

**THE IMPACT OF RELIGION, CULTURE AND WORLD VIEW OF THE PEOPLE  
OF CROSS RIVER STATE ON THE SLOW GROWTH OF SEVENTH-DAY (SDA)  
CHURCH MISSION IN THE STATE**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The research looks at the impact of religion, culture and worldview of the people of Cross River State on the spread of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Cross River State. To realize this, three (3) point purpose of the study was considered, data were collected from the field-work and the study employed statistical, sociological, historical and theological methods in analyzing its data. From the investigation conducted on this study, it is apparent that the following are the major factors impacted on the slow growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Cross River State, namely: Religio-Cultural Factors and Church Growth; Socio-Economic Factor and Church Growth, and Religious Factors and Church Growth. This recommended church organization can be understood through the adoption of the under-listed missiological approaches: Incarnation, Inculturation, and Contextualization of the gospel, in addition to Inclusive Community Paradigm in reaching out to the people of Cross River State.*

**KEYWORDS:** worldview, religion, culture, church growth.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The name, Cross River State, came from Cross River, one of the major geo-physical features in the State. This river flows from the Cameroon Mountains, meandering through most of the Local Government Areas in the State, and empties itself in the Atlantic Ocean. It has many tributaries and streams, which form a waterway; and in the past served as a highway of migration, commerce and civilization for the people of the state. The natural features at the emptying of itself in the Atlantic forms the Cross River Basin. The Cross River has played very significant role in acting as a vehicle in bringing about the socio-cultural exchanges between groups in the State (Onor, 145).

Politically, what is today known as Cross River State stemmed out from the former South Eastern State created on May 27, 1967 and renamed Cross River State in February 1976, a composition of the present Akwa Ibom and Cross River States. The erstwhile Cross River

State existed as an entity until 1987, and was excised into two independent States: Akwa Ibom and Cross River States. The “new” Cross River State, has as its capital, Calabar.

There are 18 local Government Areas in the State, namely Akpabuyo, Odukpani, Akamkpa, Biase, Abi, Ikom, Yakurr, Obubra, Boki, Ogoja, Yala, Obanliku, Obudu, Calabar South, Etung, Bekwara, Bakassi and Calabar Municipality. Cross River State is subdivided into three major geographical groups namely: Lower Cross River – comprising Calabar South and Municipality, Akpabuyo, Odukpani Local Government Areas and Bakassi clusters; Middle Cross River comprises Akamkpa, Biase, Yakurr Local Government Areas clusters, while Upper Cross River includes areas covered by Obubra, Ikom, Boki, Etung, Obudu, and Ogoja Local Government Areas. There are several villages in Cross River State. Some of the main towns in the State include: Akamkpa, Calabar, Ikom, Obubra, Odukpani, Ogoja, Okundi, Ugep, Obudu, Obanliku and Akpabuyo, as portrayed in NigeriaGalleria: Cross River State, Nigeria.

The *Wikipedia on Cross River State* reports that, Nigeria is made up of 36 states, and Cross River State is one of them. Cross River is a state in the South-South geo-political zone in Nigeria. In 2016 the state had a population of 3.74 million. It lies between 5°32<sup>1</sup> and 4°027<sup>1</sup> and 9°28<sup>1</sup> east, and covers an area of 7, 782 square miles (20, 156 km<sup>2</sup>).

The population of the state is 2,892,988 according to *Wikipedia: List of Nigerian States by Population*. Besides the indigenous dwellers, there are other dwellers cutting across a global population forming a cosmopolitan settlement and resort.

### **Research Question**

Cross River State apparently seems to be endowed with multifaceted cultures, religions, and worldviews. How do these characteristic aspects of the state affect Christian Missions in regard to the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a case study?

### **Specific Objective of Study**

1. To discover the bridges created by cultures, religions, worldviews that make it easier to communicate the truths of the Gospel to people living in the state.
2. To expose the barriers those characteristics of those cultures, religions, and worldviews which inhibit the understanding or the ability to respond to the Gospel.
3. To bridge the gaps to understanding and responding to the Gospel.

## **REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITRRATURE**

### **Ethnic Groups and Their Origins in Cross River State**

It seems cogent to agree that all four theories of Diffusionist, Anti-diffusionist, Pro-creationist and Evolutionist contribute to the understanding of the history of the people who now occupy Cross River State. According to Onor, in his discussion about the Ejagham and their neighbours, “whatever is the validity of each school, it is important to note that” the following is true of various ethnic groups and their origins in Cross River State (143):

### **The Efik**

The Efik are today located within Calabar South, Calabar Municipality, Akpabuyo, and Odukpani Local Government Areas, and in these places they accommodate other “socio-linguistic groups” (Onor, 143). According to E. U. Aye (1990);

One important clue to help the historian in demarcating ethnic groupings is their food and mode of preparing them. Efik traditional meals are vastly different from those of their neighbours in many respects, for they range from the traditional method of preparing, seasoning and spicing their soup to the various spices of *ekpan* and the most sophisticated dishes of *edikan-ikon* and *ekpannkukwo*, or *ekoki* a dish prepared from pounded maize, which is almost similar to *kenki* in Ghana. Today the culinary technique of preparing these dishes are now being borrowed by non-Efik as the Efiks themselves are borrowing some cultural traits from their neighbours (5).

### **Yala**

According to Onor, there are three separate Yala groups namely Yala (Ikom), Yala (Ogoja) and Yala (Obubra). These various Yala groups “occupy three geographically non-contiguous areas of Cross River State” (144).

### **Yakurr**

According to Matthias Okoi-Uyouyo, the Yakurr, a derivative of *Yako* and *Yakaa* is made up of five urban settlements, formerly known as *Umor*, *Ekoli*, *Ilomi*, *Nkoibolokom* and *Yakurr be Ibe*. The Europeans presence affected the linguistic pronunciation of these villages in their present appellations, namely: Ugep, Ekor, Idomi, Nko and Mkpani respectively.

The Yakurr people are found in the present day Yakurr Local government Area. The Yakurr people share their northern and eastern boundaries with Assiga, Nyima and Agoi Clans of Yakurr Local Government Area, the southern boundary with Biase Local Government Area and western boundary with Abi Local Government (3).

### **The Ejagham**

Hansford et al in Okon E. Essien deduced that Ejagham is another name for Ekoi, which is what the Efik call the Ejagham people. He stresses the point further that both Ejagham and Etung people are ethnically related. This is so because Etung is the northern Cross River State name for Ejagham group of language, whereas Ejagham itself is the southern Cross River State name of the same, and Ekoi is the name non-indigenes of Cross River State, particularly the Ibibios, call the people of Ejagham and their language (29).

Nevertheless, Sandy Ojang Onor groups the Ejagham people into various clusters by which the appellation “Ejagham” encompasses. This means that the term, Ejagham, is used to refer to several groups of people, as shall be found in Onor’s clusterization:

**Cluster I** - The Qua of Calabar, Akpabuyo and Odukpani,

**Cluster II** - The Etung, Ofutop, Ndé, Nta, Nselle, Abanyum, Nnam, Nkome, Olulomo, Akaparabong, Balep and Bendeghe-Afi – all of whom comprise the Ejagham of Ikom;

**Cluster III** - The Nkim, Nkum {a unit of Bakor sub-group) and Ekajuk of Ogoja;

**Cluster IV** - The last cluster is the Ejagham in Akamkpa.

On giving reasons for this clusterization, Onor points out that this clusterization process is based on three main factors: They are areas of similarity, their different domicile in respect of origin(s), migration(s), and different linguistic sub-grouping that exist without the large Ejagham language family; lastly and inclusively “the desire to ensure chronological sequence and analytical clarity based on the foregoing factors”.

The aforementioned groups collectively occupy a contiguous expanse of territory stretching from most of Calabar municipality, Akpabuyo and Odukpani Local Government Areas; through Akamkpa and Ikom Local Government Areas and upwards to a sizeable portion of Ogoja Local Government Area. Obviously, the most populous group in present Cross River State... (13).

### **Other Ethnic Groups**

Other groups include Biase, Yakurr, and Mbembe peoples, who occupy Biase, Yakurr, and Obubra Local Government Areas respectively in the Middle Cross River State, alongside with the Boki people in Boki Local Government Area, and the Ejagham people spread across Ogoja, Ikom, Akamkpa, Odukpani and Akpabuyo Local Government Area and Calabar Municipality.

Onor draws a conclusion of unity of origin with an exception of the Efik, in the stories of immigration to determine that Cross River State, though, has many ethnic groups, shares a unanimous legendry of having come from the same ancestral homeland before they settled in Cross River State. According to him:

“An intricate network of common ethnic origins, culture ties and relationship amongst the inhabitants of this region ... the final effect of which was to transform these ties into a cultural watershed in the history of Africa. In fact, the Efik who belong to a different linguistic stock also were ultimately integrated into the mainstream of this cultural complex, through commercial intercourse which occurred later and in which they played a major role (144).

## **THE RELIGION OF CROSS RIVER STATE PEOPLE**

### **Beliefs**

Belief is another aspect of culture that needs to be considered in the study of the Cross River State people. Cross River State before the advent of Christianity shared in the tradition African religious system; though not so much has changed. According to Ihejimaizu, belief can be defined as “existential statements about the physical, social or the supra-empirical world. Beliefs may be true or false, but from a sociological point of view, their truth value is less important than the fact of belief itself” (95).

In another dimension, beliefs may be considered as “ideologies or an interrelated sets of beliefs that try to explain and justify a given state of social affairs” or provide a “rationale for changing the state of affairs, ideologies can be conservative, gradualist or revolutionary” (96).

A general perception of various beliefs in Cross River State may include the belief in supernatural “God,” pantheons, ancestors, forces or charms, and medium. Their concepts of these beliefs affect what constitutes taboos, especially when considering official and unofficial

days in their eight or four days reckoning of weekly circle; (different cultures differ in their weekly circle) that is, recognized traditional days for certain activities, ceremonies, and festivals. These beliefs in special days govern their communal view concerning which days to go to farm; days for coronation; and their market days; even days for celebrating festivals like new yam festival, as most of the rural dwellers are principally farmers (Latham, 3). Generally, their official day for some of their major festivals and for farming is Saturday. Taboos are usually believed to be offensive to the divinities, and are acts or words to be avoided, as they can bring bad omen to individuals or to the entire community.

Other beliefs of the people include belief in life after death and in re-incarnation. Their belief in life after death and in re-incarnation, promotes their perception of the ancestral worship. This belief affects the way they bury their dead. Aye, quoting Offiong says,

From my interview with some Efik chiefs, they profess that they pray to ancestors as their intermediaries because they consider themselves unworthy to approach their Supreme Being. But in the libation prayers by a number of them they were to address all the adoration, thanksgiving and petition to the ancestors (73).

The Cross River State traditional African religionists also cherish and possess individual gods or charms or other forces for personal protection against any harm from an enemy and from witchcraft. Belief in totem [manifestation of beings in different forms] as it is common in any African society, and Cross River State traditional societies are not exempted from it. This aspect of belief makes them to give meaning to any experience they encounter.

Kathleen Kuipe claims that, "the Traditional Efik religion included belief in a supreme creator god, ancestral and other supernatural beings, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft." Nevertheless, the advent of "the publication (1868) of an Efik-language Bible—the first translation of that scripture into a Nigerian language—had a significant impact, and in the 21st century most Efik identified themselves as Christians". Kuipe endeavours to explain briefly the Efik religion and beliefs but still does not discuss how that religion impacts the growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Onor speaking on the religion of the Ekoi people of Cross River without its impact on the propagation of SDA Church, says, "The religion of the Ekoi (sic) is altogether a fascinating study of ancestor worship. Nature jujus, sacred societies, the principal events of life, and the commonest actions of the day, all blend inextricably in a complicated ritual." He adds to his list of study, the worship symbols of Ejagham in these words:

The smallest town has its own "Juju" [idol] tree. There are many varieties of these, but each stands alone, usually in an open space before the Egbo (sic) house. They are generally bound round with tie-tie, or surrounded by a little fence festooned with linked rings of the same. On the branches of these trees hung countless nests of one kind or another of weaver birds. Surely in this we have the oldest picturing of earth and sky; sky father and earth – for of all created things the birds is most akin to air and sky, while the tree with its

roots in the dark ground, reaching even, as in many northern sagas to the nether world, is the best and oldest personification of mother earth (106).

In various traditions and cultures in Cross River one clear truth pointed out by Onor is the expression of their religious beliefs with symbolic objects of nature like trees, stones, streams, et cetera. These representations are seen to be obvious in various hamlets, compounds, and homes. The representation of the plethora of other deities in African religious thought, particularly among the Ekoi was that the Supreme God was “thought to be very fierce and vindictive”, while the small gods or these deities were “conceived to be caring and magnanimous”. Hence, the belief in plethora of other smaller deities, became organized into socio-religious institutions, and are practically regarded as a means of warding off negative forces which were essentially epitomized in the evil machinations of witches, and attacks from enemies. Onor stresses on the fact that the worship of ancestors and belief in re-incarnation also constituted another important component of traditional religion among Ejagham people, which is a common case among the traditionalists in state. Belief in re-incarnation among some Cross River State people is “predicated on the fundamental principle that life is a continuum”, a principle which Uya recognizes as that which is characteristic of most traditional societies (107).

The belief in the power of the ancestors is a common belief among most traditional societies including Cross River State people, as it is commonly observed in their practice of pouring libation and in the naming of their children. For example, among the Efik names such as *Ete'te* or *Eka'ete* respectively, are evidences of their perception of re-incarnation and immortalization of their ancestors. Other tribes in Cross River State also give to their children appellations symbolic of their ancestors. All these extracts do not in any way indicate how they impact on the missionary work of the SDA Church in the state.

### **The Culture of Cross River State People**

Ihejiamaizu sees culture with Tylor as: “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (87). It may be considered that every culture is made up of the above cultural aspects.

Aziza in Gabriel E. Idang sees culture as,

The totality of the pattern of behaviour of a particular group of people. It includes everything that makes them distinct from any other group of people for instance, their greeting habits, dressing, social norms and taboos, food, songs and dance patterns, rites of passages from birth, through marriage to death, traditional occupations, religious as well as philosophical beliefs (99)

The way of doing things which is an abridge meaning of culture, is passed on from generation to another, from parents to their children in a particular setting; or simply put it is “the way of life of a people”. Culture is also acquired, and Idang avers that, the transference of culture from one hand to another is through socialization process. Fafunwa in Idang analyses how culture is transferred from one generation to another as follows:

The child just grows into and within the cultural heritage of his people. He imbibes it. Culture, in traditional society, is not taught; it is caught. The child observes, imbibes and mimics the action of his elders and siblings. He watches the naming ceremonies, religious services, marriage rituals, funeral obsequies. He witnesses the coronation of a king or chief, the annual yam festival, the annual dance and acrobatic displays of guilds and age groups or his relations in the activities. The child in a traditional society cannot escape his cultural and physical environments (99).

Iwe, becoming specific discusses the spirit of Igbo culture by saying that, “The spirit of culture reflects its basic motivations, its weltanschauung, its philosophy, vision and interpretation of life, its hierarchy of values and the priorities of its needs and aspirations” (141). People in every culture are imbued by the way things are done in that culture, belief in them, and naturally espouse it as their own. It is the acceptance of these aspects of a particular culture that identifies a culture with certain individual and vice versa; such as Igbo, Efik, Ejagham, and so forth and so on culture.

Apart from knowing what culture is and whose culture it is, the Adventist church planter or missionary needs to understand what cultural context he or she and the new church to be found would face. Emil Brunner in Faircloth who has indicated some of the cultural considerations as follows:

The impulse to create the beautiful, to realize justice, to know the truth, to preserve the past, to enter into spiritual communications, to invent the new, to extend the range of inter-human communion to share sufferings and joy of other; the impulse to submit the totality of life to ultimate directives and to give it meaning, unity and intelligibility, and finally to place everything under the divine will and receive it from the hands of God – all these are impulse out of which culture and civilization arise (154-155).

### **Characterization of Cultural Pattern in Cross River State**

Pattern of behaviour comprising culture is categorized into four groups namely: Values, Beliefs, Symbols, and Norms. However, language is added because of its significance in any culture. These items are discussed below:

#### **Values**

Josephson Institute puts it this way:

Our values are what we prize and our values system is the order in which we prize them. Because they rank our likes and dislikes, our values determine how we will behave in certain situation; ... values often conflict ... Our desire to be honest may clash with desire to be rich, prestigious or kind to other. In such cases, we resort to our value system. The value we consistently rank higher than others are our core values, which define character and personality. We translate values into principles so they can guide and motivate ethical conduct.

Ethical principles are the rules of conduct that derive from ethical value. For example, honesty is a value that governs behaviour in the form of principles such as tell the truth, don't deceive, be candid, don't cheat. In this way, values give rise to principles in the form of specific 'dos' and 'don'ts'.

In Cross River State, the following cultural values are common:

**i). Good Ethical Behaviour:** The value of good ethical behaviours which helps them live peaceably and securely. Such values include honesty, respect for human lives, and right to property, respect for elders, and sanity in marriage. They also value harmonious living.

**ii). The House System:** According to E. U. Aye (2000), "The House system [which] is deeply rooted in Efikland. All of them were born into it and therefore is a continuous historical process; because new ones are being created and added to the old as circumstances demand" (92). In the house system or what may be called extended family structure, namely: parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces live together and are cared for by their children, grand-children, and other relatives in mutual love and respect. This is why individual actions affect the entire family system. It is here that ethical values, behaviours, and sentiments are inculcated in the young.

Ekong E. Ekong (1987) looks at this family structure in a broader dimension, and asserts that this value is what culminates in their living together in families, compound or hamlets, villages, and in clans. Hence they have certain rules governing the formation of families, like marriage rites and dowry (89-101). Personal religious decisions may have to be screened by the family system, to see how it affects the kindred.

**iii). Social and Political Structures:** They also value their social and political structures, as it is evident in their rites of kingship and tions. Persons of the royalties are chosen for coronation as chiefs or village heads. At these coronation ceremonies, consultation with the spirits of their ancestors is believed to constitute integral aspects; they believe it is one of the ways to appease their ancestors. These ceremonies are usually held on Saturdays. For instance, the Efik have it on *Urua Ete*, and usually comes on a Saturday designated specifically for coronation.

**iv). Special Dishes:** The people of Cross River State value their special dishes served at special occasions, flavoured with special condiments that are traditionally expected in such dishes, most times prepared for important guests or may be regarded significantly for nutritional values. For instance, the Efik people have a special kind of soup - *Edikang-ikong* - seasoned with dry fishes of different sort and sea foods. Dwellers in the river-rine areas of Cross River State are fresh-fish eaters, and most of them take fishing as a source of livelihood and income. The northern part of the State recognizes locust bean as a special seasoning. In the middle of Cross River State, the use of bush meat for preparing meals is a common practice. Cross River State people are noted for their attitudes toward guests, and are often treated to those special dishes as expression of their act of kindness and humaneness.

**v). Cultural Dances and Costumes:** The people of Cross River State also value their cultural dances and costumes as aspects their art displayed at ceremonies and festivals. It is a common observation that the people of Cross River State have dances, folklores, folksongs, accompanied by drumming in almost all their ceremonies and festivals. Their dances are related to some of their traditional institutions like, Ekpe and *Itembe* cultural trope in Efik; *Mgbe*, *Monikim*, and *Obasinjom* in Ejagham; (Onor, 151), *Obam dance* in part of Biase and Yakurr;



*Akata* in Ekoi and Efik villages. Some of these institutions serve as security, others are for entertainments and unifying factors which can bring the people together to share in their joys and challenges. However, in the preceding discussions the authors do not refer to how all these values impact on the missionary work of SDA Church in the state.

### Symbols

In simple terms, Ihejiamaizu sees symbols as “objects that have socially come to be accepted as standing for something else” (96); there are representations. Symbols can also be seen in African Writing Systems. “Writing Systems are components of knowledge systems. By definition, they are philosophical because they assist in synthesizing ideas, thoughts, and deeds through the use of signs, symbols or other pictorial renderings”(africana/Writing\_Systems/Nsibidi.html).

One of such symbols in Cross River State is “Nsibidi” or “Nsibidi Script”. Onor in discussing the language and symbols of Ejagham people of Cross River State sees “Nsibidi” as “a highly pictorial form of writing”. It is “a unique form of ideographic writing, signs representing ideas and ... signs embodying many powers including the essence of all that is valiant, just, and ordered” (22). “Nsibidi is actually seen as a writing system of the Ejagham people in [Cross River State]. It is seen on tombstones, secret society buildings, costumes, ritual fans, headdresses, textiles,.... in gestures, body and ground painting” (African Symbols).

Individual cultural attire and costumes stand as symbols of various cultures. The Efik men dress with long white shirt and wrapper with another wrapper of a different colour round their neck, called *okpong-nkpong*, a chief of Yakurr, *obulopon*, goes about bear bodied with only wrapper tied around his waists with a long towel hanging on his shoulder, and wears a cap with beets on them, even in an official capacity.

Even when there is a mishap in a community, for a woman to have her head-tie tied around her waist, is a sign that somebody very close to her is dead. Or for a woman to rob native white chalk round her neck, that symbolizes good news. Therefore, traditional symbols in rural areas are means of communication. And in Cross River State, there are some traditional marks, usually on the face, used for identifying where certain individuals come from.

Most rural dwellers are initiated in some institutions for the security of their territories against invaders or their enemies; hence they establish war teams, like the *ebrambi* or *ebilambi* cult, which is prevalent in some parts of middle Cross River State. These war teams are the symbols of strength for their communities. Some of them make use of eagle’s feathers with the calamus inserted into their caps, to portray this acclaimed strength.

Thus cultural symbols are signs of identity and constitute unique ways of expressing people’s beliefs sympathetically. Ihejiamaizu comments that masquerades and shrines appear to be the most common symbols employed in rural Nigeria (96). These masquerades signify their beliefs in spirits and ancestor worship; masquerades are reminders of their relationship with their ancestors. In Efik they have *Ekpe*, in some villages there is *Ekpo* masquerade, in the northern part of the state they have *Obam* masquerade, et cetera. These discoveries about the people of

Cross River State are very informative; however, they do not tell why the growth of SDA Church is retarded in Cross River State.

### c). Norms

Ihejiamaizu, uses the term norm to describe,

The common standards or ideas which guide members' responses in all established groups. They are rules that specify appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Norms tell us what we should or ought to do and must do, as well as what we should not, ought not and must not do. They are expectations shared by the members of the society at large or by members of particular groups within the society (96, 97).

Norms include folkways, mores, laws, and institutions.

In Cross River State communities there are norms regarding "marriage, business, social interactions, dressing to which every member must conform" (97).

Cultural norms are behavior patterns that are typical of specific groups. Such behaviors are learned from parents, teachers, peers, and many others whose values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors take place in the context of their own organizational culture. Some norms are healthy and some are not. Some contribute to the well-being of individuals, families, and communities; others are precisely the kinds of high-risk behaviors that mainstream societies or communities would like to reduce or eliminate, such as fraud, cultism, and the drinking of alcoholic beverages. Cultural norms often are so strongly ingrained in an individual's daily life that the individual may be unaware of certain behaviors. Until these behaviors are seen in the context of a different culture with different values and beliefs, the individual may have difficulty recognizing and changing them (SCRIBD).

Norm also involves work habit. For the people of Cross River State, work is a necessity of life. In some villages, even when one is very much educated, he or she still has his or her portion of farm. Farming is one of the most cherished and rewarding cultural norms in the State. The young and the unemployed who do not go for white collar jobs resort to agriculture for a means of livelihood. Saturday is generally used for domestic and farming activities in state.

**i). Folkways:** These are norms that members of a given community do not regard with much importance, because they may be violated without any punishment in a given community. They are simply habits and customs.

It was W. G. Sumner who introduced the term folkways into sociological literature and distinguished folkways from mores largely in terms of the severity of the sanctions applied to those who offend; folkways are not obligatory, ignoring them seldom invokes punishment. Sumner believes folkways result from the frequent repetition of acts (Ihejiamaizu 97).

In some rural communities in Cross River State, except for some enlightened parents, people do not see anything wrong with a girl living with a man even when no dowry has been paid. High level of poverty has caused parents in modern rural societies to see this avenue as a way of escape from further responsibilities and commitment to their daughters. Even when pregnancy ensues as a result of this illegitimate relationship, parties involved are not punished as such, except that those involved resume parenting prematurely.

Another aspect of folkways is the drinking of alcoholic beverages or strong drink with impunity. Any community in Cross River State can tell the evil of alcoholism and cigarette smoking, yet there is no sanction placed on drinkers and smokers. Seventh-day Adventist Church preaches against the consumption of strong drink (Proverbs 20:1), and smoking and advocates total abstinence. The church also frowns at illegitimate marriages or co-habitation, or illegitimate parenting. In such situations as enumerated above, where these evils are allowed or permissible in a community, and where the SDA Church sanctions members who partake in or copy wrong behaviours of non-members, the church stands the risk of not getting community people become members because, for a non member, he or she sees sanction and a habit or a practice he or she enjoys being prohibited by the church. Though the church may help one who is an alcoholic or a promiscuous person, yet these factors can inhibit the growth of SDA Church in such a community, as they can scare away non-members.

**ii). Mores:** According to Webster dictionary, mores simply are manners or customs. As a matter of fact, they are strongly held norms or customs. These derive from the established practices of a society rather than its written laws.

McGavran asserts that there are some countries where the State enforces the sex code taught by the Church, and emphasized that ideals of monogamy and faithfulness have become a lifelong experience, while other countries do not care about what happens to marriage institution; adultery, mistresses, premarital sexual intercourse, et cetera are no crimes at all (212).

In another instance, McGavran considers cases where couples are living together out of wedlock, and no church will accept them as members, though they may claim membership of this church or that one. These ones are not baptized or added to church membership (213, 214). In Cross River State, there are communities with the above experiences.

**iii). Laws:** These are documented “norms that may be derived from folkways or mores or may be enacted by special law-making bodies in response to new or newly recognized needs” (Ihejiamaizu 98). In some communities in Cross River State for instance, in order to prohibit illegitimate marriages certain laws have been enacted on dowry, marriage with close relatives, et cetera.

Other examples include: the compulsory use of market environment on official market days or even stopping people from going to farm on market days in order to encourage attendance, especially, when many people no longer go to market to buy or sell. It would then be mandatory to avoid all other activities on market days. Such laws are only enforced when the need arises, and their sanctions do not last for a very long period, especially when the desired objectives are met.

## **Language**

Language is described as the tone of a culture. It may be spoken or unspoken (or symbolic). Language is an integral, fundamental element in any given culture, especially as a medium of communication. Oliver (1999) considers language, as probably the most persuasive characteristic of culture, as it contains thought forms, belief systems, and world views. It facilitates the expression of ideas and thought in a culture to be considered paramount in the communication of the message. He argues that if people who communicate the gospel to a culture do not understand the language of that culture, “conceptual communication is almost impossible” (75).

Essien, writing on Cross River State Languages, posits that on the ground of “mutual intelligibility attested to by ordinary native speakers ... fifty languages, consisting of individual languages, dialect clusters and groups of languages in language cluster” have been discovered in Cross River State. By “dialect clusters,” Essien meant “mutual intelligible tongues usually bearing different names, whose origin can be traced to one source” (28). Languages spoken in the State include Ekoi, Etung, Boki, and Becheve. (The Becheve people are said to have linguistic affinity with Tiv of Benue State). Other languages include Ejagham, Yakurr, Umon, et cetera.

In Cross River State there are three major or official languages used in media translations within the State. They are: Efik, Ejagham, and Bekwara. Among these three languages, Efik is the very widely spoken language in the State. And in most of the communities in the State, Efik which is purported to be the widely spoken language still remains a foreign language as it is not understood by all, especially those who live farther away from the State capital.

This problem hinders the communication of the Gospel in the languages other than the ones understood by the preachers; except there is the conversion of or a hiring of an indigene from the areas to be entered with the gospel. It is usually difficult to penetrate with the gospel without a link with the people of a particular culture. Some communities in the State use language to separate themselves from hearing the gospel from other people who do not belong to their communities or speak their language.

It is also evident that only Efik and Bette speaking people have translations of the Holy Bible in their languages. And these works are credited to the effort of some European Missionaries like Goldie, et cetera (Aye 162, 163).

There are visible problems discussed in the above passages that can hinder the propagation of the Gospel; the translation of the Bible into native languages is a plus to gospel propagation; however, the literatures reviewed do not specifically deal with how the gospel as propagated by the SDA Church in Cross River State is hindered.

## **THE WORLDVIEW OF CROSS RIVER STATE PEOPLE**

According to the Wikipedia,

The term *worldview* is ... the German word *Weltanschauung* composed of *Welt* ('world') and *Anschauung* ('view' or 'outlook') ... It is a concept fundamental to German philosophy, especially

epistemology and refers to a *wide world perception*. Additionally, it refers to the framework of ideas and beliefs forming a global description through which an individual, group or culture watches and interprets the [world](#) and interacts with it.

For instance, Brian Chilton, looking at peoples' worldview in the perspective of the ultimate reality - God, summarizes all worldviews globally into the following eight (8) belief systems, namely: Atheism/Naturalism - "Rejection of God's existence"; Agnosticism - "God's existence is unknowable"; Pantheism - "God is an Impersonal Force; God is in everything, and everything is in God"; Panentheism - "Everything is God - God penetrates everything" (Part 1). Others are: Polytheism - "Several Gods exist"; Dualism - "God and the physical world are irreparably separated"; and Monotheism/Theism - "God is omnipotent, transcendent, and personal" (Part 2). He avers that the essence of his list is to aid learning and provide background knowledge to different belief systems. His thesis is that, "Everyone has a worldview of some sort. The first step in presenting the gospel message comes by understanding where the person's worldview currently resides. Understanding a person's worldview comes by listening. Apologetics and evangelism are not a quick process" (Part 2). Though these are wonderful information, yet they do highlight on how worldview of the people of Cross River State impact the growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church.

An Africa worldview in the context of belief in a God or god(s) may not be far from a mixture of pantheism, polytheism (plethora of gods) and panentheism, though there is apparently no homogeneity of belief system in African Traditional Religion. However, this article does not address the impact of worldview Cross river state people on the propagation the gospel by Seventh-day Adventist Church.

K. C. Anyanwu looks at the perspectives of how to identify peoples' "culture" and "worldview" including African milieu as follows:

It is possible to understand the mindset of a people, their fears and hopes, aspirations and goals, their conceptions of life and the world, through the study of their art forms. In other words, forms of art reveal the mental world of a people or culture. In fact, the distinctive traits of all cultures are manifested in their art forms; and this explains why those who are aware of the Greek, the European, the African, the Indian and the Chinese art forms, for example, can easily recognise the 'art objects of each of these cultures. Differences in art forms are manifestations of the differences in world-views, modes of perception and cognition (235, 236).

Anyanwu perspective of how to identify peoples' culture and worldview is informative, but lacks the information on how a particular worldview, for example that of Cross River State people, impacts the missionary growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church in the state.

Zacchaeus A. Mathema writing on "The African Worldview: a serious challenge to Christian discipleship," agrees with Charles H. Kraft that, worldview makes up every person's "control

box"; that is - the core of a person, and it determines the person's "thinking, acting or doing, and determining values". It is what shapes "influence and power on a person's life".

Mathema directs his study to traditional African worldview. In his conclusion, he avers that the traditional African worldview often "hinders the internalization of Christian message and practice among many African Christians." He opines that the effect of the hiccups caused by traditional African worldview against the Gospel taking root in an African include, making some Africans who have become disciples to regress or revert to unchristian practices, while others "manifest spiritualistic phenomena that warp and twist human life." However, he agrees with Van der Walt that reason for these phenomena can be traced to the African convert not experiencing "the gospel as adequate for life," or what Mbiti referred to as inadequate feeding of the "religious impulse and need of the traditional African." This inadequacy makes it difficult for an African convert to Christianity to encounter successfully such variables in the traditional African worldview such as, "belief in hierarchies and entities of power, a strong sense of community and belonging, strong orientation to power, and belief in mystical powers," even as he/she struggles through life over issues concerning "reality, truth, ethics and history". This is a wonderful work on the effect of worldview on African convert to Christianity, but it does not deal with the impact of worldview of Cross River State people on Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In concluding this section it seems pertinent to assert that African worldview has so much to do with "their conceptions of life and the world" with every culture or group of people in their communities. Therefore, in Cross River State, understanding the worldview of the people requires examining their heterogeneous cultural beliefs, which have hitherto shaped their established institutions and behaviour. The people of Cross River State hardly can do anything without involving their art and cultural expression in the form of music, foods, and dancing.

## **Methodology of Study**

This research, in addition to data collected from the field-work, also employs sociological, statistical, historical and theological methods in analyzing its data. The research questions are centred on issues concerning the Seventh-day Adventist church in Cross River State, its mission and impact on the people and cultures of the people of State, in order to substantiate the church's *raison d'être*.

The sampling technique was limited to stratified sampling. According to Essien Udo Essien, stratified sampling is adopted "when sub-groups of the population with certain common characteristics are easily identifiable and included in the random sampling" (6). This may imply that almost all the Local Government Areas in the State shall be target centres, since Local Government Areas constitute sub-groups of a State in Nigeria. In the same vein, it also may be assumed that all the peoples or groups, that is, the population, in a Local Government Area have "certain common characteristics" and "are easily identifiable" in their culture, religion, et cetera. Hence, what is applicable to one group may likely be applicable to the other nearby group in the same state; meaning that they are identical. Therefore, it may be justified point out that, these selected communities are subgroups (the microcosm) of the entire State (the macrocosm), since there have identical characteristics in culture, religion, and seemingly similar features in their attitudes and behaviours.

Nevertheless, while 14 Local Government Areas constitute centres for sampling, the research was done randomly. That is, selected villages and towns per Local Government Area were used, especially and particularly those communities with Seventh-day Adventist Church presence.

In gathering data, questionnaires, interview, and participatory observation were used. One set of questionnaires [using contingent questions, that is, (Yes) and (No) questions], was prepared for members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the state. The data collected were analyzed. A total of 300 questionnaires were administered in those sampled villages and communities in the selected 14 Local Government Areas, where there are Seventh-day Adventist Church's presence.

## **DATA COLLECTION/DISCUSSION**

### **Religio-Cultural Factors and Church Growth**

The questions under this group consider SDA attitude regarding the following cultural and religious issues: the presence of “the white culture” syndrome in the church, the use of local dialects in church, cultural use of Saturday in communities, forbidden adornment by SDA Church such as the use of ear-rings, bangles and cosmetics and their cultural impact, polygamy and church membership, the free use of alcoholic beverage, dietary religious laws that forbid the use of shrimps, pork, snails et cetera, the use of certain instruments of music such as local drums, bands, gongs, and clapping of hands and dancing at church worships, and reception or acceptance of traditional titles by Christians.

In finding out the presence of “the white-man” culture syndrome in the church, 168 respondents that is 72.72 percent indicated that SDA Church in Cross River State is not influenced by “white-man” culture syndrome, while 63 respondents that is 27.27 percent also pointed out that there is “white-man” culture syndrome, as some practices adopted by the SDA Church are foreign to traditional African practices. For the use of local dialects in church, 145 respondents that is 62.77 percent of the respondents agreed that there is in existence the use of local dialect in church, while 86 respondents, that is 37.23 disagreed that local dialect is used in the church. In accessing the cultural use of Saturday in communities 231 respondents, which is 100 percent, agreed that Saturday is used for festivities and for farming in their communities, while none, that is 0 percent, indicated otherwise. Pertaining to forbidden adornment by SDA such as the use of ear-rings, bangles, and cosmetics and their cultural impact, 231 respondents respectively, that is 100 percent respectively, agreed that SDA Church forbids the use of these items, while none of the respondents, that is 0 percent respectively, did not indicate otherwise. For polygamy and church membership, 231 respondents that is 100 percent, agreed that the church does not receive polygamist into her membership, while none of the respondents, that is 0 percent indicated a contrary opinion. As for the free use of alcoholic beverage 231 respondents, that is 100 percent, agreed that the church does not encourage the free use of alcoholic beverage, and while none of the respondents, that is 0 percent showed a different opinion. On dietary religious laws that forbid the use of shrimps, pork, snails et cetera, 228 respondents, that is 90.70 percent, agreed that the SDA Church teaches her members not to eat these items, while 3 respondents

that is 1.29 percent, do not think the church teaches that. For the use of certain instruments of music such as local drums, bands, gongs, and clapping of hands and dancing at church worships, 217 and 211 respondents respectively, that is 93.93 and 91.34 percent respectively, agreed that the church does not encourage the use of these instruments of music and dancing in her church services, while 14 and 20 respondents respectively, that is 6.06 and 8.66 percent respectively, did not see the church in this light. Concerning Christians' reception of traditional titles, 168 respondents, that is 72.72 percent, agreed that the SDA Church places restriction on members - forbidding them to receive traditional titles, while 39 respondents that is 16.88 percent did not think the church makes rules against this item.

## FINDINGS

In concluding the forgone analysis, the percentages confirming the cultural issues are prominent, indicating that SDA Church has problems with most of what is allowed in the culture of the people of Cross River State as can be substantiated in the following references. In matters concerning food, dancing, music and clapping of hands during worship in this cultural study, there are succinct incompatibilities between SDA Church and the culture of the people of Cross River State. This finding alludes to what Aye (1990) posits that, some of the dishes cherished by Cross River State indigenes contain sea foods such as shrimps and fishes without scales, and animals. The Efik people, in their special *edikan-ikon* and *ekpannkukwo dishes*, are a notable example. These sea foods are generally cherished by every community in Cross River State in their food preparations. Seventh-day Adventist Church on the other hand, for religious reasons, regards most sea foods as non-edibles for religious and health reasons. For instance, SDA Church members do not eat shrimps, pork, dog, et cetera, generally referred to as "unclean meat", and fishes without scales and fins, as presented in the SDA Church's Fundamental Beliefs, referenced in Deuteronomy 14:2-21 and Leviticus 11:1-47.

James Cress confirms that SDA Church teachings on temperance and health habits as part of their life style agree with "no alcohol, tobacco, or "unclean" foods, if not outright vegetarianism; no theatre, movies, novels, dancing; limited jewelry or makeup" (47), which have some restraint on some cultural and eating habits of the people of Cross River State. These restrictions form the major dietary and health teachings of the church and constitute some of the conditions for membership.

Onor refers to some of the dances cherished by cultures in Cross River State, namely, *Itembe* cultural trope in Efik; *Monikim* and *Obasinjom* in Ejagham; (151). And none of these cultural dances are performed without dancing and clapping of hands. This denotes that dancing and clapping of hands is culturally embedded in the culture of the people of Cross River State. These cultural attitudes are carried over in the psyche of the people to the churches as cultural heritages which are said to make worship interesting to the indigenous people of the State. Conversely, the SDA Church does not encourage dancing and uncontrolled clapping of hands in the church; hence their places of worship are scantily attended. Dancing, of course, is one of the entertaining cultural values of the people. Wagner (1984) encourages that Church growth should have both an evangelistic and cultural mandate.



The Seventh-day Adventist liturgical position especially on instruments of music other than instrumentals like: organs, piano, guitar, et cetera, played orderly and skillfully to produce meaningful musical pathos and hymns, devoid of pandemonium, needs to be considered in an attempt to reform the society and give distinct value to cultural music in the light of the scripture. Nevertheless, in the Elder's Digest (April/June, 2006) one of the General Conference of SDA Church's principles on cultural music, encourages the SDA Church to "recognize and acknowledge the contribution of different cultures in worshipping God"; and that there should be room for musical adaptation (9). Such an approach to culture is worth adopting in the SDA Church in Cross River State.

Polygamy as a culturally inhibiting problem to SDA evangelism in Cross River State is confirmed by McGavran who stresses that in "Africa, the system of polygamy keeps very large numbers from confessing Christ". Churches rule that men who have married two or more women according to tribal custom must give up all but one on becoming Christians. Some Churches are not happy with this rule, especially some African Churches. He points out that the issue is whether converts with two or more wives whom, while pagans, they have married according to tribal law, may be baptized with their wives and continue living with them, on the clear understanding that (1) while they will be members in good standing, they may not be deacons or elders, and (2) they will cleave strictly to monogamy as a system. If a wife dies they will not replace her, and they will arrange monogamous marriages for their sons and daughters.

In a nut shell, McGavran sees a problem of growth among those Churches in Africa that refuse the baptism of polygamists as having problem with church growth in Africa (212-214). Seventh-day Adventist Church is one of such churches whose evangelism results have been affected by failure to baptize polygamists. Therefore, the preceding findings show that religious-cultural factor is an inhibiting factor to SDA Church growth in Cross River State.

### **Socio-Economic Factor and Church Growth**

Items used and grouped together for determining socio-economic factor as it relates to SDA Church growth included: customary use of Saturday by communities for domestic and economic activities; the convenient use of Sunday for worship over Saturday by communities in Cross River State; SDA Church's discouragement of her members from attending social meetings, buying or selling, or sitting for exams on Saturday; SDA Church discouraging members from getting married to non-members.

In examining the customary use of Saturday by communities for domestic and economic activities 231 respondents that is 100 percent agreed that many find it difficult to stop doing their domestic and economic activities on Saturday, while none of the respondents, that is 0 percent, disagreed that people find it difficult to stop doing their domestic and economic activities on Saturday. For the convenient use of Sunday for worship over Saturday by communities in Cross River State, 126 respondents that is 54.55 percent, agreed that there is that convenience, while 105 respondents that is 45.45 percent did not think that it is more convenient for people in their communities to go to church on Sunday than on Saturday. As to whether SDA Church forbids her members to attend social meetings on Saturday, 231

respondents that is 100 percent agreed that SDA Church does that, while none of the respondents, that is 0 percent, indicated anything.

That the church forbids members to sell or buy on Saturday, 231 respondents that is 100 percent, agreed that SDA Church prohibits her members from buying or selling on Saturday, however none of the respondents that is 0 percent indicated otherwise. Concerning discouraging members of the church to sit for exams on Saturday 231 respondents that is 100 percent agreed that members of the church are restricted from taking examinations on Saturday, while none of the respondents, that is 0 percent, indicated a contrary answer. Finally, that the SDA Church does not encourage members to get married to non-members, 231 respondents that is 100 percent agreed that it is true that members are not encouraged to marry non-members, while none of the respondents, that is 0 percent indicated otherwise.

### **FINDINGS:**

This finding affirms what James Cress had seen about SDA Church lifestyle. He describes Adventist Life Style as that which causes “a closed community”. He deduces that the cause of this attitude may have come from Adventists’ “pride in theological accuracy and orthodoxy;” which may have led them to maintain a very conservative and exclusivist lifestyle rather than inclusive, humble, and salvific approach toward people of the cultures they are evangelizing. The use of "pride" in the above quote is simply that of confidence, especially from their biblical worldview. The Adventists express this conservative lifestyle in their belief in the sacredness of Saturday, which condemns any social activities apart from those that are in consonance with their beliefs. Cress concludes that exclusive lifestyle makes Seventh-day Adventist Church’s evangelistic efforts poorly fruitful, especially as the church finds it difficult to keep most of its converts. This insight presupposes that the SDA Church actually makes it difficult for these new converts to remain in the church by their lifestyle and teachings (47).

Findings under this section indicate that, communities in Cross River State attend church services more conveniently on Sunday than on Saturday, as a religious custom of the people. According to McGavran, when a society finds itself in certain physical, economic, and political circumstances, it soon develops a characteristic culture and self-image. Ruth Benedict in McGavran stressed that, the culture of each society, however, is the combined outcome of many different forces – racial, military, religious, climatic, and others (208).

The findings above show that most economic and social activities in the state are popularly and conveniently conducted on Saturdays in various communities, whereas the SDA Church tenaciously uses Saturday only for religious purposes, according to their belief on the Sabbath, Exodus 20:8-11. Also, the church does not encourage her members to buy or sell; neither does she encourage her members to conduct any social activities, such as marriages, weddings, as well on Saturdays. The SDA church does not also permit marriages between members of the church and non-members. It does not encourage her members to allow their children sit for examinations on Saturdays. It is necessary to infer that SDA Church regards their members as reformers and the church as the remnant church, whose evangelistic goal is that of bringing other believers to the path of what they regard as the “truth” as stressed by Dudley and Cumming (17).

It could then be inferred that the easy use of Sunday as a day of worship in these communities has made it part of the culture of the people of Cross River State. By a careful observation, two extreme positions are presented here, one by the SDA Church and the other by those who worship on Sunday. The latter, being the majority of the people, choosing other days other than Sunday for socio-economic activities, while the former, being the minority tenaciously holding on to Saturday as a day of worship including Sunday among other days of the week used for socio-economic activities, thereby running at an opposite current with the majority of the people of this culture. Hence, socio-economic factors in this perspective inhibit the growth of SDA Church in Cross River State.

### **Religious Factors and Church Growth**

Statements from the questionnaire used for determining religious factor as it is linked with SDA Church growth were for respondents to affirm or disagree with the following: the preference members of communities have for Sunday over Saturday, finding out if there are in those communities churches that worship on Saturday other than SDA, whether the people of these communities are convinced of the biblical sanctity of Saturday as the 7<sup>th</sup> day of worship. The respondents were also required to indicate if members of the SDA Church are restricted by the church to watch television or listen to radio on Saturday for religious reasons; if the church forbids cohabitation and trial marriage, and if the church receives polygamists and their wives into church membership. The respondents were asked to indicate if the SDA church ordains women into the ministry of the church. Also, the respondents were required to identify if SDA Church supports her members to celebrate Easter and Christmas, and whether the church exercises control over speaking in tongues, prophesying, and uncontrolled excitement during prayers.

To find out if members of the communities have preference for Sunday over Saturday, 197 respondents that is 85.28 percent, agreed that there is such a preference in those communities, while 34 respondents that is 14.71 percent did not agree that there is such a preference of Sunday over Saturday. On finding out if there are in those communities churches that worship on Saturday other than SDA Church, 195 respondents that is 84.41 agreed that there are other "Saturday churches" other than SDA Church in their communities; however, 36 respondents that is 15.56 percent say they did not have such a group of worshippers. As to whether the people of these communities are convinced of the biblical sanctity of Saturday as the 7<sup>th</sup> day of worship, 185 respondents, that is 80.09 percent, say the community people are convinced of the sanctity of Saturday as a day of worship, while 46 respondents that is 19.91 say the people are not convinced of the sanctity of Saturday as a day of worship. The respondents were also to ascertain out if members of the SDA Church are not encouraged by the church to watch television or listen to radio on Saturday for religious reasons; 231 respondents that is 100 percent confirmed in the affirmative that the church forbids members to do these activities on Saturday, while none of the respondents disagreed that the church forbids these activities on Saturday. To find out if the church forbids cohabitation and trial marriage, 231 respondents that is 100 percent agreed that SDA Church forbids cohabitation and trial marriage, while none of the respondents indicated otherwise. On the fate of polygamists and their wives, 231 respondents that is 100 percent, agreed that SDA Church does not receive polygamists into church membership, however their wives may be baptized and accepted into church

membership, while none of the respondents gave a contrary answer. The respondents were asked to indicate if the SDA church ordains women into the ministry of the church, 231 respondents that is 100 percent agreed that SDA Church does not ordain women into the ministry, however the church encourages the services of women; while none of the respondents took a different position. Also, the respondents were required to identify if SDA Church encourages her members to celebrate Easter and Christmas, 217 respondents that is 93.94 percent agree that SDA Church in the state teaches members not to celebrate Christmas and Easter, while 14 respondent that is 6.06 percent did not see the church in that light. Finally, respondents were to indicate whether or not the church exercises control over speaking in tongues, prophesying, and uncontrolled excitement during prayers. To this last finding, 231 respondents, that is 100 percent, agreed that the SDA Church exerts such controls over those items, while none of the respondents had a different opinion.

## **FINDINGS**

This section confirms the preference of Sunday as a day of worship in communities in Cross River State as a cultural institution highly rated than any other day including Saturday - which is revered by the SDA Church. It also reveals how much the SDA Church has done in convincing the people of Cross River State to accept Saturday; the finding indicates that there is no much awareness as a result of the teaching methodology use by the Church.

Chastain's concept of a "teaching church" being "an evangelistic church" is pertinent in SDA Church's situation. In his reference to the duration of teaching in order to convince and transform a community or people, he suggests the following:

When Jesus set about his work, he first drew aside a little group of disciples that he might teach them. And he took time to do a thorough job of it. For three years – day and night – they were with him constantly ... Years were needed for Jesus to transform even more responsible of his disciples into dependable apostles. Nor did these men learn merely from what Jesus said; every experience through which they passed added something ... We may not expect, therefore, to get quick, easy results. We, too must begin where people are and teach them by word and experience (48).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

For SDA Church in Cross River State to be received by the cultures, there is the need to present the Gospel to people in their languages. Gospel literatures need to be translated into various language groups as well as target groups. On entering villages or communities in the State, there may be the need to go with members from those cultures to help in interpreting the sermons to the understanding of the people in their own mother tongues.

Therefore, from the above cultural perspectives and findings about the people of Cross River State, and the search for the possibilities to evangelize this territory by the SDA Church, there is the necessity to obviously take into cognizance, their worldview, their cultural expressions, their attitudes, values and norms, mores, cultural symbols, language, et cetera. There is a serious need for the application contextualization, inculturation, and Incarnational models of

propagation of the gospel in this regard, without destroying the essence of the gospel so as to achieve the desired objective. This function is not to be soliloquized but must be accepted by all, as it is stressed by the world Church of Seventh-day Adventist Church. For example, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee's 2004 Annual Council has the following concerning cultural music. The use of music intelligible to cultures by SDA Church is an example of the church's interest in reaching the people of different cultures with the use of their languages, musical forms, instruments, and their varied cultural contributions in the art of worshipping God (Elder's Digest, April, June 2006: 9).

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