borana Muslim women were unfamiliar with the researcher and were therefore understandably reticent to give information. Since the researcher had anticipated this, the use of unstructured interviews proved wise. The use of seemingly natural flowing statements allowed the women to respond to engage in a conversation rather than a strict question and answer session. Thus they were able to participate in a less threatening atmosphere allowing the researcher to gain information while significantly reducing their stress levels.

Data Recording Procedures

Data acquired from interviews was recorded in a digital recorder where the women were willing and supplemented by hand written notes. However, most of the women were uncomfortable with the use of the machine. Therefore, the researcher took notes immediately after the interviews.

Spradley gives three types of note taking that could be used in ethnographic observation ie the condensed account, the expanded account and the fieldwork journal (1980, 69-72). The researcher spent time with the Borana Muslim women in their normal activities and made observations recorded in the form of field notes for later incorporation in the analysis. These were made in the style of condensed accounts immediately after every session.

Method of Data Analysis

Data Analysis is the process of distilling the data gathered in a research in order to come up with viable findings. In qualitative research, the data gathered is sorted into themes and an attempt is made to discover how they are related (Mugenda

and Mugenda 2003, 203). This results in a critical evaluation and discussion of the data gathered.

The data gathered through taped interviews and field notes was transcribed and reviewed looking for words, phrases or key words that gave information relevant to the research. These were picked out and coded for analysis. The data from both collection methods was then analysed clustering the information into themes derived from the research questions.

<center>Validity and Reliability of the Instrument</center>

According to Russell, validity refers to looking into "the accuracy and trustworthiness of instruments, data, and findings in research" (Bernard 1995, 38). Research findings obtained from a research should be representative of the situation under investigation. In the effort to ensure that the findings were valid, the researcher used the following strategies:

1. Rich, thick description to explain the findings of the research especially from the observations made by the researcher.

2. Triangulation strategies where the answers given by one informant were checked with other women in the class.

3. There were repeated visits which the researcher used to gather more information to supplement areas not adequately covered.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

The aim of this chapter is to present the findings from the chronological storying among Muslim women in Kariobangi. Here, the data collected is described, interpreted and findings reported. First, a description of the participating women is followed by the findings.

Background of the Informants

In this research, the background information of the informants has helped in understanding the women and their present situation. This has helped in the evaluation of CBS as a method of evangelism among them.

Out of the nine women that were interviewed for this research, six were from the Borana community and three from the Burji. The women were Kariobangi residents and attended the storying sessions for varying lengths of time. Based on the ages of their children, the ages of the women were wide ranging as some had toddlers while others had grown up children. The CBS teacher was also an invaluable resource for the research.

The women were mostly either born or brought up in their rural areas and moved to Nairobi for specific reasons. Reasons for moving to the city included following their husbands who worked in the city, to visit family members or a search for better opportunities. Maryam's (2010) husband brought her to Nairobi while Rigeye (2010) came to the city with her family seeking opportunities to immigrate to the west.

Majority of the women are married with one being single and another widowed. The cultural practise of early marriage is rampant among the Borana. Most of the women were married off in their early teens as tradition demands. The reason for this practice, according Salma and Khadija (2010), is to avoid the occurrence of premarital sex and the shame that it could bring. They said that during the wedding night, a white sheet was used in order to tell whether or not a girl was a *"bikra"* or virgin. If one was not a virgin on their wedding night or got pregnant out of wedlock, it could cause shame that one would never live down. Contrary to the norm however, Asha (2010), a Borana young woman of twenty five, is still unmarried.

Circumcision of women is still practice by the Borana. According to Khadija (2010), the practise is Islamic and thus the community continues regardless of the government directive to the contrary. Circumcision is now done in secret for fear of arrest. What has changed however as Salma (2010) explained is the severity of the procedure. From her description, previously the operation involved excision or partial infibulation claimed that "they left nothing and the woman could never feel a thing during sex" and that sex would become a difficult and painful ordeal for a new bride. Now according to her, "the women are left with something" which one could classify as clitoridectomy.

The educational background of the Borana Muslim women interviewed ranged from literate to functional literates. Fatma and Asha (2010) said that they never attended any institution of formal education in their childhood while Fatma and Zainab (2010) dropped out of school while still in lower primary. They would have been classified as illiterate except for the fact that they made efforts to attend adult literacy classes offered at the Ark Primary School. For those who had some education, the education systems attended were either Kenyan or Ethiopian depending on where

they grew up. Khadija (2010), who was by far the most educated having finished secondary school, said that she had attended Ethiopian schools. She and Rigeye (2010) therefore had to learn English and Swahili on arrival to Nairobi in order to function.

Since the CBS project is targeting Muslims for the purposes of evangelism, most of the women are of the Muslim faith. Many of the Muslim women were brought up in Muslim homes and continued in the same faith with few exceptions. Maryam (2010) came from a Borana traditionalist family and conversion to the Islamic faith came through teachings she received while going to school. Rigeye (2010) is from a Christian background but married a Muslim man who forbade her to practice her Christian faith. Before the storying sessions, contact with Christianity among the Kenyan women had primarily been through studying Christian Religious Education (C.R.E) at school. Asha (2010) who had never been to school had never heard anything about Christianity before joining the project. Their knowledge of Islam was generally low. Salma (2010) for example had received little instruction in her early years was attending *madrassa*. Conversely Khadija (2010) had attended *madrassa* until she finished her secondary education and could easily cite *hadith* and Qur'an in her arguments.

Thus, the women sampled for this research while of the same community varied in terms of life experiences. A summary of all the informants' background is given in Appendix 3.

Understanding Chronological Bible Storying

In this section, the first research question regarding the understanding of CBS was being addressed by examining what the perception of CBS was from both the storyer and the Borana Muslim women.

According to Grace (2010), Chronological Bible Storying is a method of communicating the gospel that involves "telling the bible story chronologically." She explained that CBS is a strategy that is well suited for oral communicators and the illiterate. This is because it involves retelling the story to the target audience so that the intended message is clearly communicated. Thus, a communicator has to read a bible story and pick out the message to pass on in the storying session.

The Borana Muslim women understood the CBS sessions as a time to listen to stories from the bible. These stories according to Maryam and Fatma (2010) gave them a better understanding of God and taught them about how to relate to one another with love and respect. Maryam (2010) explained that in the stories, "Jesus heals the blind, the lame, raises the dead, helps those struggling with sin, forgives those with sin." Story sessions are seen as time to share their struggles and pray together. Therefore, storying is understood as an opportunity to learn about God as well as cultivating and deepening relationships with each other.

Using Chronological Bible Storying in Evangelism

Since CBS is an evangelistic tool that is primarily based on a story session, it has the potential to be used creatively to fit in any context. In this section, the second research question is addressed by investigating the context in which CBS is being used to reach Borana Muslim women.

Storying Context

CBS among Muslim women in Kariobangi is done in the context of a self-help group called the New Ark Kariobangi Women Self-help Project (NAKWSP). The aim of the project from its inception, according to the storyer, Grace (2010), was to provide a forum in which Muslim women could be gathered together for the purpose

of sharing the gospel. The Borana Muslim women targeted are mothers of the children attending Ark Primary School and those living in the neighbourhood.

The Kariobangi project is modelled after a similar one, in Kibera among the same people group. At NAKWSP, they equip the Muslim women with sewing skills using the opportunity as a doorway for evangelism. Although the main goal is evangelism, Grace explains that they allow Christian women to attend the classes and hold them at a neutral venue to keep their mission hidden. In order to meet their stated objective, the Muslim women are advised before enrolling that there is a compulsory bible storying session once a week (Grace 2010).

All the Muslim women involved in the sewing project enrolled voluntarily. The women found out about the project either through word of mouth or through teachers at the adult literacy classes in Ark Primary School. For Halima and Fatma (2010), the idea of the sewing project was floated to them while they were attending literacy classes and they became part of the core group that began the project. Since the project is not overtly affiliated with a church, the community has grown to accept and approve of it. Therefore, successive students acquire knowledge of the project by word of mouth, through friendship and family networks.

Reasons for Enrolment

Opportunities in every sphere of life are either actively sought after or stumbled upon. Based on their reasons for enrolment, the Muslim Borana women attending the sewing project fall into both categories, Khadija and Zainab (2010) had been looking for a place where they could learn how to sew. They had seen the potential for using the skill in business by the time friends told them about the project. For Khadija, the project was a cheaper alternative compared to her other options.

Some women found out about the project and decided to get involved in order to keep themselves busy. Asha (2010) said that she joined the sewing project because her sister had suggested she do it to keep busy. Being single and unemployed, there was nothing to occupy her. Rigeye (2010), on the other hand, joined the group because they met close to her home. Although she was a housewife, the felt that she had to occupy some of her daytime hours when her husband and children were away.

In a low income area like Kariobangi, the opportunity to learn a trade that would potentially raise income levels in a home is very attractive. Thus, it is no wonder that the Borana Muslim women have chosen to join NAKWSP given the potential for financial gain and the opportunity for meaningful occupation.

Natural attrition

Despite the interest of the Borana Muslim women, NAKWSP has seen an ebb and flow of students since its inception three years ago. The number of women attending the sewing classes varies from day to day. According to Grace (2010), the number of women enrolled was thirteen but the regular attenders were six to eight women. Maryam (2010) who had been there at the very beginning estimated that sixteen to seventeen women had attended the sewing classes at some point. Few completed their training, passed the city council examination, and got certificates while the rest stopped coming for various reasons.

Of the nine Muslim women interviewed, half were no longer attending the sessions at NAKWSP. The women cited family affairs and business reasons for their absence. Being in a society that values children, especially sons, the Borana Muslim women are under pressure to give birth to many children. According to Rigeye, most Borana women have six to eight children. Halima and Fatma (2010) stopped attending

sewing classes when they were expectant as they were often too weary. Fatma, in explaining her two year absence said "*si unajua tu shida za wanawake*" (you know the problems of women) in reference to her expectant state at the time of our interview. Halima explained that though she wanted to return, she could not leave her child in another's care until he could walk.

After attending the sewing lessons for a while, the skills gained often open opportunities for the women to engage in small income generating activities. Some women, with the help of their spouses, buy or rent sewing machines and begin to repair or make clothes to earn a living. Zainab (2010) stopped attending sewing classes when she set up a sewing business using the basic skills she had acquired. Her thriving business however means that she is too busy to continue with her training.

Though NAKWSP provides an opportunity to meet, interact, and share the gospel with Muslim women, the programme comes with an inbuilt time limitation. Since the Borana Muslim women come to learn how to sew with a view to financial gain, as soon as they are competent in the basic skills, they leave and set up their own businesses. The role of women in the family e.g. in reproduction and care-giving means that often, their schedules will be interrupted or terminated due to family related obligations.

Storying Sessions

In the three years since she started CBS at the project, Grace (2010) has "storyed" through the Old Testament and began the New Testament thus introducing Jesus and his ministry. According to her plan, the story sessions for the first quarter were to cover the teachings, his passion, death, and resurrection. The passion lessons were planned to coincide with the Easter festivities.

During the time of this research, Thursday afternoons were the chosen time for CBS. The storying sessions were scheduled to start at two o'clock, but usually started off at half past the hour or later, and lasted about an hour. Once the women had returned to the sewing room after lunch/prayer break, Grace began by requesting for their attention. As people take time to settle down, the opportunity is used to catch up on how everyone is doing since Grace is not at the project on a daily basis.

On one occassion, one of the women was irritable and took a while to settle down. It emerged that she was in her menses. Using this opportunity, Grace began a discussion on prayer during ones periods. After the Muslim women explained the teachings of Islam in the matter, Grace explained the Christian viewpoint and recounted the healing of the haemorrhaging woman within the context of the healing of Jairus' daughter that she had told previously. However, Grace forgot to include that Jesus had told the parents not to worry as the child was not dead but only sleeping. Khadija corrected her on the spot. It was interesting to see proof that Khadija had listened and could remember the story in detail.

Once everyone is and attentive, Grace recoups the previous lesson. She would do this through asking questions on what story they had listened to and what they had learnt from it. A chance is given for questions that may have arisen during the week regarding the past session before a new story was introduced. Once this is, Grace sets the stage for the new story by putting it into context so that there is continuity between the previous story and the next one.

Grace narrates the new bible story in Swahili from memory. Grace (2010) is trained on how to memorise and internalise a story so that she can tell it naturally. Apart from reading the bible, she often uses published CBS material like God and Man as well as Firm foundation to give her the required story structure and useful

questions. Although Grace may quote where she gets the story from, the use of a bible is not necessary. This keeps the atmosphere from becoming threatening or causing offence.

Pictures are used as teaching aids for the session. As the story unfolded, Grace would show the appropriate picture for each scene to illustrate. If the women are intrigued by something in the pictures, they interrupt her with questions. For example while storying about the triumphal entry, Khadija pointed out that the animal on the picture was not a donkey but a mule leading to a spontaneous discussion on the differences. Usually, Grace would lead the conversation back to the story and continue.

Grace always carries a notebook with the lessons of the story and a list of some of the questions she could ask to elicit them. At the end of the story session, Grace poses a question to the women to begin a discussion. She would get the women to draw out the lessons that they learn form a story. Sometimes, Grace would explain the theological significance of the happenings in the story in simple terms. This would be accompanied by a contrast between Islamic and Christian teachings. A case in point would be the storying session that involved the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. The Muslim women recounted what Islam teaches and she expounded the significance of the event for salvation pointing out that the events were a fulfilment of prophesies.

During the storying session, usually one woman or another would seek clarification of the story or the discussion. Since some had poor command of Swahili, they are inevitably left out at some point. The ones who understood the goings on then recount to the uncomprehending ones in the language they understood best. After the story on the last supper, Khadija retold the story to Salma who had not grasped it in

Borana. However, as it turned out, they spoke different dialects of Borana that were not always mutually intelligible. Thus, when it came to discussing the lessons, Huda, an MBB, explained to Salma in Amharic.

At the end of the storying lesson, the women are encouraged to share their prayer requests before a time of intersession. According to Grace (2010), the women are comfortable with allowing her to pray for them since they believe her God and theirs are the same. Both Grace and the women were open and honest in presenting their requests. Prayer needs encompassed a variety of issues including family conflict, illness, finances, and even plans of future business ventures.

The atmosphere of openness and trust that permeates the entire session becomes very clear at prayer time. Although the content is Christian, Grace manages to get the point across without causing a stir and allows discussion that will not cause offence. Therefore, the women let down their guard enough to learn and share honestly.

Relevance of CBS in Borana Muslim Women Evangelism

A chosen tool for a particular task can only be effective if it meets the demands of the given assignment. In this section, the suitability of CBS as an evangelism tool is evaluated to see whether it meets the needs of the Borana Muslim women.

Communicating the Gospel to the Illiterate

As mentioned earlier, the passage of time would ordinarily mean that the women who had done basic schooling in the past regress to the level of illiteracy. However, the Borana Muslim women have taken advantage of the local adult literacy programme and recovered some of the lost ground. The illiterate women have also

taken up the challenge and attended some literacy classes. Therefore, the level of literacy can generally be placed at functional illiteracy.

Grace (2010) chose to use CBS based on the realisation that the women's literacy levels were very low. She explained that the women could not grasp information communicated through literate and abstract means. Therefore, one had to find a level more suited to communicate the gospel to them. According to Slack's literacy continuum given in Appendix 4, women of lower literacy levels are more suited to oral based learning methods. Grace said that the Borana Muslim women are more comfortable in oral means of communication and have no problem deducing lessons from stories and applying them to their own situations. While attending the sessions, it was noted that since the women were familiar with literacy, the storying sessions with the Muslim Borana women were inclusive of both story and exposition. Grace typically tells the story of the day to the end and then asks questions so that they could discover the lessons. However, she sometimes discusses the story in greater depth. For example, Grace spent some time telling the women about prophesies made about Jesus' death after the crucifixion story.

Contextualization

When communicating the gospel, it is important to package the gospel in a way that the target culture can understand it from their worldview. In CBS, this could include aspects of the target culture like using their language, music, rhetorical style etc.

In addressing how storying is being made culturally appropriate, Grace (2010) mentioned that the similarity in lifestyle between the target culture and that of the bible characters enables the women to identify with the stories. Since they come from

a nomadic community, the women understand an occupation like shepherding. According to her, aspects of culture like singing cannot be used during CBS. This, she explained, is because the storying is still at the evangelistic level and she felt that to use that form would expose their agenda and endanger the ministry. However, while singing could indeed be counterproductive, other more subtle ways should be sought to contextualise the gospel while storying.

Ministry Needs of Muslim Women

Miriam Adeney documents five recurrent themes in conversion stories among Muslim women; "scriptures, power encounters, the love of Christians, sex and beauty issues as well as social justice issues"(Adeney 2000, 102). In this section, storying in the context of NAKWSP is explored to see which of Adeney's five attractions to the Muslim women are present in the CBS process paving the way for possible conversion.

Scriptures

Spiritually, the storying sessions made an impact on the women in different ways. Salma (2010) said that she had a sense of peace at the project and liked the idea of women collectively praying about their problems at the end of the storying sessions since the prayers were directed to the same God. For Halima (2010), the storying sessions were an opportunity to learn about God while Asha (2010) was happy to hear Christian teaching, which she had never heard before.

Some stories made an impact on the women as individuals and as a group. Asked about the stories that caught their attention, some women remembered specific ones while others could not. Khadija's (2010) favourite story was about the adulterous

woman. She was struck by the forgiveness that Jesus offered her. The lesson she took away from the story was that second chances were available no matter how badly one loses their way. According to Grace (2010), this story struck a nerve with all the women. At the time it was told, the story of a Somali Muslim woman who was to be stoned to death was all over the media. According to Grace, the women thought it unfair that the man who participated in the adultery was not judged in the same way. Since women are often blamed in such situations, they were amazed at the grace extended to the woman.

The story of the healing of Jairus' daughter was Salma's (2010) favourite. The faith of the centurion amazed her. He only sought Jesus' word and did not bring the girl with him. That he would take Jesus at his word and go home believing that she was healed encouraged her to have faith. Maryam (2010) thought all the stories she had heard were interesting. However, she thought that the ones about the ministry of Jesus were noteworthy. Although she did not believe that Jesus is God, she thought that they were helpful as they showed the power of God in him so that one could believe him.

Fatma (2010) remembered the story of Noah, albeit vaguely as the story was narrated three years ago. According to her, Noah had listened, heard the voice of God, and obeyed building the ark and saving his family in the process. Fatma gathered that if she too could listen to God, she could be warned and avoid misfortunes that could come her way. Though she did not give reasons for her choice of interesting stories, Rigeye (2010) said that the most memorable ones were about Jesus driving out the demons of the demoniac and Jacob stealing Esau's birthright. While the others were comfortable with telling their favourite stories, Asha was very defensive. Her

response was that not only could she not remember a story she thought interesting but was satisfied with her stand as a Muslim.

Although the women learnt from the lessons, few could exemplify how these have been affected their daily lives. Zainab (2010) said since she learnt to have faith in God and prayer, whenever she comes across seemingly impossible situations, she knows that God can do something about it and thus prays about it. Rigeye (2010) expressed that although she had learnt Christian principles like forgiveness and kindness, practising them was useless since her Muslim neighbours would not understand what she was doing. Maryam (2010) thought that the stories had not changed anything since she has always had good relationships with others since she has always been easygoing.

The scriptures seem to be speaking to different women about God and his love for them.

Sex and beauty issues

Borana Muslim women live in a society that values family. Like in any other Muslim society, the women are expected to get married and bear children. While the single might worry about acquiring a husband, the married try to find ways to sustain their marriages. During one session, Maryam asked, "What can I do to make my husband love me? I pray five times a day and the next day, I wake up early to do the same with a greater sense of need." She wanted to know if there was anything she could learn from Christian teachings that would help her. She went on to add that the one thing she really admired about Christians was that they were monogamous (Gitau 2010). This provided an opportunity for Grace to share about marriage from the Christian perspective and lovingly share Maryam's pain through prayer.

After a paying a social visit to a former student, one of the current women sought to meet with Grace for private prayer. Rigeye shared with us her heart ache and fears about her failure to conceive. Though she had two little girls, Rigeye has been hoping to conceive for a long time now but that is not happening. She said that she experienced recurrent bad dreams that feature the shedding of blood, which always end up with her periods coming even prematurely. According to Grace, the concern was driven by the community expectation of larger families but by marital insecurity most of all. The more sons a woman has, the more secure her place as a man could marry another woman in search of more sons (Gitau 2010).

The love of christians

The simplicity of the storying process has encouraged the search for creative ways to reach the Borana Muslim women. Although the main reason for the project is evangelism, the Borana Muslim women have a chance to learn a skill that will empower them economically. Muslim women worry about finances and desire to give their children the best opportunities. The adaptability of the tool means that the women are invited to story through the bible at least once a week while being equipped to deal with their challenges. Thus, both activities complement each other in showing the love of Christ by sharing the gospel and equipping them to fend for their families.

The open and loving atmosphere of the storying sessions created an avenue for the women to bond with each other and the storyer. Salma (2010), speaking about the storying sessions, said that Grace was a good teacher and one that she really liked. Her love for Grace was evident through both verbal and non-verbal cues. The storying session allowed the women to get to know her as she shared her joys and sorrows with

the women. Grace also reached out to the women outside the sessions in friendship showing genuine concern. During the research, it was noted that if someone was absent from the project, she would either go and find out if they were alright afterward or send another student. Most of the times however, the other women would know why one of their number was missing and would relay the message to everyone else.

In the interviews, the women said that they enjoyed having new friends whom they met at the project. Further, the women expressed that they were taught how to treat other with love and respect. Although the discussions around theological issues became heated at times, Grace (2010) pointed out that she did not allow things to get out of control. She insisted that the women, both Muslim and Christian, see each other as fellow human beings and not enemies. This practice has further enhanced their relationships, a factor that became clear when arguments broke out and though in disagreement, the women refrained from name-calling. The true demonstration of how much they have learnt to love from Grace came at the end of one of the sessions when the women wanted to pray for Rigeye to conceive (Gitau 2010).

Summary

This study has established that the Borana Muslim women understand CBS sessions as a time to learn about God through stories from the Bible. Chronological Bible Storying approach is used within a Kariobangi women's self help group that targets Muslim women. The women who are functionally illiterate or illiterate are equipped with sewing skills as they are exposed to the gospel. CBS proves to be a versatile strategy that is relevant to the Kariobangi as it fits into the self help group programme perfectly. Being low income area, storying within this setting has ensured that there is a group of Muslim women contacts to empower, love and witness to.

Since the group is small, the Muslim women have come to know and trust one another as well as the storyer thus creating opportunities for felt needs to be expressed and met through the Word, prayer and Christ's love.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and Conclusions

This study sought to gain understanding of Chronological bible storying as a tool for Muslim evangelism and how it has been employed among the Borana Muslim women in Kariobangi. Further, it has examined the relevance of this approach for the Borana Muslim women in Kariobangi. The following were the findings.

Chronological Bible Storying is understood to be the presentation of the gospel from creation to Christ through the use of stories with the intention of leading the Borana Muslim Women to the Lord. The Borana Muslim women understand CBS sessions as a time to learn about God and maintaining loving relationships with one another. In Kariobangi, CBS is done in the context of a self-help women's group. The economic advantage of learning a trade at a comparatively low cost and a way to get profitable work to do are the main attractions for the Borana Muslim women. Economic empowerment of the women through the teaching of sewing skills creates an opportunity for gathering consistent contacts for evangelism. Since the project is not overtly affiliated with a church and has premises at a neutral venue, Borana Muslim women are easily enrolled as a result of verbal recommendations from friends and family. However, their role as caregivers and the desire for financial stability jointly contribute to frequent interruptions and sometimes termination of involvement at NAKWSP.

Borana Muslim women at NAKWSP rank between illiterate and functional illiteracy. CBS was chosen for them because they are oral communicators who would make more sense of concrete rather than abstract ideas. With the exception of drawing comparisons with the Hebrew culture, no other attempt has been made to contextualize the storying. Chronological Storying has provided room for some factors known to contribute to conversion. The exposition of scripture has allowed the women to learn about God and his love. An opportunity to share their hurts and concerns regarding their marriages has also been created and thus an opportunity for the storyer to demonstrate Christ's love through concern and prayer.

In conclusion, this study has found that Chronological Bible Storying is a relevant evangelism tool for Borana Muslim women in Kariobangi. Since they are at most functionally illiterate, they are considered oral communicators thus making storying the best way to communicate the gospel. However, more needs to be done in regards to contextualization. Since the Borana women are in need of economic empowerment, this strategy is appropriate as it goes hand in hand with the framework of common interest created by the self help group.

Missiological Implications

During the study, the importance of anthropology for missionaries was made very clear. It is in understanding the socio-cultural background of the people that can allow one to choose an evangelism strategy that will be effective. In this case, the missionary studied the Borana Muslim women's situation. Having found that they were oral communicators, the method chosen to evangelise them was chosen on this basis. Cross-cultural missionaries should therefore have anthropological tools that allow them to effectively evaluate their people of focus.

The Borana Muslim women in this study come from a low income area. The fact that they have little education makes it difficult for them to find employment. This understanding enabled the missionary to think of teaching the women a trade thus meeting a felt need. It is this effort that has opened up an opportunity for evangelism. While the desire of any missionary is to impart spiritual truth, this should be accompanied by love in action. It is therefore important that missionaries in needy areas look for ways to share the gospel while helping their target people in practical ways to meet their needs. The point is not just to look for a point of entry for evangelism but to demonstrate the love of God through Christ our Lord.

Recommendations for Christian Witness

Through both the interviews with the women and that with storyer, it became clear that the Storying cycle from Creation to Christ had taken three years. This means that the women who left the project in the interim had only heard a few of the stories wherever they had happened to join in the cycle. It would be more effective if the Chronological Storying cycle was shortened to mirror the average time that the women need to learn basic sewing. This would ensure that the Muslim hear the entire salvation story. Otherwise, the exercise becomes an exercise of enjoying stories from the bible without being challenged to consider Christianity. If the women remain longer than the scheduled lesson cycle, there would no harm in repeating the stories and even adding some that had been omitted previously.

While using Swahili to interview the women and sitting in on the Swahili storying sessions, I realized that some of the women knew little or no Swahili at all. Sometimes, some women had to translate the story to the rest after or during the session. Once, a Borana woman had to act as my translator since the interviewee had trouble understanding basic Swahili and could not express herself in it adequately.

This was not surprising especially for those who grew up in northern Kenya or Ethiopia and had little or no education. Since Swahili is problematic for them, it would make a big difference in terms of effective communication if the storyer took time to learn Borana for use in storying and interaction.

Recommendations for Further Study

While this research has covered the effectiveness of Chronological Storying Method among largely illiterate women in a low income environment, other situations could also be explored. How this strategy can be employed among highly literate women would a significant contribution. This is especially important in the light of the fact that more Kenyan Muslim young women are joining universities and colleges. An investigation of how this versatile strategy has been or can be used for evangelism and discipleship in tertiary institutions would prove invaluable for those both students and Christian workers.

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APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR BORANA MUSLIM WOMEN

Personal Background:

Name:_____Marital Status:_____

Level of Education: _____Religion:_____

Country of Origin: _____Occupation:_____

1. How is Chronological Bible Storying used in ministering to Muslim women in Kariobangi?

   a) How did you know of this sewing project?

   b) Why did you choose to come to this project?

      Or If not currently attending:

      i. Why did you stop attending the sewing classes?

   c) What do you learn on Thursday afternoon sessions?

2. What is the relevance of this approach for the Borana Muslim women?

   a) What is your opinion of the storying sessions? Why?

   b) Which are your favourite stories? Why?

c) Is there a time that you have put to practise something you learnt from the stories?

- ➤ ◦ If yes, tell me about it?

- ➤ ◦ If no, why not?

Probes:

- ◦ How has this project benefited you?

- ◦ Did you know any of these women here?

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE STORYER

Personal Background:

Name: _____

Occupation: _____

Level of Education: _____

1. What do you understand CBS to be?

2. How did you learn about CBS?

3. What materials do you use for preparation?

4. In what context do you do Storying? Why?

5. Why have you decided to use this method for evangelism for the
   Muslim Borana women?

6. How long have you been Storying with the women?

7. What have you covered up to this time?

8. Describe a typical storying session.

9. How do you make the stories relevant to them?

10. What feedback have you had, if any, from the women on the storying
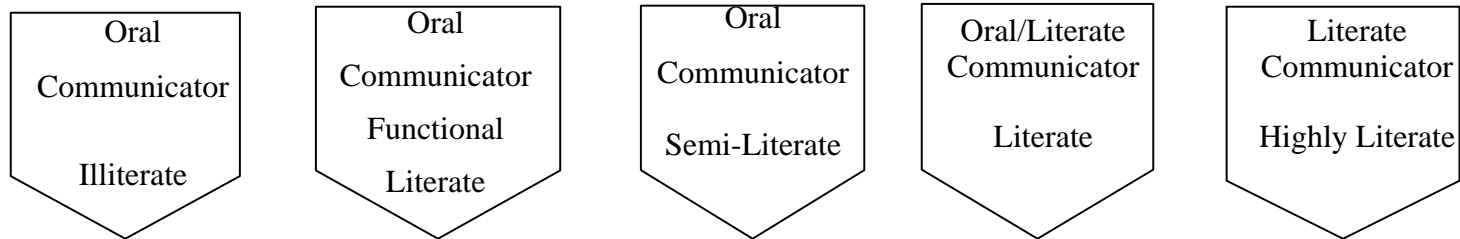
   sessions?

APPENDIX 3

TABULATED PROFILES OF THE WOMEN

Interviewee	Community	Origin	Marital Status	Religion	Highest Education Level Attained	Occupation
Salma	Borana	Ethiopia	Widow	Muslim	Class Five	Student/sewing business
Khadija	Borana	Ethiopia	Married	Muslim	Form Four	Student
Rigeye	Borana	Ethiopia	Married	Muslim**	Form One	Student/Housewife
Maryam	Burji	Kenya	Married	Muslim	Class Six	Student/sewing business
Fatma	Burji	Kenya	Married	Muslim	None	Runs a Small Café
Halima	Borana	Kenya	Married	Muslim	Class Four	Housewife
Saida	Borana	Ethiopia	Married	Christian	None	Housewife
Zainab	Burji	Kenya	Married	Muslim	Class Two	Sewing Business
Asha	Boarna	Kenya	Single	Muslim	None	Baby Care

**Describes herself as Christian but refers to Christians in the third person as though she does not belong.

APPENDIX 4

HOW PEOPLE LEARN AND THE USE OF EXPOSITION

Oral Communicator Illiterate	Oral Communicator Functional Literate	Oral Communicator Semi-Literate	Oral/Literate Communicator Literate	Literate Communicator Highly Literate

STORY	**NO EXPOSITION**	**NO EXPOSITION**	**SOME EXPOSITION**	**STORY WITH EXPOSITION** **Or** **EXPOSITION**	**NO STORY or STORIES With** **MUCH EXPOSITION as desired or interest calls for**	**STORY**
EXPOSITION					
DIALOGUE	**NO EXPOSITION**	**LITTLE EXPOSITION**	**MODERATE EXPOSITION**	**EXPOSITION IN DIALOGUE**	**As MUCH EXPOSITION as desired or interest calls for**

A Learning Grid

Source: Eric, Christel. 2000. Chronological Bible Storytelling: A Methodology for Presenting the Gospel to Oral Communicators and Unreached People Groups. Nairobi: Life Challenge Africa. (46)

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