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Interracial conflict and cultural division in Moreleta circuit: A quest for developing an inclusive missional church

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Interracial conflict and cultural divisions have been a serious challenge in the church globally. Through the years there has been vast available literature about the phenomenon as it happens and this study will specifically explore it in the Methodist church at the Moreleta circuit in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, South Africa. This article seeks to explore factors affecting developing an inclusive missional church. It aims to contribute to research in this area and suggests developing an inclusive missional church. It is presented as a qualitative study conducted in the churches of the circuit based on semi-structured interviews with some church leaders and pastors in the circuit. The study reveals some factors of interracial conflict and cultural divisions that contributed to the article. It shows that there are various factors affecting developing an inclusive missional in the above-mentioned circuit. This results in a generally unsatisfactory level of relationships.

Contribution: This article aims to contribute to research in the practice of developing an inclusive missional church in the Methodist church at Moreleta circuit. It hopes to also contribute to the Methodist church of Southern Africa as a whole.

Keywords: conflict; division; culture; race; socio-economic; language; political; missional; inclusive; church.

Introduction

The study of interracial conflict, cultural divisions, and the development of an inclusive missional church encompasses important concepts and processes. This argument emphasises the necessity of studying interracial and cultural divisions in their respective contexts, particularly in the South African context.

This article aims to explore the implications of interracial conflict and cultural divisions for the development of an inclusive missional church within the Moreleta Circuit of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA). The Moreleta Circuit, established in 2008, is a merger of suburban and township churches in the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. Tshwane, located approximately 50 km north of Johannesburg in northeastern South Africa, comprises five societies: Garsfontein, Brooklyn, St. George's (Eersterust), Mamelodi West, and Mamelodi East Methodist Church.

Background and problem statement

There are congregations and communities such as the Glen, Brooklyn, and Eersterus, which are interracial and culturally diverse. The writing of this article is prompted by the presence of interracial conflict and cultural divisions within the Moreleta Circuit. These issues significantly impede the ecclesial endeavours of building united missional congregations and communities. Contributing factors to interracial conflict and cultural divisions within the Moreleta Circuit include disparities in culture, race, economics, and politics. The circuit, situated in the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, remains an unequal society characterised by social class divisions based on social and economic status. It is stratified into the rich, middle class, and poor, with the rich enjoying economic advantages, the middle class burdened by debt, and the poor trapped in poverty.

Aim of the article

This article aims to contribute to the church's efforts in addressing issues of inequality and exploring the practical application of theology. Moreover, it seeks to enhance the understanding of practical theology, particularly regarding practical theological perspectives on the development of an inclusive missional church. Practical theology, as highlighted by Ramirez and De Beer (2002:2), encompasses a comprehensive field of study that extends beyond the mere training of church functionality. It critically analyses the dynamics of what transpires within communities (cf. Steyn & Masango 2001). Bennett (2016) further emphasises the role of practical theologians as both reflectors and actors.

The primary objective of this article is to shed light on the matters related to interracial conflict, cultural divisions, and unequal societies within the Moreleta Circuit. It also aims to investigate the utilisation of practical theology and congregational studies within the MCSA, specifically in the context of the Moreleta Circuit.

Research methodology

This article employs qualitative research, which involves a systematic process of collecting, analysing, and interpreting data (cf. De Wet 2012:135). This study takes an empirical exploration, which enables the recognition of ministry (cf. Osmer 2008:41). Specifically, this study conducts empirical research on interracial conflict and cultural divisions within the Moreleta Circuit of the MCSA in Pretoria. Empirical research aims to explore and describe a particular situation or event (cf. Babbie & Mouton 2001:79–84; Fouche & De Vos 2011:95).

The data encompass descriptive material, such as written accounts in newspapers, verbal information obtained through interviews, or visual data such as drawings or photographs (cf. Breakwell, Hammond & Fife-Shaw 1995:259). The empirical exploration is based on survey research as the chosen methodology utilising interview schedules as the primary data-collection method. It provides primary data that are collected, maintained, and analysed for the aimed goal. Although this survey does not offer a quick and easy understanding of interracial conflict and cultural divisions, it is deemed the most suitable technique to achieve the research objectives.

The survey was conducted in five congregations within the Moreleta Circuit of the MCSA in Pretoria, comprising individuals from black, white, and mixed race backgrounds. The researcher randomly selected three Society Stewards (SS) from each group in each of the five congregations, along with the pastors. The random selection allows for unbiased information collection and these selected congregations represent a wide range of socio-economic and socio-cultural variables that influence interracial conflict and cultural divisions. It is worth observing that

some members of these congregations face challenges such as poverty, unemployment, family violence, and crime, affecting their overall well-being.

The five main points for discussion are interracial conflict, cultural divisions, socio-economic conditions, political issues, and development of an inclusive missional church.

Interracial conflict

According to some of the interview respondents, the Moreleta circuit was formed from a predominantly white congregation (white circuit) in the suburban area the Glen and Brooklyn Methodist Church; predominantly coloured congregation (coloured circuit) at Eersterus; and predominantly black African congregations (black African circuit) from Mamelodi. The cities and townships were planned according to racial lines. In the former white areas, blacks were only allowed to be there when employed by whites (Baloyi 2018:3). According Changed from Williams (2000), it may be defined as racial segregation that exists in South Africa.

Cultural divisions

The Brooklyn and the Glen Methodist church were for whites' congregants only; Eersterus (St. George's) Methodist for mixed race congregants only; and Mamelodi West and Mamelodi East for black African congregants. In addition, there are language barriers. Whites and mixed race congregations use Afrikaans and English language in their worship services. Black Africans at Mamelodi use the indigenous African language, according to Census 2011, the primary languages spoken in the City of Tshwane are Afrikaans, Sepedi, Xitsonga, Sesotho, and English. Strydom (2005) states that the Tshwane Metropolitan council should take serious steps to uplift the status of indigenous languages. There are 'white' (European) worship styles and 'black' (African) worship styles.

The division between certain races causes cultural barriers. Of the 14 interview respondents, 50% said there are services that are attended largely by certain races. However, some of the interview respondents suggested that divisions are along racial lines, ethnicity, and class. There is also a struggle of embracing other cultures, which makes it difficult to build an inclusive church.

Socio-economic conditions

A huge gap exists between the suburban and township churches: the churches in the suburban appear glaringly affluent as compared to the ones in the townships. The Glen, Brooklyn, and Eersterus (St. George's) Methodist churches are financially stable, well-developed, and resourceful whereas the Mamelodi Methodist churches are financially struggling, with a lack of resources and facilities, especially Mamelodi East Methodist church with a lot of informal settlements in the surroundings. According to Platzky and

Walker (1985:335), townships are surrounded by informal settlements.

In addition, Mamelodi and Eersterus Methodist churches share similar background in the sense that these communities faced high levels of unemployment, poverty, overcrowding, violence, crime and were previously disenfranchised under apartheid. According to Abrahams (2010:514), poverty is informed by disparity in income between the rich and the poor. Furthermore, Chatindiara (2019:14) states that high inequality is structural in nature and the poor are unable to move out of poverty.

Political conditions

Of the 14 interview respondents, most respondents mentioned that the effects of colonialism and apartheid contributed to the interracial conflict and cultural divisions in the Moreleta circuit. The *Group Areas Act of 1950* and *Separate Amenities Act of 1953* made unity difficult because of geographic separation (Foster 2008:8). In addition, Xozwa (1989:5) states that the social politics of South Africa played a big role in church politics. According to Lephakga (2015:1) churches and communities have been divided as European centre and non-Europeans. European centre refers to white suburbs and non-European to black African, mixed race, and Indian centres. Even today we still find that most white people do not live in the inner city of Pretoria or in Mamelodi or even in Eersterus but in the suburban areas (Census 2011). Tshwane experienced demographic change (Donaldson & Williams 2005:57).The cities that were previously exclusive became home to people who were excluded (Renkin 2017:17).

Developing an inclusive missional church

Developing missional congregations is a ministry aimed at continuing reformation within the congregation (Nel 2015:205). It is a reproducing a community created by the Spirit, who calls, gathers, and sends the church into the world to participate in God's mission (cf. ed. Keifert 2009:28; Van Gelder 2007:18).It is described as congregations on a journey (cf. Easum 2001:10; Niemandt 2010:398). Engagement and vision aim for congregations to reach beyond the boundaries and boundary-breaking mission. People of many races and cultures, move towards crossing any racial, cultural, and ethnic lines. Integration and unity are achieved through a common purpose of seeing the church as 'one and undivided'.

The church must constantly reflect upon its real existence in the present and in the past (cf. Kung 1968:15). Of the interview respondents, 80% suggested multiracial and multicultural inclusiveness, as a key organising principle for church community. Additionally, 28% said the unity lesson at the Glen Methodist church of working together can be a lesson. Doing things together, connecting, different projects and whatever activities in cultural diversity, importance of diversity, inclusion, and engagement helped in this aim (S1, SS3, SS4, SS6, SS8, SS9).

The study aims to develop specific guidelines through critical reflection of the pragmatic task to be employed in the transformational task of the church in the circuit. Referring to Osmer (2008:176–179) transformational leadership is a process of leading an organisation through 'deep change' in 'identity, mission, culture, and operating procedures'.

Change in identity

Referring to Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1, to be given an identity involves being assigned a special place. Who are we to God? We are created in the image of God (Gn 1:26–27). The identity of a congregation is constituted and formed by this relationship (Van Gelder 2000:37). Family of Christ, household of Christ is a Christ-culture, family-based church loving God and loving people. All those on earth and heaven who have been called by God through Jesus Christ, to be his people also who share the unity that the Spirit gives (A Catechism of Methodists) (Methodist Church of Southern Africa 2020).

Suggesting ants as a good metaphor to use in developing an inclusive missional church, they are a superfamily living in big colonies, structured nest communities, and they are active, cooperative, and collaborative. The church should learn from this fact that although we might differ culturally, we can still worship, praise, work together and in this way, build the Church of Christ. Conveying a sense of belonging includes being accepted for who we are: loved, cherished, celebrated, and fully forgiven. Referring to John 13:34, a new commandment I give you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

Change in mission

One of the concerns raised by the interview respondents is that, out there are people who have never heard the Word of God or are struggling with issues that would make them understand God better (S2, SS3, SS7, SS9, SS10). Our role as a Christian is to bring the heavenly reality into the circumstances of those around us who do not know him or his will and share the gospel with every person encountered. According to Nel (2015:97), missional church exists as a community called and sent to participate in God's mission. In addition, the mission is transformational, transforming victims into victors.

In response, 50% of the interview respondents' proposition is to have a mission week once a quarter. This would involve Circuit Quarterly Mission Outreach Meeting (CQMOM) and pulpit exchange, exploring the anthropology of Nomads, members of a community without fixed habitation who regularly move to and from areas (a community with no permanent settlement). Cross-cultural ministry, have presentations on interracial conflict, cultural division, inequality, suburban, township and undertake informal settlement ministry because there are a lot of informal settlements in the circuit.

Abraham is the first person in scripture who seems to specifically identify as living a nomadic lifestyle. Furthermore, the Israelites were nomads for 40 years and Jesus travelled from one town and village to another, proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom of God (Lk 8:9). Foraging can provide diversity and flavour by discovering a range of surprising ingredients, and it is a beautiful way to experience the outside and get some fresh air.

Change in culture

Of the 14 interview respondents, 43% expressed their understanding of the concept of 'multiracial and multicultural' church. Bringing black, white, and mixed race congregations together encouraged unity, inclusion, multicultural, multiracial, and racial integration. The practicing of multicultural diversity was motivated by a love for God and therefore by a love for other human beings. This involves building inclusive communities and crossing boundaries of location, denominational belonging, and race (cf. Naidoo 2007). The approach of collaboration is envisaged with the purpose of encouraging and building relationships in which all parties strategically choose to cooperate to achieve shared objectives.

Therefore text such as Jeremiah 32:39 becomes relevant: 'I will give them one heart and one way, so that they may fear me forever, for their children after them'. Congregational assembly, unity, inclusion, multicultural, multiracial, and racial integration are crucial. The circuit has an opportunity for racial integration, sharing each other's culture, challenges, and racial beliefs. For example, looking at the integration happening at the Glen Methodist church, there is complete change in form, appearance, and nature. Following an approach of collective foraging, groups interact and move together while searching for resources regularly. They work round the clock, with a structured and well-organised routing.

Diversity, cultural exchange, and new skills are important in developing an inclusive missional church. There must be Mixed Covenant Groups Meetings (MCGM) once a week on Wednesdays to pray and discuss challenges facing the circuit around race, culture, and inequality issues.

The core characteristics of a church

This section will be looking at the core resources and core characteristics of the church, providing congregational leadership with guidance on developing an inclusive missional church. This forms the four marks of the Church, the Christian Church 'one, holy, catholic, and apostolic and apostolic, which is the body of Christ' (Methodist Book of Order 2014:11). These four aspects will lead to a new proposed action plan:

The church is one

The church is united and global and has its basis in Jesus Christ and brings together all sorts of people (Pevey 2019:9). It is recognised as a society of fellowship with God (www.britannica.com). The unity of people in multiracial circuits and societies in ensured (cf. Dlamini 2019). On becoming a group, the sense of 'we', lessens cultural differences (Doughrty & Huyser 2008:25). In addition, God sees the 'we' in the me (Nel 2018:94). The unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Trinity (www.britannica.com), God in a community, union with Christ helps people live together (2 Cor 5:17). Living together as God's people, reflects the communal church (Swanson & Clement 1996:82). This suggests that Christians commit to oneness to foster faith in the world, create a sharing community, a community where people care for each other. Koinonia is about spending time together in the community, building friendships and relationships, eating, playing, praying, worshipping, and working together. The fellowship of Christians in the Lord should be included for purposes of worship and ministry (1 Cor 1:9). Working together as God's family involves recognising the others as brothers and sisters.

The inclusive human community is a Practical Theological ideology (cf. Kgatle 2017:5). Ants are included as a good metaphor to use in developing an inclusive missional church; they are a superfamily. They are called social insects because they live together. The church can learn from this, that although people might differ, they should worship, praise, and work together and in this way, build the church of Christ. By being connected, joined together as parts of one body, we are a family (Warren 1995:328). This helps in conveying a sense of belonging, being accepted, loved, cherished, celebrated, and fully forgiven. The gathering of the redeemed transcends all barriers (Methodist Almanac 1986:109). St. Paul similarly teaches that Christ breaks down the barriers of race, class, and sex (Gl 3:26–29; Col 1:19. 3:11).

Furthermore, using diversity as a concept of oneness (Giller 1977:25), the Body of Christ is an organic miracle of diversity expressed in a unity of purpose (Gibbs & Coffey 2000:71). Many Christian groups extending and holding together (Macquarrie 1977:402) believe that if one suffers, we all suffer together (Eph 4:26).

The church is holy

The church is holy because it is the body of Christ, founded and guided by the Holy Spirit. The sacraments help to make the faithful holy. Protestants believe in two sacraments that Scripture shows to have been instituted by Christ himself (TEEC 2008:68). According to Grudem (1994:866), baptism involves admitting people into the church and the Lord's Supper thus allowing people to continue with the membership of the church (TEEC 2008:58–59). Both sacraments serve the gospel of Christ's atoning work through the body of Christ through faith (Giller 1977:22). They also speak of the centrality of the cross and the atonement of Christ for sins (Anderson 2001:231).

The church and baptism

When we entered the church through baptism, faith, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, we were all made members of one body, the Church (Methodist Almanac 1986:108). In baptism we belong to the God-humankind community (TEEC 2008:58–59), need each other, remain connected and joined together as part of one body (Warren 1995:328). All members are made of one body, the church (Methodist Almanac 1986:106). Incorporated into the church, is the body of Christ, the covenant community (TEEC 2008:72–73). In addition, people are looking for community and belonging (Carter 2020:3; Swanson & Clement 1996:7). An individual now belongs to the community, and is forgiven and reborn (cf. TEEC 2008). Furthermore, we need each other, and need to be connected, joined together and we are family (Warren 1995:328). According to Swanson and Clement (1996:vii), people are welcomed as sisters and brothers in Christ.

Holy communion

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper, deepens our unity with Christ and each other (TEEC 2008:94). We have a communion with Christ and communion with one another (Methodist Book of Order 2014:16) and also share in the creation of the new community (1 Pt 2:9–10). According to Azevedo (1985:607), it is an instrument of intimate union with God and the whole human race. In addition, members are reminded of the significance of the death and resurrection of Christ. Furthermore, transformational leaders must inspire a covenant friendship that includes all people of God around the table of the Lord, where the parties eat and drink together, and the relationship is built upon love.

Universal boundary-breaking mission

According to Niemandt (2010:3), the word Catholic means 'universal'; the church aims to spread the word of God universally across the world (Mt 28:19). According to Bevans and Schroeder (2004:2), the church emerges when it becomes aware of its boundary-breaking mission. The circuit should become a collective foraging where preaching and teaching are transferred to the church and community to observe it (Mt 28:20). To have pulpit exchange with mixed languages and different worship styles (eclectic worship style). Exploring the anthropology of Nomads, they initiate another one to survive, searching for new pastoral land. This results in a boundary breaking rather than a boundary-maintaining community (Nel 2015:33). Pevey (2019:8) is referred to as the 'Great Commandment' and the 'Great Commission' recorded in the gospel of Matthew.

The Great commission according to Warren (1995:235) is that we are to take the initiative in sharing the Good News. People moving from suburban, township and informal settlement and other areas to share the Gospel. Jesus travelled about from one town, and village to another, proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom of God (Lk 8:9). The church made efforts to communicate the gospel to all nations or ethnic groups who have not been evangelised. It is through preaching that we convey words and deeds of God's salvific way in the Old Testament and the New Testament (Pieterse 2001:16). This will help the witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Warren 1995:161). In addition, it will help in adapting to all people, nations, all classes (White 1940:820). Through the proclamation of the Word the transformative power of the gospel becomes clear (De Gruchy 1987:141). Having pulpit exchange in mixed languages and different worship styles (eclectic worship styles), European or Western and black African worship styles also promote culturalism in a spontaneous manner that is forced upon people.

The Great Commandment is a name in the New Testament cited by Jesus in Matthew 22:35–40, Mark 12:28–34, and Luke 10:27a. The church can only be when it embraces everyone and, in all situations (Evans & Schroeder 2004:10). Gibbs and Coffey (2000:58) state that the missional church must be attentive to the voice of the world. Preachers who espouse congregational nomadism travel around to different groups of people spreading the gospel, encouraging, strengthening, and equipping people. Niemandt (2010:4) refers to preaching as transformational because it results in encounter between God and human beings (Pieterse 2001:16). Transformational leaders following the nomadic style could expand their mission to informal settlements and newly developed areas in the circuit they serve.

Furthermore, the church needs a continuing visitation programme (Armstrong 1993:85, 1995:32). Sharing of resources – wherein one cultural group visits the other and there is interchange of resources and places of worship to foster equity, solidarity, and family relationships. Clubbing together will lead to the spirit of cooperation being elevated to a whole new level; a highly organised and efficient circuit.

Drawing insights from the example of an ant when one goes astray, the colony responds to a correcting mechanism that ensures the whole colony's welfare above the individual's benefit. They have a built-in self-correcting mechanism that ensures the interest of the entire colony above the benefit of the individual. There should be wisdom and a sense of balance in sharing the resources of a local church. The equitable distribution of resources became an essential characteristic of the early church (cf. Ac 2:42–47, 4:32–37). They looked out for one another, they helped one another, they shared resources with one another to provide for the needs that they had (Pevey 2019:21). The rich devote themselves to distributing their wealth responsibly to benefit society while still alive.

Furthermore, Circuit Quarterly Mission Outreach Week (CQMOW) and pulpit exchange in the different sections of the circuit is suggested. Acts illustrate the importance of crossing boundaries, and welcoming the 'other', the 'stranger', the 'marginalised' into the community (Niemandt 2010:5). Cross-cultural ministry should have presentations on interracial conflict, cultural divisions, inequality,

suburban, township and undertake informal settlement ministry because there is a lot in the circuit. Learning to listen to others who come from different traditions is of great importance (Gibaut & Jorgensen 2014:94). Multicultural outreach projects deal with race, cultural and inequality issues happening in the circuit. According to Storey (2014:86), multicultural ministry teams have been found to be promising. Each section should have at least two representations that will report progress to the Circuit Quarterly Meeting. This should be the function of transformational leaders and this is also where the aspect of resources plays a vital role.

The Apostolic ministry

According to Nel (2015:185), the church should pay special attention to teaching (didache), the task of interpreting and applying Scripture (Grudem 1994:1058). The teaching of the Twelve Apostles is often simply an explanation and application of Scripture (Ac 15:35, 11:11, 25; Rm 2:21, 15:4; Col 3:16; Heb 5:12), the apostolic instructions (Rm16:17; 2 Tm 2:2, 3;10; et al.). This commission mandated the disciples to go and disciple new people sharing the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:20).

According to Gibbs and Coffey (2000:78), within the new Apostolic Movement identified by C. Peter Wagner, David Cannistraci describes Apostolic ministry in terms of the restoration of the 1st-century role of Apostle:

- Restoring the New Testament office of the Apostle.
- Imparting Christ's anointing to equip, help mature, and activate the people of God.
- A dramatic revival of supernatural signs wonders and miracles of the kinds that followed the 1st century Apostles.
- A worldwide deployment of thousands of Apostles; their development will transcend groups, denominations hierarchies, and agencies, and will not be the work of any one organisation.

The leaders should be equipped to engage in practical theological interpretation, and it would be an invaluable skill for all leaders and pastors to master (Osmer 2008:109). Paul told Titus that elders must be able to give instructions in sound doctrine (Grudem 1994:974). The ability to explain God's Word should include the teacher who can instruct and communicate knowledge clearly, especially the doctrines of the faith and truth of the Bible (1 Cor 12:27–29). This can often target restoration, transformation, and healing, which opens the doors to engaging with diverse stakeholders. The reading of Christian books on Scripture and even personal Bible study should be encouraged (Grudem 1994:953).

Teaching can also happen through the liturgy of life and in-service training; means of in-service training should be the model for how a congregation teaches and is taught (Nel 2015:194). In-service training is a systematic attempt to bring about changes in the classroom practices and in teacher's beliefs and attitude (www.iiste.org). Training activities that aim to increase the leaders' and pastors' level of efficiency, increase their knowledge, experience, and skills so that they can better fulfil their future duties and responsibilities.

Change in operational procedures

The last aspect is that of change in operational procedures; this is usually called a process of strategic planning, congregational strategic planning (cf. Nel 2015:222). The guidelines for all church organisations and leaders help to implement the Bylaws provision in developing an inclusive missional church. The principle of 'Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider its ways and be wise' Proverbs 6:6 is proposed. Ants are industrious creatures; small but wise in their ability to optimise their time, skills, and resources. They teach us the necessity to plan and look ahead, plan seasons of work and rest to prevent burnout.

This article views transformational leadership as the most appropriate way to effect the change needed, willingness from leadership to confront the situation head-on. Nehemiah is considered a great transformational leader in the Bible. He organised people to systematically rebuild the walls of Jerusalem despite opposition and challenges. This must be based on character, conviction, Christlikeness, and the ability to communicate effectively, build trust, develop, empower, and inspire others.

In addition, the elements needed for the church to be an agent of change are action-driven, including a vision for change and acceptance of responsibility. This is influenced by various factors such as good leadership, a collaborative approach, harmonious cooperation, collective behaviour, effective teamwork, enriching the social fabric, and fostering more interconnectedness. Furthermore, highly modified, visionary thinking and the ability to tackle complex challenges facing the circuit are also required. Mutual respect, trust, and open communication are crucial in developing an inclusive missional church; they are breaking boundaries.

Finally, the pragmatic task has endeavoured to develop practical guidelines that could be employed to enhance the effectiveness of the church's task to transform the local church. Once successfully developed, new leaders start the process all over again; each finds a new location to establish a new congregation and begins to produce new congregations. In many parts of a leader's life, they must move to find a new congregation for church growth and evangelism. They are programmed to begin creating a new congregation and are the founders of this congregation. Their role is to develop congregations into mature, God-loving, and God-fearing groups. The focus should be restoration, transformation, and empowerment, which opens the door to engaging with diverse stakeholders.

Proposed action plan

The heritage of our Methodist roots, Wesley's mission strategy was establishing small groups of disciples, which met weekly to study and pray together under the leadership of a Class leader.

A weekly programme of organisational (Mission groups) structures within the Methodist church needs to be visible and actively involve at least one and a half hours once per week. A workable set of timelines demonstrating a reasonable workflow that the leaders and grassroots of the congregation can substantially achieve and accomplish is also needed (Callahan 1987:25).

A tentative schedule strategy: In addition to Sunday, spirituality, evangelism, and church growth should be practiced on a daily basis from Monday to Saturday. Another aim is served by consistently implementing justice, reconciliation, and service, as well as economic and human growth, empowerment, and Christian formation and education.

The reversal strategy: Each mission group must have at least two days devotional time in spiritual pursuit, evangelism and church growth, justice, reconciliation and service, human economic development and empowerment, education and spreading Christianity. The suggested devotional time is one and a half hours to two hours per week.

The succession strategic planning focuses on relational aspects such as evangelism and church expansion, justice, reconciliation, and service, as well as human, economic, and empowerment development. Education and Christian formation should also be included.

Suggestions for a way forward

To improve race and cultural relations, it is recommended that workshops, campaigns, preaching, and teachings about racial relations and equality should be arranged. Interracial conflict and cultural division issues should be one of the priorities discussed at the Moreleta circuit leader's meetings, Quarterly Meetings, church services, as well as Synods and conferences because it is a national problem. It is vital to have a cross-cultural approach of one culture merging into the space of another culture (Esterline & Kalu 2006:30).

There is a need to implement three phases of development, namely the missionary movement that led to cross-cultural dynamics, the post-colonial phase, with a new appreciation for the 'other' (cf. Adendorff., Venter & Boshof 2008). The church must constantly reflect upon its real existence in the present with reference to its origin in the past, to ensure its existence in the future.

Sharing and connecting by creating a dialogue of cultural acceptance, initiating civil rights, social justice activities, community development projects and counselling, racial reconciliation programmes, cross-racial friendships, and partnership across racial lines is also recommended (cf. S4, SS2, SS10).

The interviewees made it clear that the cause of the current state of the circuit requires that ministers and church leaders should undergo theological training and empowerment in dealing with interracial conflict and cultural divisions.

The church is becoming the answer to its boundary-breaking mission. Crossing boundaries and welcoming the others, the stranger, and the marginalised into the community is also needed. Christians should be willing to reach and extend love to the different ethnic groups that serve in their churches. Cross-cultural approach and cross functionality is the concept that recognises the differences among people.

A further recommendation is to conduct studies in cross-cultural and cross-functionality, which is a concept that recognises the differences among people of different nations and ethnic backgrounds. Also important is the consideration of dynamic exchanges of different cultures, experiences, and perspectives.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the empirical scope of this article is admittedly limited, and does not claim that deductions can be generalised beyond the 14 members who were interviewed and on which this study is based.

The investigation revealed that this research is an important prerequisite for dealing with interracial conflict and cultural divisions. On this basis, future research should examine the ability of interracial conflict and cultural divisions of development programmes. This article can be interpreted as a first step in research on interracial conflict and cultural divisions.

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author, M.D. The information are not publicly available because of content that could compromise the privacy of research participants.

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