

ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN THE STATE OF CHHATTISGARH, NORTH INDIA

by

Shibu Joseph

The purpose of this study was to develop new strategies for Christian leadership training to improve missionary works in Chhattisgarh, North India by understanding the existing challenges and strategies related to Christian leadership training. There are many pastors in the remote and tribal villages of North India who have never been to any kind of Biblical training but serve God with commitment and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Since they are not theologically trained, their ministries are not effective and many of their churches do not have proper growth.

The research was conducted in a selected district called Durg of the Chhattisgarh State. The district was divided into ten divisions, and a pastor in each division was appointed to arrange a one-day seminar to distribute the questionnaires and to conduct the interviews. There were twenty to thirty participants in every seminar. In total, this research surveyed 275 people, including presidents of Christian organizations, principals and staff of Bible colleges, pastors, laymen, and believers.

This research revealed fifteen challenges faced by the lay pastors as well as fourteen challenges faced by trainers conducting Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh. It also revealed that many of the present strategies used in the leadership

training are not effective, particularly in the modern world. As a result, the researcher developed twelve new strategies to train these pastors better and become more effective in their ministry.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled

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by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	x
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	xii
CHAPTER 1 NATURE OF THE PROJECT.....	1
Overview of the Chapter.....	1
Autobiographical Introduction.....	2
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Purpose of the Project.....	4
Research Questions.....	5
Rationale of the Project.....	6
Definition of Key Terms.....	7
Delimitations	8
Review of Relevant Literature.....	10
Research Methodology.....	11
Type of Research.....	11
Participants	13
Instrumentation	14
Data Collection.....	14
Data Analysis.....	16
Generalizability.....	17
Overview of Dissertation.....	17
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT.....	18
Overview of the Chapter.....	18
Biblical Foundations of Leadership Training.....	18

Old Testament Examples.....	19
God as Great Leader.....	19
Abraham.....	20
Moses.....	21
Samuel.....	24
David.....	25
Solomon.....	26
Nehemiah.....	27
Ezekiel.....	28
New Testament.....	29
Jesus and Leadership.....	29
Apostle Paul as a Leader.....	31
Theological Foundations.....	33
India: The Land and its People.....	35
A History of Christianity in India.....	36
Early Christianity in India.....	36
Emergence of Protestant Missions.....	37
Chhattisgarh.....	39
The Origin of Christianity in Chhattisgarh.....	41
Review on Leadership.....	48
Different Kinds of Leadership Training.....	50
Need of Christian Leadership Training in India.....	52
Christian Leadership Training: Different Types of Leaders.....	59
Challenges for the Christian Leadership Training.....	65
Cultural Context.....	67

Gaps Analysis in Literature.....	69
Review of Chapter	71
CHAPTER 3 ANALYTICAL FRAME WORK OF THE PROJECT.....	73
Overview of the Chapter.....	73
Nature and Purpose of the Project.....	74
Research Questions.....	76
Ministry Context for Observing the Phenomenon.....	77
Participants	80
Criteria for Selection.....	80
Description of Participants.....	81
Procedure for Collecting Evidence from Participants.....	82
Ethical Considerations	85
Procedure for Analyzing the Evidence Collected.....	85
Reliability and Validity of Project Design.....	86
Review of the Chapter.....	87
CHAPTER 4 EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT.....	88
Overview of the Chapter.....	88
Participants.....	88
Research Questions.....	93
Research Question #1.....	93
Challenges Faced by the Pastors.....	93
Financial Problem.....	94
Family Issues.....	95
Personal Issues.....	96
Food Problems.....	97

Health Issues.....	97
Social Issues.....	97
Lack of Time.....	97
Black Magic.....	98
Caste Issues.....	98
Opposition from the Villagers	98
Cultural Issues	99
Lack of People to assist the Ministry	99
Language Problem	99
Illiteracy	100
Attack by Naxalites	100
Challenges Faced by the Trainers.....	100
Anti-Conversion Bill.....	101
Language Problem	102
Cultural Issues.....	103
Casteism.....	104
Lack of Literatures and Study Materials.....	104
Terrorist Attacks	105
Attack by Villagers.....	105
Lack of Cooperation from other Pastors.....	105
Transportation.....	106
Accommodation.....	106
Food.....	107
Lack of Electricity.....	107
Drinking Water.....	107

Phone Network and Internet Facility.....	108
Research Question # 2:	108
Existing Strategies for Leadership Training.....	108
Conducting Seminars for a Week in Six Months.....	109
Three Days Seminar Once in Three Months.....	110
One Day Seminar in Every Month.....	111
Providing Study Materials	112
Audio Devices for Illiterate People.....	112
Focusing on Discipleship.....	113
Focusing on Evangelism.....	113
Focusing on Church Based Theology.....	113
Social Awareness Seminars.....	113
Setting Ministry Goals.....	114
Group Discussions on Current Issues.....	114
Giving Financial Support.....	114
Research Question # 3:	115
Interview with Serve India Ministry.....	116
Summary of Major Findings.....	118
Review of the Chapter.....	121
CHAPTER 5 LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT.....	123
Overview of the Chapter.....	123
Purpose	124
Major Findings.....	124
First Finding.....	124
Second Finding.....	125

Third Finding.....	126
Ministry Implications of the Findings.....	130
Recommendations.....	131
Provide Ongoing Training in the Field even after the Training.....	131
Develop Second Level Leaders to Train Others	131
Provide Leadership Training to Female Leaders.....	132
Provide Training on Modern Technologies and Social Media.....	133
Select One or Two Able Pastors and Provide Them Higher Education..	133
Appoint A Leader To Oversee and To Give Further Guidance.....	134
Provide more Study Materials in Indian Context and in Indian Language	134
Provide Social Awareness to Eradicate Casteism.....	135
Teach English as an Optional Subject.....	135
Provide More Electronic Devices for Illiterate Pastors.....	135
Provide Electronic Equipments for the Expansion of the Ministry.....	136
Provide Basic Computer Education Along with The Training.....	136
Limitations of the Study.....	136
Unexpected Observations.....	137
Future Directions for the Study.....	137
Review of the Chapter.....	137
Postscript.....	138
APPENDIXES.....	140
A. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE FIRST GROUP.....	140
B. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE SECOND GROUP.....	142
C. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE THIRD GROUP.....	144
D. PHOTOS OF AUDIO BIBLE DEVICES.....	145

E. INFORMED CONSENT LETTER.....	146
F. CONFIDENTIALITY FORM.....	147
WORKS CITED	148
WORKS CONSULTED	156s

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4:1. List of the Participants By Category.....	90
Table 4.2 Pastors and Their Theological Qualifications.....	92
Table 4:3. List of Categories of Challenges Faced by the Village Pastors.....	94
Table 4.4. Financial Issues.....	95
Table 4.5 List of Family Issues.....	96
Table 4.6. List of Challenges Faced by the Trainers.....	101
Table 4.7. Existing Strategies for Leadership Training.....	109
Table 4. 8, Response to the Question, “Are You Satisfied with the Curriculum and Training?.....	115
Table 4. 9. List of New Strategies.....	116

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:1 Map of India.....	9
Figure 1:2 Map of Chhattisgarh State.....	9
Figure 2:1 Chhattisgarh Population by Religious Communities.....	40
Figure 4:1 Participants according to the category.....	90

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CHAPTER 1

NATURE OF THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

The shepherds have several roles in regard to their sheep. They lead, feed, nurture, comfort, correct, and protect. The Christian leader is also a feeder and nourisher of the sheep and the ultimate sheep food is the Word of God. Just as the shepherd leads, his flock to the most lush pasture so they will grow and flourish, the Christian leader nourishes his flock with the only food which will produce strong, vibrant Christians. The Bible is the only diet that can produce healthy Christians. “Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord” (NIV Deut. 8:3).

The Apostle Paul told Timothy, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witness entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Tim. 2:2). Paul wanted to ensure that future followers of Jesus would be vibrant and faithful. One who is rooted in the word can make others strong and can bring fruit in his ministry. If the leader is not rooted in the Word then he becomes ineffective in the ministry and he fails to feed, nourish, nurture, and protect the believers.

There are many pastors and leaders working in the remote villages of north India without having any kind of theological training. This research is an attempt to develop the new strategies to train them better by understanding the existing challenges and strategies related to the Christian leadership training. This chapter examines the context of the research topic, the puzzles involved in this research, the process, and the procedure of this research.

Autobiographical Introduction

In 1996, during my first year of Bachelor of Theology studies, I realized for the first time that God wants me to serve Him in North Indian states. I was in Punjab with a team of ten brothers during our summer vacation. We as a team visited many villages and churches in the border of Punjab and Jammu Kashmir. According to the information received from the local believers, many of the churches in this area began with a large congregation of believers, which declined as leadership or pastors changed. Church activities became limited to Sunday worship or a fasting prayer on Friday. This limit paved the way to a moral decline of believers, with churches becoming simply Christian worship centers no different than pagan or Hindu worship centers.

From 2004 to 2009, I officiated the post of Academic dean and vice-principal in a Bible college in Madhya Pradesh, a state in the central part of India. I visited other churches for preaching and taking Bible classes. Many of these villages and even urban churches presented a similar experience. Most of the pastors were not theologically trained and considered the ministry as part time service to God. They also worked full time in different capacities. Their understanding of pastoral ministry was simply that a pastor should conduct services and preach. They read the Bible only to make sermons for services.

In 2009, I came to a theological seminary in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, a border district to the states of Orissa and Chhattisgarh. While teaching in the seminary, I used to conduct gospel meetings, and Bible studies for the pastors and believers in Andhra Pradesh and in Orissa. These meetings consisted of unofficial discussions and clarifications of Biblical doubts. Many pastors expressed an interest in studying the Bible and being trained more formally. However, many of them were

married and had additional responsibilities, which made it impossible for them to leave their villages and everyday life for formal training. Instead, we presented a three-day seminar for the pastors that taught the basic foundations of the Christian faith and doctrines. It also gave them short-term leadership training. This seminar prepared them more formally for ministry and was a success. A year later transformational changes had occurred in their ministry and churches. Churches began to grow in number, and the church initiated more activities. The pastors also began to be identified in their community as leaders, and believers began to newly respect the pastors and see something new in them.

Although successful, the pastoral and leadership training faced many challenges, particularly when conducted by an individual from a different state or group. Language is the greatest challenge for visitors, but that challenge is compounded by differences in culture, food, customs, lifestyle, persecutions, and moral issues (Kumar, 37). In addition, the leaders of the organizations or denominations to which the home pastors belong are not interested in the leadership training. Instead, they are focused on increasing the number of churches rather than the quality of the churches or the qualifications of the pastors or evangelists working with them. Many of these pastors are laymen and otherwise untrained people. It is difficult for them attend a Bible College as they have families and many other responsibilities. Because local believers are more comfortable with a local pastor than one who is stranger to their culture, food, and lifestyle, it is important to conduct Bible studies and leadership training programs in local villages to equip local pastors for the next level of ministry. A need to examine the challenges of existing training and possible strategies for future training in Christian leadership in North India also exists.

Statement of the Problem

India's population is over 1.2 billion and encompasses nearly 5,000 distinct ethnic groups and 1,600 languages. The people come from numerous religious backgrounds, including a Hindu majority that adopts elements of several religions (David). The diversity of religions and ethnicities, as well as the ensuing conflicts among them, makes India a challenging place for Christian evangelism. Training leaders within their own cultural context is difficult, given that there are so many. Hundreds of Christian organizations work in India with the mission to reach the unreached with the Gospel of Christ, but the result is not satisfactory. Organizations are covering village after village with the gospel, but there is no corresponding growth in the percentage of Christianity in India. Many Christian missionary organizations fail to impact groups in different parts of North India. There is a need to prepare local leaders and pastors Biblically and strategically; so that the training and preparation can impact both these leaders and their followers in lasting ways.

Though India received the gospel of Jesus much earlier than many countries through the apostle Thomas, the number of Christians is still less than 3.5 percent of total population. Millions of people in thousands of villages have yet to hear the name of Jesus (Kuriakose, 18). These villages can only be reached through the pastors or missionaries who work in and near the villages. Often these pastors and missionaries are not trained leaders or pastors.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this research was to analyze the challenges to Christian leadership training and develop new strategies for training inadequately trained pastors and church leaders in their local communities by conducting a series of one-day seminars in the District of Durg in Chhattisgarh State in northern India.

Research Questions

This study focused on three specific research questions for Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh:

Research Question # 1 What are the challenges for the Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh?

India is known for its unity in diversity, every state has its own language, culture, and life style. Most of the missionaries work in north India are from southern states. Therefore, language becomes one of the major issues in Christian leadership training. Along with language issue, differences in culture, lifestyle, caste and tribe make more difficulties in training the pastors. Apart from a common language most of the tribes have their own dialects. Most of the villages have no basic amenities like good roads, hospitals, good infrastructure for accommodation, and little or no access to the internet and cell phone services. The Christian status as a religious minority, the anti-conversion bill that has been passed become great challenges for the trainers to conduct any kind of such training openly in these villages. Since most of the villages pastors work daily for their livelihood, and have family responsibilities the leaders have to conduct the training program at their convenience in their own villages.

Research Question # 2 What existing strategies are being used currently for the Christian leadership training?

Pastors in the villages are mostly without proper training or theological education. A few have training in the Bible colleges for six months or for one year. Some of them are without any kind of training relying on the guidance of Holy Spirit for their ministry. However, some Christian organizations conduct leadership trainings in these villages for the pastors. Most of their materials are either in English

or translated from English and therefore, not in Indian context or basically intended for north Indian villages, thus remain ineffective.

Research Question # 3 What new strategies could be more effective for the Christian leadership training?

The new strategies can be, focusing on developing the leadership materials especially for north India, based on the situation, culture, lifestyle and challenges that are prevalent today. Including basic computer education, use of social medias, providing ongoing training, awareness of need of eradicating social barriers such as.

Rationale for the Project

The first reason this study is important is that Indian Christians are proud of their St. Thomas tradition. They claim that India received the gospel before many other Christian countries. The St. Thomas tradition goes back to AD. 53. Almost 1970 years have passed since India received the gospel, but still the Christian population of India is less than 5 percent. The reason is not due to the lack of pastors or missionaries but due to the lack of trained leaders. One must attend to this issue of training the laymen and pastors for the development and growth of the church.

The second reason for this study is that most of the pastors who serve God in the villages are untrained or uneducated. Many are not interested or do not have the resources to go to Bible colleges for training. They have faith and the ability to preach, and they are content with that. These pastors blindly believe that special training is not necessary to be an evangelical pastor. They claim that the guidance of God is enough. Faith and ability cannot be condemned, but their success is not stable. For long lasting results training in ministry is necessary.

The third reason for this study is that most of these pastors and missionaries are unable to go for a long-term bible study or training since they have many

responsibilities that tie them back to their villages. The development of training that conveniently works for the pastors is needed.

The fourth reason that this study is significant is its Scriptural basis. Identifying, developing, and training leaders are essential tasks of leadership illustrated throughout the scriptures. In the Old Testament David trained Solomon, and Moses prepared Joshua as their successors. Naomi also prepared Ruth, and Elijah trained Elisha. Jesus is the best New Testament example as He trained His twelve disciples to carry out the mission. Paul also prepared Timothy and Priscilla and Aquila trained Apollos. Each of these cases involved deliberate, intentional preparation of leaders in obedience to the commandment of God.

Definitions of Key Terms

Caste

Caste is a form of social stratification characterized by endogamy, hereditary transmission of a lifestyle, which often includes an occupation, status in a hierarchy, and customary social interaction and exclusion (Cultural Anthropology).

Casteism

Casteism is one of the rural social problems, which is very peculiar to the Indian society. India is a country of various religions. Each religion is subdivided into different castes and these castes again into sub-castes. The culture of each caste varies though they all belong to one religion. Certain castes are given a high status and others a low status depending upon their caste occupation (Mondal).

Christian Leadership Training

This term here in this title does not mean Christian leadership training for a president, director or chairman of an organization or church or an institution. Here

this term means leadership training for the untrained pastors/leaders or laymen who serve God as pastors, evangelists or missionaries.

Discipleship

Discipleship refers to training the committed Christian to train others to share the gospel of Jesus.

Evangelism

Evangelism is the propagation of gospel through different media such as preaching, sharing, tract distribution, singing, literature, outreach meetings, and house visiting.

Lay Pastor

A lay pastor is a ministering servant of God who does not have any theological training or studies. Normally, a good believer has become a pastor. Just like any other Christians, he is entitled to ministry and gifted by the Holy Spirit.

North India

North India consists of more than 15 states located in the Northern part of India. This study is limited to only one state because the area is too large to include all of the northern states (Learning India).

Sarpanch

A *sarpanch* is a Hindi word, which means an elected head of a village-level statutory institution of local self-government called the *panchayat* (village government) in India (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarpanch>).

Delimitations

This study focused on the challenges and strategies for Christian leadership training in North India, specifically the state of Chhattisgarh. North India consists of more than 15 states. This study could not cover all of the states, as it is difficult to

make an empirical study of the whole area. Therefore, research will be limited to Chhattisgarh, and findings will be generalized to the other North Indian states.



Figure 1:1 Map of India



Figure 1:2 Map of Chhattisgarh

Review of Relevant Literature

The purpose of this project is to analyze challenges and develop appropriate strategies to address Christian leadership training in communicating the gospel in India with specific reference to the state of Chhattisgarh, India. Training the whole people of God, particularly untrained laymen and pastors, to become leaders of future Christianity in India is the most important priority and the primary task of the church of India. This project attempts to call the church in India to take seriously the education of the laity and to reorient both outlook and practice towards the realization that discipleship means actively working with God in the world.

The strategy proposed here is a simple Christian leadership training strategy for communicating the gospel. This participatory style of leadership engages lay leaders in sharing the vision of mission responsibilities, and setting goals, and in planning, implementing, and making decisions for action. This strategy of popular involvement can spread from individuals to groups with great effect.

The church in India has not paid satisfactory attention to the question of its involvement in training lay leaders in India. A great amount of material has been written about leadership education in the churches in the West, but these materials are not available in India where the need is great. The key to the future of Christianity in India depends on the lay leadership. Traditionally, decisions were made -at the top of the church hierarchy and directed down to the laity, but this new strategy stresses the need for a bottom up strategy with decisions for action made at the grass-roots levels. This strategy may be a reversal of traditional strategy of making policies and decisions.

Individual people acting in sufficient numbers and with adequate training and motivation can create the changes needed. Mission is a divine-human imperative.

Each person can share his or her call and help address this local and national Christian leadership crisis. Trust in the dignity, worth, capacity and charisma of the laity is the basis in implementing this strategy. Individuals communicate with one another and can jointly motivate changes needed to implement viable strategies for the future of Christian leadership in India.

Many books that address education, history, evangelism, and missions are available. For leadership development *The Leader Development Resource System*, a total of eight handbooks, and *T4T A Discipleship ReRevolution*, a classic book on leadership training, are primary sources. Another primary source is *Master Builders: Developing Life and Leadership in the Body of Christ Today*, which is a basic resource for training the lay leader and pastor in the local church, published by the OM Books Secunderabad, 2005. The book, *Participation Training for Adult Education*, by Paul Bergevin and John McKinley, also gives insights about training the laymen and pastors. *Towards Involvement: The Theory and Practice of Laity Education*, by D.A Thangasamy, Madras, India is the only book published in India that is available in this area. Other useful books are listed in references.

Research Methodology

Type of Research

This research used not only quantitative research based on the collection of data through questionnaires but also qualitative research that included both participant observations, and interviews. These observations, interviews, and distribution of questionnaires took place in scheduled seminars in ten different places in Durg district of Chhattisgarh.

According to Sensing, qualitative research systematically seeks answers to questions by examining various social setting and the individuals who inhabit those

settings. Qualitative researchers are most interested in how humans arrange themselves and their settings and how inhabitants of these settings make sense of their surroundings through symbols, rituals, social structures, and social roles (Sensing, 57). The quantitative approach assumes that persons have distinctive characteristics such as specific opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that researchers can identify and make appropriate quantifiable measurements (Sensing, 67).

However, in reality, what people say they believe is contrary to what they do. Participant observation is a significant tool for discovering the difference (Sensing, 93). A qualitative approach also assumed that persons have distinctive characteristics, but such characteristics are complex and interwoven in many aspects of the lives of the persons. Qualitative research assumes that any effort to identify and measure any of these characteristics and beliefs separately results, at best, in a superficial understanding. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth understanding (Sensing, 93).

According to Sensing, participant observation is the primary tool used in ethnographic studies of living human beings in their social and cultural contexts. Participant observation allows the researcher to encounter members of the project team who are engaging in the project's activities (93). Primarily, participant-observers use all their senses to ask questions, gather data, and take notes according to a prescribed protocol (93). Sensing says, a researcher may need to train himself and his participants to see the context with new eyes. Finally, with participant observer eyes, a set of events can be scrutinized for the purpose of the project (94).

The other type of research was through interviews. Interviews allow people to describe their situations and put words to their inner lives, personal feelings, opinions and experiences that their researcher will not learn through observations (Sensing,

103). Interviews not only provide a record of interviewees' views and perspectives, but also recognize the legitimacy of their views (103). The interview helps to reveal the feelings, thoughts, and intentions of the participants, which a researcher cannot understand by observing a participant (104). Therefore, to understand and collect the maximum reliable data for the research, I arranged to interview three groups of participants, church leaders, lay pastors and believers.

According to Sensing, A questionnaire is a paper and pencil instrument for doing an interview (113). The questionnaire format should be eye-catching and uncluttered, with plenty of white spaces, it should be clear with readable font and should be with a short statement (118). I prepared the questionnaires with specific intentions to collect data from different groups of people.

Participants

The participants of this research were the residents of Durg district of Chhattisgarh state. It included founders and presidents of Christian organizations and ministries; the principals, deans, registrars and faculty members and staff of Bible colleges and seminaries; and the pastors, laymen, clergy and believers in Durg district. Some were from the urban areas and some were from outskirts of urban cities, but most of them were from the remote, tribal villages. It covered most of the castes, tribes, classes and denominations both men and women in the ministry, including those who were involved in the children and youth ministry.

I interviewed people from three distinct groups. Each group had a slightly different questionnaire. The first group consisted of presidents of organizations, seminary principals, deans, registrars, and faculty members. The second group contained pastors, lay leaders, clergy, missionaries, and elders. The third and final

group was made up of believers and other church members. The questionnaires are furnished in the appendixes.

Instrumentation

Questionnaire was the main instrument used to collect the data related to the challenges for the Christian leadership training and existing strategies of Christian leadership training. I divided the Durg district in to ten divisions and selected ten pastors to work with me in this research. Each were given a division to arrange seminars to distribute the questionnaires and conduct interviews. I attended all the ten seminars and distributed the questionnaires and conducted interviews. Most of the participants returned the questionnaires on the same day. The assigned pastor collected from each division the remaining questionnaires and handed over to me at the given time.

Data Collection

Data related to challenges and strategies for the leadership training was collected by distributing questionnaires, conducting interviews, holding seminars, reading reports, and reviewing church documents. The questionnaires were distributed in the Durg District in the state of Chhattisgarh. The distribution of the questionnaire was according to the random sample model and included all kinds of people involved in the ministry and leadership. The questionnaires were primarily in the Hindi language, but they were translated to Chhattisgarhi and other tribal languages as needed. An English translation of the original questionnaire is included in the Appendix A, B, and C. I distributed the questionnaires to the founders and presidents of Christian organizations and ministries: the principals, deans, registrars and faculty members and staff of Bible colleges and seminaries, and the pastors, laymen, clergies and missionaries in Chhattisgarh. The questionnaires reached all castes and classes

people, both men and women, in the ministry, including those involved with children and youth ministry.

I also conducted interviews with all kinds of people who took part in ministry and leadership training in the state of Chhattisgarh. I recorded the interviews in electronic devices or written documents. With the help of an interpreter I interviewed a few of the founders and presidents of the Christian organizations and ministries; principals, deans, registrars, faculty members and staff of Bible colleges and seminaries; pastors; laypersons; clergy; and missionaries in Chhattisgarh.

According to Sensing, “Data collection is a critical issue for the project” (90). The participant’s angle of vision, an outsider’s angle of vision, and the researcher’s angle of vision provide an intensive gaze upon the effectiveness of the project (90). Sensing suggests that a researcher must ask “What best gathers information that I need for this particular angle of vision” (90). He also says “preparing for data collection requires certain skills” (91).

Sensing suggests when research is conducted in a different ethnographic setting; the researcher should observe people as they engage in their routine activities of worship, meetings, service, fellowship and education(93). A qualitative researcher should assume that there will be multiple perspectives within any given community and the activities of the community (93). Therefore, the researcher should be present in all the ten seminars to observe clearly and collect the maximum reliable data as possible.

Keeping Sensing suggestion in mind, I formed a research team of ten pastors to help collect information. To facilitate the distribution of questionnaires, the team divided the Durg district. I assigned each pastor one of the divisions and asked him to organize a one-day seminar there to include local pastors and select believers from the

area. Each pastor informed local churches of the seminars and invited representatives from each church to participate. They invited three to four participants from each church. Representatives included the church pastor, an elder of the church, a mature believer from the church, a youth that had been born again, and a baptized believer. Each seminar had a minimum of twenty five to thirty participants representing these categories.

The researchers distributed questionnaires during the afternoon session and asked the participants to fill them out and return on the same day. Those participants who were unable to return the questionnaires handed them over later to the assigned pastor of that area.

During the afternoon session while the participants filled out the questionnaires, I conducted interviews. However, not all the seminars had the interviews, because I interviewed only selected participants.

Data Analysis

I based the analysis of the distributed questionnaires according to the responses of the people, the subject matter of the questionnaire, and geography. The changes were noted with the help of a graph, particularly the generation gap, time difference, influence of technology, social media and latest media works.

I analyzed data related to challenges and strategies collected through the interviews according the designation, theological background, ministry experience, geographical area, social situation and cultural background of the participants.

Church documents revealed the challenges faced in the past and the methods used for the leadership training. I analyzed these documents according to the geographical areas and the doctrinal stand point of the churches, as well as the mission and vision of the church. The area of its focus, such as rural or urban mission

was also important for the analysis. I analyzed the documents according to the chronology of their writing.

Generalizability

The findings in this research are primarily applicable to the churches and Christian leadership training in the district of Durg, Chhattisgarh, India. However, the churches and Christian leadership training in other states of North India having the same context and issues may also benefit from the research.

Overview of the Dissertation

The research attempts to develop new strategies for Christian leadership training to improve missionary works in Chhattisgarh, North India by understanding the existing challenges and strategies related to the Christian leadership training.

The second chapter of this research deals with the Biblical and theological perspective of Christian leadership training as well as a bird's eye view of the history of Christianity in India and the formation, population, culture and people of the state of Chhattisgarh.

The third chapter explains the methods used in this study to gather information, distributing questionnaires, conducting interviews, and collecting data from existing documents.

The fourth chapter analyzes the research collected to determine answers to the primary research questions and to reveal the significant findings of the intervention.

The fifth chapter draws major findings of the research, to develop new strategies for Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh and to provide a summary of the research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

First, the chapter deals with the Biblical and theological basis of leadership. The Bible has the records of many leaders whom God has raised for His eternal sovereign plan and purpose. This chapter discusses a few leaders of the Old Testament and New Testament and their leadership training methods.

Second, this chapter situates the research within the context of Northern India by discussing population, cultural, and religious aspects of the people of India. It also discusses the history of Christianity in India and the strength and development of Christian missions in India.

Third, this chapter illustrates the state of Chhattisgarh, where the research was carried out. The formation of the state, population, culture and people of the land is provided. This state was a part of Madhya Pradesh until 2001. Therefore, Christianity in this state evolved along with Christianity in Madhya Pradesh. It is discussed briefly in this chapter.

Fourth, this chapter ends by analyzing the need for Christian leadership training in India and in Chhattisgarh, as well as some of the challenges it faces. More such challenges will be discussed in the third chapter.

Biblical Foundations of Leadership Training

Leadership training is indispensable for a successful church and the expansion of God's kingdom. There are numerous examples of leadership training and development throughout the Bible. Christendom can be characterized as a massive learning community within which leadership is a critical element. The instructor is Jesus Himself, and the co-instructor is the Holy Spirit who coordinates the learning

cooperative though a virtual learning strategy that predates any current distance-learning format. The curriculum consists of Holy divine inspiration, supportive fellowship, and the natural expressions of the Creator. The preferred learning strategies are those that Jesus models in His ministry: experiential learning, small-group formats, and higher-order thinking. These are essentially all of the examples of applied learning.

Old Testament Examples

God as great leader.

In the beginning, God repeatedly provided a model of divine leadership that reflected His character, and humankind repeatedly rejected the model. God sent His Son to demonstrate His model in person. Humankind rejected it once again. God has once more presented the model, this time through the church.

The Bible opens with the leadership skills of God. God demonstrated His leadership by vesting the leadership quality to Adam and Eve. God commanded Adam to have dominion over the earth and to subdue it. This fact is the basis for His apostolic leadership. Adam had ultimate authority over the newly created universe as the first leader of the universe:

Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth'. (Genesis 1: 26).

Adam was given the divine instruction and authority to lead the entire universe according to the plan and purpose of the world, where sin was not yet revealed. God gave a kind of training and instruction before He handed over the garden to Adam. The presence of Satan in the garden is the evidence that the Garden of Eden was under attack. Today the churches are still under this attack with Satan trying to influence and entice. Therefore, the leaders are in a great need of training. To keep the

garden is key in leadership, as a keeper of the garden Adam was its steward or manager. The Hebrew word keep is *shawmar* meaning to hedge about, protect, and take heed to self. The failure of Adam as a leader paved way for the depravity of humanity (Kenyon, 10). The Bible says God raised another leader called Noah, with different a plan to save the people and produce a group of godly people on the earth. We see the instructions of God to Noah in Genesis 6 to 8. God gave the same command that God gave to Adam to Noah. “So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth’” (Gen. 9:1).

Clayton King says,

But there was only one real leader that Israel trusted. It was the Lord. Of all the lords that had ruled over the house of Jacob, only God was worthy of honor.... God is the standard for leadership. Not because He has written books on the subject or built successful systems or organizations, but because His love and faithfulness never failed His people (King)

Abraham.

The story of Abraham represents one of the earliest records of leadership in the Bible. Abraham’s leadership begins with an act of faith, which will bless all families of the earth (Gen. 12). Throughout the centuries of Christian theological development, Abraham stands as a pivotal symbol of leadership that is both faithful and fruitful. Much of the New Testament theology is an interpretation of the meaning of Abraham’s faith and leadership. It is understood that Abraham also trained his men to be faithful and responsible in matters. Throughout his life, he trained his people to become leaders. Genesis chapter twenty-four verse two says that “Eliezer, the servant of Abraham was the ruler over all that Abraham had.”The experience of Abraham shows that leadership on the high plane of faith involves risk and is not merely an intellectual assent to a proposition.

Abraham was a leader with a vision, about a promised land. “This vision, passed on from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob and to Jacob’s children, sustained the Israelites through a bitter servitude lasting many decades” (Friedman.89).

According to Ellen F. Davis, “Abraham acts as a leader in three moments in the story of Genesis: his blessings, his intercession on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah, and his willingness to sacrifice his son” (Byassee). Hershey H. Friedman says,

“Abraham had the ultimate divine gift, *Kharisma*, since God assured him that ‘I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse’ (Gen. 12:3). Moreover, almost four thousand years after his death, he is still a role model for billions of people. His burial place, the cave of Machpelah in Hebron, is a holy place that is visited by hundreds of individuals every day” (90).

Moses.

The Bible assigns a high status to courageous, visionary leaders who offer themselves as agents of God’s mission. In the case of Moses, God’s mission was liberation. Moses had a religious experience on Mount Horeb that sanctified him as a leader of God’s people to take them from slavery to freedom. In the burning-bush story a situation of exploitation and injustice already existed, and God told Moses that He was taking sides with oppressed Hebrews against the Egyptian establishment. The burning bush contract introduced a revolutionary quality into the leadership model Moses represents. Through Moses’ leadership a new social and spiritual community emerged to match the vision of God’s freedom (F. E.Harris).

God called Moses to spiritual leadership as a liberator with prophetic and redemptive hope for the children of Israel. One of the burdens of religious leadership is consistent ethical and theological guidance. Through the revelation of God, Moses received the Ten Commandments and made them the ethical and theological mandate of the Hebrew community.

God told Moses to raise up leaders of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens (Exod. 18:21). After Israel left Egypt, a select group of elders were chosen and trained by Moses to serve the flock of Israel. Numbers 11:16-17 tells us that God commanded Moses to instruct and train them to take care of the people of Israel during their wilderness journey:

So the LORD said to Moses: “Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tabernacle of meeting, that they may stand there with you. Then I will come down and talk with you there. I will take of the Spirit that is upon you and will put the same upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone. Then you shall say to the people, ‘Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the hearing of the LORD, saying, “Who will give us meat to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt.” Therefore the LORD will give you meat, and you shall eat. You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, but for a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you, because you have despised the LORD who is among you, and have wept before Him, saying, ‘Why did we ever come up out of Egypt?’” (Num. 11:16-20).

These seventy men joined Moses in leading Israel, and Moses began to train these people as leaders for the people of Israel. The role of these elders continued after Moses through the time of Joshua.

The Old Testament teaches us very clearly that Moses had a great training program throughout the wilderness journey. He had been training Joshua for almost forty years to be the next leader of the people of Israel, to take the people of Israel to the Promised Land, and to distribute the land to the people. In Joshua 1:1 we see a statement of God to Joshua, the assistant of Moses, “After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ assistant”. From the book of Joshua it is clear that Moses had been teaching the laws and the commandments of God to Joshua during this training period. As soon

as Moses died, God appeared to Joshua and reminded him not to forget the law and commandment that Moses had taught him. We read in Joshua 1: 2-9:

Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

The Bible teaches that Joshua became a successful leader of the people of Israel due to the training of Moses. At the beginning he was young, untrained, and spiritually immature, but Moses' effective leadership and influence made him a successful leader.

Mark D. Harris says,

Moses was a good example of administrative leadership. He taught conflict resolution in many ways... He was first able to avoid becoming defensive during the conflict... Delegating decision to others helped Moses excuse himself from conflicts that he did not need to be involved in, but the biggest and most important conflicts were for him to handle. He was man of great character, having spent many a long night with his sheep studying at the feet of God... Moses had a long term commitment, first to the Lord and second to His people. (Harris).

Samuel.

The book of First Samuel speaks of Eli who trained Samuel to be a great leader of the people of Israel and acted as King, Priest and Prophet for the people of Israel. I Samuel 3:19 -20: “so Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all the Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel had been established as a prophet of the Lord.” Saul, the first king of Israel, was a tragic figure whose leadership collapsed in failure because of jealousy and insecurity. Saul’s leadership emerged in a transitional period between the end of an old order of tribal leadership and the beginning of a new order of leadership under the Judges and the monarchy of kings. Saul was a weak leader because he sought to lead out of his small carnal package of vision. He was unwilling to train the people to carry out responsibilities after him(Clemons, 12).

God acknowledges and accredits Samuel as a true prophet. The Lord sees to it that every one of Samuel’s prophecies is fulfilled. With Samuel, God establishes the office of prophet to function alongside priest and eventually king. Samuel is recognized as the first of a long line of servants of God about whom Peter says in Acts 3:24 “Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days” (NKJV) (Clemons, 12).

According to Geoffrey P. Miller, Samuel’s leadership contrasts with that of prior leaders of the Israelite confederacy. He had been devoted to the priesthood from early childhood and was inspired by nothing other than religious fervor. He is the recipient of genuine revelation. He speaks with God frequently and regularly consults him on matters of public importance. Samuel’s call to leadership was different from that of other judges. In his case the people did not cry out to God to rescue them from worldly oppression (G. Miller, 11). “Samuel’s defense of the people was religious

rather than military in nature. He did not defeat the Philistines through valor in battle but rather by devoting a burnt offering to the Lord (1 Sam 7:9-10). Samuel, in short, was a true theocratic leader -- the first after the settlement of the Promised Land who enjoys a legitimate commission to act in this capacity” (G. Miller, 12).

David.

God raised David up to be a leader of his people. David ascended to the throne when he was thirty years old. His reign lasted for forty years total. According to the Bible he was a leader after God’s own heart who placed his faith in God even in the midst of difficult times. David was a human who erred, but his humility allowed him to subject himself to God’s judgment. This humility was deeply rooted in David’s spirituality, as evidenced in his Psalms. David was well liked by men and women. He was also very artistic. The Scriptures demonstrate this quality in David

(Brueggemann, 14), as written by Luke in Acts 13:21-22:

And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, “I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.

David is the biblical example of a growing leader. The growing leader is one who is constantly seeking personal growth rather than attaining a high level of competence and not trying to improve further. David gained fame with his defeat of Goliath and became a leader of soldiers in Saul’s army. Events beyond his control forced David to become the leader of a group of soldiers that became his private army as he sought refuge from Saul (Towns, 34). Growth requires change. Growth as a leader increases one’s effectiveness as a leader. According to Maxwell’s “Law of the Lid, an organization can only rise to the level of its leadership. If a person has a strong leadership quality then the organization will have high potential. The effectiveness of

an organization and individuals is based on the strength of leadership” (Maxwell, 28). God trained David by giving him an opportunity to serve Saul in his palace. God had placed David in a situation where he could observe a leader who refused to grow. Saul was a failed leader and David had the opportunity to learn from Saul’s negative leadership model. David saw Saul’s refusal to yield completely to God. This refusal resulted in Saul being troubled by an evil spirit and could only be alleviated by David’s music. Later, David would see the damage that Saul’s wounded pride would do as Saul grew more jealous of David’s successes. David’s leadership is a mixture of public responsibility and power, personal temptation and deception. The time David spent with Saul was a leadership training center in which David learned what not to do to be a good leader(F. Harris).

David seized opportunities and showed a willingness to serve in battle and victory over Goliath. He showed a character that Saul did not possess. Victory over Goliath was the beginning of David’s success as a leader. His continued success gave him a strong reputation and popularity among the people, which increased his influence. David also worked to strengthen his relationship and influence with his followers, which was another mark of his leadership. The experience in the wilderness led to David’s growth as leader as he learned to grow in spite of circumstances (F. Harris).

Solomon.

Solomon was the third monarch of the kingdom of Israel, the wisest king who ever ruled Israel, and a great leader. He sought personal wisdom and knowledge for his leadership (1Kings 3). Soon after Solomon was appointed King of Israel, the Lord God almighty appeared to him in a dream and promised to give the young king whatever he asked for. In response to God’s promise, Solomon asked for the wisdom

to effectively lead the people of Israel (Roach). The Bible also says that he recruited wise counsellors for advice in all matters of the business or organization Proverbs 24:6.

“The history of King Solomon shows the skills of a great leader. As one studies the life of this leader, there are skills that are revealed. Solomon was an organizer, an administrator, a builder, an entrepreneur, a diplomat, a merchant, a visionary, a dreamer and a wise man” (Roach). “One of the true signs of a healthy leader can be seen in the way they can organize those who are under their leadership. The Old Testament book of 1st Kings shows how Solomon recruited a core group of leaders to help develop his kingdom” (Roach).

“Solomon had the ability to take something old and create something new. During the fourth year of his reign as King, Solomon started to build the a Temple. This temple project began 480 years after the people of Israel were freed from their Egyptian bondage (1 Kings 6:1)” (Roach).

Good leaders are not afraid to hire people who know more than them. Good leaders are active listeners who are humble and willing to be trained by other people. They also look for a training to be effective in their leadership. As a great and effective leader Solomon gave importance to vision to guide the people. Solomon wrote “Where there is no vision people perish; but he that keeps the law, happy is he.” Prov. 29:18. Effective leaders inspire and lead through a compelling vision.

Nehemiah.

According to Forrest E. Harris,

Nehemiah is a model of leadership for reconstruction. Nehemiah had a compelling social vision for rebuilding the people of God. Babylonian exile demoralized Judah. Jerusalem was made a wasteland. Survivors of the destruction of Jerusalem deeply lamented over the loss of the temple and Judah’s national identity. Nehemiah grieves over the conditions of Jerusalem. The values and experience honed by years in exile presented Nehemiah with a

rebuilding task. Rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and rebuilding the people's confidence and faith in the purpose of God were formidable projects. Nehemiah performed both projects well. Nehemiah's vision of reconstruction was practical, resourceful, and transformational.

He met opposition from the people for his leadership and work, but he did not give up. Today India needs such bold leaders to train the next generation in the midst of opposition and persecution. Self-determined leaders are able to remain focused despite many distractions. Nehemiah's model of leadership reveals that the longing for reconstruction comes from grief that rises from looking out over the city with a vision of newness.

The passion that Nehemiah had for his people and the mission of God made him a great leader. The passion of Nehemiah is seen in Nehemiah 1:3-4:

The remnants that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach; the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days, I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

Nehemiah was a visionary; he could see what needed to be done and had the vision to see the task through. Nehemiah was selfless; he cared more for his people in Jerusalem than he did himself. He was willing to leave the position of cupbearer to help the people rebuild the city walls. Nehemiah was dedicated; when Sanballat and Geshem, the Nemeses of Jerusalem, came calling he remained focused and did not let Sanballat and Geshem deter the work (Shockley).

Ezekiel.

Ezekiel's life is a best example for prophetic leadership. He was a prophet and priest who lived during the time of spiritual and moral decline of Judah. The destruction of Judah placed the people in exile for seventy years. Ezekiel describes the condition of the exiles as being like "a valley of dry bones" (37:1-11). God asked

Ezekiel to make the people aware of God's plan and ultimate purpose through this destruction. This was not easy leadership. From the perspective of the exiles, a future of recovery was hopeless. Ezekiel's leadership bears witness to the fact that God is not defeated by the wretchedness of human beings and can use that wretchedness to work out glorious purpose (F. Harris). Ezekiel's courageous leadership and preaching teaches us that hope is the very dynamic force of history.

F. Harris says,

It is the energy of transformation, the engine of change, and the door from one reality to another. Ezekiel was an agent of hope who empowered people to imagine change, new possibilities, and opportunities to return to the dream of God. Ezekiel teaches that leaders who serve God's purpose must be prepared to provide leadership that may seem nonsensical, illogical and unreasonable but nonetheless is possible, reasonable and understandable as the God's will.

New Testament

Jesus and leadership

Jesus spent most of his time in ministry training a small group of future leaders rather than an army of foot soldiers. He knew the future of the church depended on the quality of its leadership. He trained twelve and had 120 in the upper room. He may have seemed like a failure, hanging on the cross with His own disciples deserting him. His three and a half years of ministry only produced a dozen trained men. However, Jesus knew He had the winning formula for success. As the years passed by His trained disciples produced tens of thousands of believers. Sadly, many pastors have chased after numbers, rather than emulating Jesus by choosing, raising, and training leaders.

Jesus acted as a preacher, theologian, and teacher. His teaching conveyed the true meaning of community, love, and the righteousness of God. The model of Jesus' leadership was that of a pastoral theologian committed to the realization of divine justice for God's entire creation. His commitment was to the weak and marginal. Jesus proclaimed the Sermon on the Mount as the ethical and spiritual foundation of the future leaders who committed their lives for the God's kingdom. Jesus imbued the disciples with the vision of God's reign, a

vision that brought him into conflict with the kingdoms of the world. Jesus' leadership was liberating, redemptive, prophetic, transforming, and salvific. The leadership of Jesus cost Him crucifixion but won for the world the salvation of God.

Christian leadership is motivated by emulating Jesus Christ because He is the consummate servant leader. Believers must also have a holy calling from Him to serve as a leader and embody the core competencies that every leader must possess. (Gregory, 53).

Jesus teaches us many things about authentic spiritual leadership; kingdom priorities must come first in the life of a leader. Servant leadership brings hope transformation to life. Suffering has merit when done to fulfill God's purpose. Leaders must teach and theologize with integrity by being true to the context of the community that they serve (F.E. Harris).

Olivier Rigaud says,

The first, primordial, and essential way to Christian leadership position is the way of the cross. Too often Christians desire power without weakness, glory without humiliation, honor without shame, life without death, in short the Pentecost without the cross of Christ, the Spirit of Christ without crucifixion of the flesh. The servant leader framework well represents this spiritual dynamic. Jesus was a servant and a leader. He learned as a servant, humility, and obedience until the cross but was also a great and powerful leader recognized by all Israel (Rigaud 32).

Manz sees in Jesus' approach "a uniquely constructive and compassionate approach to leadership based on positive spiritual principles and important concepts such as soul, service, and servant leadership" (ix-x). Adair notes that "leadership is a journey, which started in Jesus' experience at His baptism with the call of His Father and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, from this experience, Jesus became a great leader, healing people, casting out demons, performing great miracles, teaching and manifesting the kingdom of God" (92). "Many readers see in Jesus a perfect model of a spiritual leader. He had a clear vision of its mission, a strong sense of purpose; he was courageous, persistent, and consistent" (Rigaud, 43).

Apostle Paul as a Leader.

Paul was a good leadership trainer. He always had someone with him that he was training in his journey and ministry (Acts 16). In his letters Paul calls the leaders together to remind them about his example of leadership training and exhort them to learn from his leadership, “Therefore I urge you, imitate me” (1Cor. 4:16), “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ” (1Cor. 11:1). In the epistle of Ephesians Paul calls for the leaders of the Ephesian church to give them final instructions about leadership because he knows this will be the last time he will see them and be able to exhort them in prison. This speech by Paul is intended as a guide for the future conduct of the Christian leaders or elders in Ephesus (Eph. 5: 1- 6: 24).

Paul establishes standards for beneficial conduct for leaders. He is a model for leaders working as a servant, not for self-aggrandizement. After Jesus, Paul is the best example of effective leadership training. His specific advice shows elders how to shepherd their own flock through the unconventional wisdom of Jesus: giving and serving with no thought of return. These instructions include servant and shepherd leadership and a giving of self. He reminded them that it was the Holy Spirit that made them overseers and that they were to continue to shepherd because they had been made overseers to the flock of God. The example of the shepherd encouraged the audience of future leaders that this was a continuing ministry. Paul is preparing future leaders that they must lead without his help and follow his example. “Imitation was at the heart of ancient education; the rhetoric of imitation was deliberative in character” (Bruce, 687).

Paul setting himself forth as the example of a leader to imitate was not incidental; it was the point of his direction to the Ephesian leaders and elders. Even

Paul's special relation to God shines through this text as he serves the Lord with humility. In this speech Paul reminds the leaders of Ephesus how he has served them in humility, led them as a shepherd, and connected with God in the ministry or call he received. "This subjective aspect of Paul's relationship with the Lord is a part of the example in leading. Before he leaves, he commends them to God and the word of His grace. This is not idle talk; he is trusting in their relationship with God to continue to provide grace and growth for them as they lead the flock just like it did for him" (Bruce, 688).

Paul sets his model for leadership in Acts 20, and this model includes the subjective aspect of his connection or special relation to God, as well as humility. He instructs them in objective ways of leading willingly, not selfishly, invoking Jesus' word: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). He emphasizes the cultural aspect of leadership and draws on their common understanding of leading as a shepherd of the flock of God. He also includes the call of God, emphasizing that his directive for ministry was received from the Lord Jesus, which he had zealously fulfilled.

Peter also instructs the leaders in this form of shepherd leadership with this example from I Peter 5:

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the suffering of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;. nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away (1 Peter 5;1-4).

Another example is found in the text in Acts 26. Paul is before King Agrippa defending some of his recent actions. In his defense, he only brings one factor to the court for his hearing: the story of his call from God to leadership.

The story has four stages. First is the journey to Damascus, and second is the encounter with Jesus. The third and largest section is Paul's detailed description of the call from God to leadership and training the leaders, and the fourth stage is Paul's connection between the call of God and his present actions. This is the third time in the book of Acts that Paul's call is detailed. Luke is a rhetorical historian who repeats this narrative three times to emphasize its importance. This was a crucial event for Paul for his conversion and call to a certain aspect of leadership (Bruce, 689).

This event was also crucial to the birthing of the early church. Paul's leadership was not just important to him; it was important to those whom he would lead. Although it was primarily a subjective experience for Paul, it also had a social, cultural, and religious impact on his community of faith and on the world.

Theological Foundations

Leadership is a gift from God. It is among the spiritual gifts listed in Scripture: If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously (Romans 12:8). Preceding that thought, the Bible says, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well (Romans 12:6). This suggests that some people have leadership abilities but others don't. Morgan says, "We are all followers, but not all of us are leaders. Although everyone can learn leadership skills, not everyone is gifted to be a leader. One of the first questions you need to answer is this: Am I really a leader?" (Morgan, 5). God has designed the church to have clear leadership roles and structure, Paul says, "the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11). Morgan also says that, "We all need to wrestle without theology of leadership because God has gifted some to be leaders. Not only has He defined leadership roles in the church, He has also expressly defined how leaders are supposed to act" (5).

Paul described the responsibility of leaders in the church this way: “Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do His work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ” (Eph. 4:12-13). According to Morgan, leadership is less about the leader and more about those being led. Our role as leaders is “to equip God’s people to do His work. The leader does not do the work- God’s people do His work. God’s people do not do the leader’s work, they do God’s work” (9).

“Leadership is less about the words or actions of the leader and more about the character of the leader” (Morgan, 11).

According to Sanders,

True greatness, true leadership, is found in giving yourself in service to others, not in coaxing or inducing others to serve you. True service is never without cost. Often it comes with a painful baptism of suffering. But the true spiritual leader is focused on the service he and she can render to God and other people, not on the residuals and perks of high office or holy title. We must aim to put more into life than we take out (Sanders 1994,15).

True leaders should know their God (Eph. 4:4-6), and know that God has put His hand upon their life and that He is committed to them (Rom. 8:28). Know that God is not going to give upon them (Rom. 9:20). They are not supposed to live as masters of their own destiny, purpose, role or identity, but rather live to serve the will of God (Eph. 2:10).

Paul urges Timothy to be teacher of teachers, “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:1-2). God wants us to be a part of an ongoing ministry, as a leader to equip other leaders, who in turn will equip others who are able to equip others. It is a process that will exist till the coming of God.

India: The Land and Its People

The nation of India has many challenges. It is one of the most ancient parts of the world but is also considered a developing nation with a population of 1.25 billion. In addition, every month a million babies are born and added to the population. This population explosion is the nation's number one enemy and national problem. The country's geographical location close to the equator makes it climatically a tragic area. Natural calamities such as floods, heavy rain, drought, and famine have been common phenomena for ages. India is like the tower of Babel; hundreds of dialects and languages are spoken. Children learn school subjects in three different languages simultaneously. Hindi has become the national official language, and English is second official and a foreign language. India is also an impoverished nation. People are becoming more urban than rural. In the villages of India, the industrial revolution has not brought radical changes from the traditional, cultural, and religious customs and beliefs.

The land, India, is a biblical fact. In Esther 1:1 and 8:9, one can see that India was included in the empire that Ahasuerus ruled:

Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus (this was the Asasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia, over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces) (Esther 1:1).

So the King's scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third day; and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews, the satraps, the governors, and the princes of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces in all, to every province in its own script, to every people in their own language (Esther 8:9)

It is a land of diversity and yet in spite of its diversity in culture, language, and religion the unity it maintains is a remarkable phenomenon. India is called, "The Mother of Religions." A number of the world's important living religions have either originated in India or become domiciled here. The Indian people are not of a single

homogeneous stock. They are a heterogeneous mass, made up of a racially conglomerate people differing widely in ethnic origins, languages, customs, beliefs, and ways of life. The Indian way of life is heavily influenced by religious philosophies and superstitions.

A History of Christianity in India

Early Christianity in India

Christianity in India has its origin from the first century A.D. The legendary tradition ascribes it to St. Thomas, one of the disciples of Jesus, who arrived at Crangannore in A.D. 52. Scholars are divided on the authenticity of this historical claim of the Syrian Christians of South India. "A Syriac work, believed to be of the 4th century gives a vivid description of the work of the Apostle Thomas in the kingdom of Gundaphoros, a king who ruled in northwestern India. Jerome (4th Century A.D.), Gregory of Tours (6th Century) and several others have references to the Apostle Thomas and his work in India" (P. Thomas, *Christians and Christianity*, 10). Some scholars question the validity of St. Thomas tradition:

The Christian community in Southwest India existed from probably the end of the second century or the beginning of the third century, although historical evidences of its existence as an established community, can be obtained from no earlier than the sixth century A.D. Traditionally, however, claim has been made for its existence from A.D 52, when St. Thomas who believed to have come to Malabar (Kerala). The tradition developed probably around the tenth century of the apocryphal Acts of Judas Thomas. The Christian community until the seventeenth century A.D. was composed of descendants of Christian immigrants (traders) from Persia and east Syria, and converts from Nambuthiri (Brahman) and Nayar communities. The converts from Hinduism continued in their religious and social practices with certain modifications to accommodate the beliefs and practices of immigrant Christians. But after their total assimilation of immigrant Christians, the Christian community was Hinduized for all practical purposes (Varghese, 111).

Kenneth Scott Latourett writes: "It is probable that in the fourth and fifth centuries Christians were to be found in India and Ceylon. Between 950-1350, there

were strong churches in India. Converts were made in central Asia and China and strong churches existed in India” (401).

By the advent of the Portuguese there was a large increase in the members of churches in India. Their arrival during the fourteenth century in India is one of the turning points in the history and growth of Christianity in India. Both Romanism and the rise of Portuguese power influenced Indian Christianity. The Portuguese even used their political power upon the Syrian Christians of Kerala (P. Thomas, *Christians and Christianity*,17).

The eighteenth century can be considered one of the best centuries for Europeans, economically and politically. Their invasion and adventures in India brought the collapse of the Moghul empire and established their colonialism in India. However, there was not much favor shown to missionaries or mission work in India. The British East India company was purely interested in commerce and profit and did not encourage missionary activities (P. Thomas, *Christians and Christianity* 17-18).

Emergence of Protestant Missions

Further invasion and colonization of India led to the further spread of Christianity.

The invasion of the Portuguese, then the Dutch, was followed by the East India Company in 1600. By 1751, a large part of India came under the rule of the British government. During the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, Roman Catholic priests were widely spread throughout India. In the early part of the eighteenth century, Protestant missionaries came in and established their missions. Missionaries from America, Europe, and Britain came, and Christianity in India became widely spread through the growing British Empire (Latourette, 1031).

In 1793 William Carey from the Baptist missionary Society sailed for India and settled in Serampore, a Danish possession near Calcutta. There he joined with Marshman and Ward, and they translated and printed the Bible into several of the languages of India and the East Asia, including Chinese, and founded a school for the training of India Christians (Latourette, 1033).

During the years from 1751-1947, when British rule was effective in India, Christianity made remarkable progress, even though the East India Company and the British government were not specifically interested in spreading Christianity. After 1914, there was a striking growth of Christianity in India (Latourette, 1033).

Ultimately Indian independence spread Christianity further through the nation. In 1947, India became a politically free nation, and, with the new constitution in 1950, India became a Sovereign Democratic Republic. Political freedom brought more religious freedom and both missionaries and national leaders intensified their religious activities (Latourette, 1034-5). Furthermore, Lawson reports that in 1599, “Catholic authorities in southern India sought to absorb the ancient Syrian-founded churches of the region, the Thomas Christians” (Lawson, 148). Aleixo de Menezes, the archbishop leading the operation, led a powerful campaign to achieve his goal, but the St. Thomas Christians refused to abandon their sovereignty (Lawson, 148). According to Lawson, “In Indian Christian memory, de Menezes remains a villainous symbol of European imperialism” (Lawson, 148). The unique identity of these St. Thomas Christians was a source of pride and devotion to those who described themselves as such.

Today Christianity is widespread in India although though it can be difficult to quantify. In 2001, there were 24,080,016 reported Christians living in India (indiaonlinepages.com). However, this number may not tell the whole story. Lawson, postulates, “All observers recognize that the government figure for Christians is too low” (Lawson, 83). He believes that these statistics are manipulated because of “the government’s vested interest in denying the power of ‘foreign’ faiths, especially those that appeal chiefly to those of low or no caste” (Lawson, 83). Instead of these formal statistics, Lawson, turns to the World Christian Encyclopaedia which estimated the

population of Indian Christians in 2000, to be 62 million people, or about 6 percent of the nation (Lawson, 83). The author also suggests that by 2025, India will boast up to 100 million Christians (Lawson, 83). However, Lawson also reports that “Indian Christian observers opt for figures between the two extremes, suggesting perhaps 40 million believers in India today, or 3.7 percent of the total population” (Lawson, 83). Regardless of the absolute numbers, it is undeniable that this large Christian population is growing each year.

Chhattisgarh

The new state of Chhattisgarh came into existence on November of 2000. It was carved out of the eastern part of Madhya Pradesh. At the time of the 1991 census when still a part of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh comprised only seven districts; by the 2001 census it had sixteen districts, ninety-seven Taluks, 146 blocks, 20378 villages, and ninety-seven urban centers. (Larson, 12). This encompasses an area of 83,847 square miles. According to the 2001 Census of India, Chhattisgarh’s roughly twenty-one million residents live in and around twenty thousand villages and towns, and 80 percent of the population lives in rural areas (Office of the Registrar General, Census of India, 2011).

The city of Raipur is the capital of Chhattisgarh. It is centrally located and the fastest growing large city with a population of three million. The 1901 census reports that 95 percent of the region’s inhabitants spoke a dialect called Chhattisgarhi, a dialect of Eastern Hindi (along with Awadhi and Begheli), as their mother tongue. By the 1961 census that number had decreased to 65 percent Hindi having become more popular in the urban areas (Flueckiger, 7). Though Hindi is on the rise, English has yet to become a popular language in the state. As recently as 2003, less than one-fifth of the Chief Minister’s cabinet members were fluent in English (Times News

Network). “Chhattisgarhi is a language raised in the dust and soil of a farmer’s life, a language of earthy idioms, lurid abuses, and evocative imagery. To those who speak it fluently, it is a language of pride and belonging” (Bauman, 8).

Population by religious communities				
State / UT	Religious Communities	Persons	Males	Females
Chhattisgarh	All Religious Communities	20,833,803	10,474,218	10,359,585
Chhattisgarh	Hindu	19,729,670	9,915,670	9,814,000
Chhattisgarh	Muslim	409,615	210,829	198,786
Chhattisgarh	Christian	401,035	198,471	202,564
Chhattisgarh	Sikh	69,621	36,662	32,959
Chhattisgarh	Buddhist	65,267	32,444	32,823
Chhattisgarh	Jain	56,103	29,186	26,917
Chhattisgarh	Other Religious Communities	95,187	47,255	47,932

Figure 2:1 Chhattisgarh Population by Religious Communities

(http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001)

Chhattisgarh has long been recognized as a distinct region with a certain geographic, linguistic, ethnic, and historical integrity. This land is blessed with large and fertile crop-producing soil. The plain of Chhattisgarh is watered by the Mahanadi, Son, and Seonath river basins and is surrounded by several forest-covered hilly tracts: The Satpura Hills and the Maikala Range in the west, the Sonpar Hills and Chotanagpur Plateau in the north, and the Bastar and Albaka Hills in the south. These mountainous areas forbid easy transportation and have sheltered the region from commerce with the outside world. A large part of the state is still accessible only by oxcart, foot, or hardy motorcycle.

Such physical isolation has resulted in the development of distinct Chhattisgarhi folkways. Chhattisgarh is not, however, an ethnographic monolith.

Until more recent urbanization, the peoples of Chhattisgarh could be roughly divided into the “Hindus” of the plains and the “jungly” (Scheduled Tribes) “Adivasi” (“original inhabitant”) communities of the hills, which were less fully integrated into the Hindu caste system (Babb,11). Chhattisgarh is known for its Scheduled Tribes and Caste population. Nearly two-thirds of the Scheduled Castes and a large majority of undivided Madhya Pradesh’s Adivasi communities were found in the region (Lamb, 12). Due to these demographics and its geographic inaccessibility, Chhattisgarh is perceived by outsiders to be a refuge for miscreants and Corybants. References to the state in conversations with modernized Indians often provoke comment on its “backwardness” and unflattering comparisons to Bihar. Because of their sheer numerical strength, and the absence of a large high-caste population, among caste Hindus, Sudras predominate. Chhattisgarh’s low castes have been able to contest their domination by high castes in a variety of ways, and in many villages they are in fact the dominant caste, statistically and otherwise. Much of the population is rural and the economy is largely agricultural (Lamb,12). Until the end of the first millennium, the region was known as Dakshin (south) Kosala, and governed by a series of monarchic dynasties, among them the Gupta (Wolpert, 88).

The Origin of Christianity in Chhattisgarh

It is difficult to trace the origin of Christianity in Chhattisgarh since as a state it is only 14 years old, and before then it was part of Madhya Pradesh. The origin of Christianity in Chhattisgarh goes back to the 19th century with the arrival of foreign missionaries. In 1866 the German Evangelical Mission Society, founded by pastors from six denominations in New Jersey, commissioned Rev. Oscar Lohr to India. Rev. Oscar Lohr, a German immigrant to America, had previously been assigned to the

Gossner Missionary in Chota Nagpur. He abandoned that post due to the Indian Mutiny.

Rev. Oscar Lohr arrived in India in 1868 with his family and soon attended a Bombay missionary conference where he met Rev. J.G. Cooper, of the Free Church of Scotland in Nagpur (Seybold, 13-17). From there Lohr went first to Nagpur and then on to Raipur. He remained for some time in Raipur, laying the foundation for his work. He had a very good reception there and was advised by some of his English friends to start a school for the local people to nurture church leadership. One of the major local groups he met was called *Satnamis*, on the occasion of the annual *Satnami guru puja* (*Guru* means, a religious teacher and spiritual guide in Hinduism and *Pooja* generally means Worship or Prayer or Devotion, is of Indian origin. Therefore, *guru pooja* means, ceremony of expressing gratitude towards the religious leader or spiritual guide) and pilgrimage held during the Hindu festival of *Dussehra*. (or dussehra is a major Hindu festival celebrated at the end of Navratri every year, in the northern, southern and western states).

Lohr also traveled to Bhandar, headquarters of the Satnampath, a North Indian *dalit* (Hindu sectarian community) founded by an illiterate *Chamar*, Guru Ghasidas, in the early nineteenth century. Ghasidas' message was similar to that of many Hindu reformers who had come before him. He told his followers to abandon the worship of images, to devote themselves entirely to the one and only deity (whom he called *Satnam*, that is, the True Name), to avoid eating meat, and to reject the use of brahmans as religious functionaries. The Guru's following grew, slowly at first, but by his death in 1850 he claimed a quarter of a million disciples, and by the century's end nearly all members of the *Chamar* caste in Chhattisgarh had joined his *panth* (a community of followers) (Seybold,19).

In 1868, eighteen years after Ghasidas' death, the first western missionaries arrived in Raipur and later set up camp nearby in Bishrampur. In 1895, Disciples of Christ missionaries would join them, working outwards from the town of Bilaspur. Hearing from an unknown source that a *Satnami* guru had prophesied their coming, these missionaries came to expect that all *Satnamis* would soon become Christians. Only a small percentage of people did convert, but the great majority of today's Christians in this area can trace their ancestry to the *Satnampanth* (Seybold, 19).

Colonel Balmain, who was "burdened with the spiritual destitution of the *Chamars*, that of the *Satnami* sect in particular," soon facilitated and helped finance Lohr's purchase of a tract of land north of Raipur, just off the Raipur-Bilaspur road (Melick, 49). The land, locally referred to as "The Tiger Hole," was in a forested area infested by wild animals. One of these tigers would eventually kill Lohr's son. Lohr named the land *Bishrampur* (City of Rest) in 1870. In the meantime, Lohr had also purchased the village of Ganeshpur, which adjoined the property. Lohr himself became *malguar* (leader) of the two villages, meaning that within them he had proprietary rights over the distribution and use of land and a responsibility to determine and collect taxes.

At Christmas in 1868, Lohr held a service in Bishrampur with both British officials and almost one thousand local people attended. However, this period of goodwill ended abruptly the next week when Lohr conducted his first baptisms. During the ceremony, Lohr asked the converts to remove their *kanthis* (sacred necklaces) (Dube, 72). As a result, all thirty-five of Lohr's *Satnami* students, who were considering becoming Christian, threatened to abandon the school if they too would be asked to give up their sacred necklace. Lohr refused to budge, and they made good on their promise, although twenty-two returned later in that day (Dube,

72). Lohr reported six months later, however, that the matter was still unsettled and prevented him from baptizing any others. The incident underscores the fact that between Lohr and the *Satnamis* disparate understandings of the nature of Christianity still existed. Lohr and others understood Christianity to be a religious tradition entirely distinct from Hinduism, yet they tried strenuously to forge connections with *Satnami* and Hindu modes of thought. They understood these adoptions as superficial adjustments, mere marketing strategies, but the adoptions were only effective to the extent that *Satnamis* understood Christianity to be a *panth*, a school of thought or way of spiritual praxis, that could be investigated and explored without compromising their connection to the *Satnami* community (Feierabend, 20).

As such they welcomed its presence, particularly since association with it appeared to have certain social and economic advantages in the colonial context. Missionary reports, letters, and books are saturated with stories about people who liked to listen to missionaries, attended church, read the Bible, and spoke lovingly of Christ but displayed no interest in baptism (Feierabend, 20). Missionaries generally interpreted this reticence as a sign that people were unwilling to give up their “profligate ways” such as polygamy and adultery. There is some evidence that Christian moral standards were an obstacle to native peoples otherwise interested in joining the community, but the more important factor appears to have been that baptism entailed a dislocating social and economic ostracism, a loss of belonging, security, and identity. It is for this reason that when Lohr deprived his first converts of their *kanthis*, a symbol of *Satnami* identity, he inadvertently provoked such an intense backlash (McGavran, 21). It appears that until that moment the *Satnamis* had considered Christianity a *panth*, that is, a way of thinking and acting that complemented, rather than required the rejection of their *Satnami* beliefs and

practices. Moreover, joining this Christian *panth* would have granted Satnamis access to certain social and economic advantages while not disrupting their social lives (Webster, 224). Little is known of the content of Lohr's early evangelistic messages, but it is clear from his own accounts that he portrayed Jesus as the Satnam of which Ghasidas had spoken (Dube, 77). It is therefore not surprising that Satnamis may have initially understood Christianity in this way.

The Evangelical Mission continued to grow slowly through the rest of the nineteenth century. Lohr and other missionaries founded schools, orphanages, hospitals, and printing press, and brought most converts into the spatial and economic orbit of the mission compound. In 1871 a mission was opened in Raipur, and then others in Bethelpur (1886), Parsabhader (1893), Mahasamund (1907), and Tilda (1929) (Feierabend, 20). Devastating famines at the end of the century greatly increased the frequency of conversion. The Christian community grew beyond these mission centers, and soon Indians were moving into leadership positions. Simon Ramnath Bajpai became the first Indian to be ordained in the region in 1920 and others followed.

In the late 1800s missionary work continued to spread throughout the region. In 1874, the Disciples of Christ women formed a Christian Women's Board of Missions (CWBM). A year later the denomination also began mission work under the Foreign Christian Missionary Society (FCMS). In 1882, the two boards agreed to begin a mission in Asia, and by the end of the year two families from the FCMS and four single women from CWBM set up camp at Harda, in what is now Madhya Pradesh. In 1885, the mission expanded into the Chhattisgarh region with a station at Bilaspur (Gamboe, 1-2). In 1886, hoping to have more contact with the caste, the disciples established a mission in Mungeli, a town thirty-one miles west of Bilaspur.

Already in 1885, a resident of Bilaspur named Bhagwani had become the first convert, and Hiralal, joined the Christian community in Mungeli. As on the Evangelical mission field, the amicable relationship between disciple's missionaries and Satnamis was disrupted when it became clear that the missionaries expected converts to renounce of their Satnami beliefs, practices, and folkways (Gamboe, 1-2).

The Christian community in Chhattisgarh grew slowly at first. For the first twenty years (1868 -1888), Indians joined the evangelical church in small groups, never more than forty-five in a year. The same can be said for the disciples, after their arrival in 1885. The number of converts around the evangelical Bishrampur station remained unremarkable until the 1890s, the single most significant decade in the history of Christianity in Chhattisgarh.

The disciples mission in Chhattisgarh continued to produce converts to Christianity, especially in the period after the famines of the 1890s when Chhattisgarh suffered a series of ravaging famines, impoverishing tens of thousands of people. The first severe famine came in 1896-97 and hit Uttar Pradesh, large parts of the Punjab and the Central Provinces. Streams and wells dried up and brackish waters became contaminated, fueling an opportunistic cholera epidemic. The Bubonic Plague, which had begun in Mumbai, also made an appearance. Mothers wandered the countryside desperately offering their children for sale; orphaned children straggled about in search of food.. (Seybold, 41).

The famines significantly and permanently altered the nature of mission work in Chhattisgarh. The British government funnelled large amounts of money and grain to mission workers to feed and employ famine victims in useful work. During the first famine, evangelical missionaries were feeding more than two thousand people daily in the Bishrampur area, over one thousand in Parsabhader, and around six thousand in

Raipur (Seybold, 41-43). Out of desperation and gratitude, Chhattisgarh became Christian in droves. The missions established orphanages that were immediately filled to capacity. Accordingly, the disciples extended their schools, orphanages, leper asylums, and hospitals into more and more villages. In 1926, the disciples opened a mission at Takhatpur, midway between Bilaspur and Mungeli.

Many of those who became Christian during the famines reverted to their previous faiths afterwards. In 1901 alone, the Evangelicals lost 429 members, and from 1903 to 1908 the community declined from nearly five thousand to 3,160 communicants (Seybold, 41-43). Census figures show that the entire Christian community in Chhattisgarh declined in that decade, though in the next three decades Christian growth outpaced that of every other major community. The post 1911 increases was partly due to the large number of famine orphans who came of age in that period and asked for baptism. The decennial censuses show the following figures for the Christian community in all of Chhattisgarh: 6,392 in 1901, 8,077 in 1911, 11,544 in 1921, 15,336 in 1931, 20,693 in 1941, and 44,695 in 1951 (M. Davis, 80-81). Both mission societies experienced an appreciable lull in conversions in the first decades of the 20th century. The conversions began to grow by the middle of 1930s when the Methodist missionaries attempted to evangelize the people with new focus and methods (Pickett, 47).

According to Nelle Grant Alexander, there were 3669 baptized Christians associated with the disciples mission by 1945 (38). There is no record of mass movement among the Satnamis that led the people to conversions; however, there were records of signs and miracles that led the people to Christian churches. The rise of Christian conversions led the local Christians to think about the indigenization of the churches. This pressure let the western missionaries transfer authority to the

Indian Christian leaders. The churches in Chhattisgarh became independent and began to grow under the leadership of their Indian leaders.

Review on Leadership

“Leadership is a very important part of God’s order for mobilizing His church and enabling it to achieve His purpose on earth. The church needs leaders with a variety of gifts in order to achieve this for God” (B. Gordon, 143).

The concept and phenomenon of leadership has been well researched, but no clear consensus of the definition of leadership has been universally accepted. Leadership has been defined and conceptualized in many ways; the common component being that leadership is an influence process. Some researchers generally define leadership according to their major areas of interests and personal perspectives. In developing an understanding of the true nature of the leadership, the researcher will address the nature of leadership in four categories: trait, behavior, contingency, and transformation (Locke, 20).

The definition of leadership used in this study states that “leadership is a practice that occurs as one individual influences one or more people in an effort to facilitate a desired outcome or goal” (Locke, 21). Kouzes and Posner defined leadership as “the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations.”(18) Gardner defined leadership as “the process of persuasion or example by which an individual or leadership team induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader and his or her followers” (1). Rost defined leadership as “an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes” (124). Chemers characterized leadership as a “process of social influence in which one person is able to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task” (1). “A leader has the ability to expand another person’s capacity to be effective in leadership processes and roles that assists groups of individuals towards a goal” (Northouse, 20).

Northouse synthesized leadership theories into three major conceptualizations: a process that involves influence, a process that occurs within a group context, and a

process that involves goal attainment. Based on these concepts, “he defined leadership as a process whereby one person influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (24). Northouse explained that leadership must take on an active process that engages the followers to commit and execute a task or skill. In addition, he explained that leadership requires the individual to work with other individuals. Leaders must have individuals who are willing to follow in order to complete the task or reach the goal. Finally, Northouse stated that the aim or purpose of the leader and the group is to achieve a common goal. If the group of individuals does not see the need, relevance, or meaning of the task, the group will not be committed to accomplishing the task. Being that leaders and followers are both a part of the leadership process, it is important to understand and recognize the relationship and dynamics between the two (25).

In prior research, many studies have focused on leadership as a trait, however research has shown leadership to be more complex and cover assigned and emergent leadership, the concept of power, and coercion. A well-developed and mature leader has the capacity to exercise different styles in different situations. A crisis situation may call for an authoritarian style; a decision-making process among peers may call for a consensus-building style, and a learning situation may call for a prophetic style. Leadership styles are neither linear nor hierarchical; they are best understood as options in repertoire circle where the situation determines which style will best serve (Northouse, 26).

Oswald Sanders, in his classic work on leadership, draws a contrast between natural and spiritual leadership. He compares and contrasts military and political leadership with spiritual leadership. There are many similarities but spiritual leadership is unique. A spiritual leader must exercise the gifts and qualities of the Holy Spirit. One must have an overwhelming conviction that God is calling the believer to a task that is greater than self. Sanders goes on to say that spiritual goals can be achieved only by spiritual people who use spiritual methods (Sanders *Spiritual Leadership* 2nd Ed, 30). According to Sanders “Effective Christian leadership is the

process of helping a group embody in its corporate life the practices that shape vital Christian life, community, and witness in ways that are faithful to Jesus Christ and the gospel and appropriate to the particular group's setting, resources, and purpose" (12).

Christian leadership is the same in all times and places. It embodies unchanging principles and values, such as servanthood, morality, and respect for all people as divine image bearers, but the style of leadership varies greatly depending upon the individual leader and the situation in which leadership is exercised.

Different Kinds of Leadership Training

There are a number of methods available for leadership training, and it is usually best to combine a number of these methods for each training program.

Churches or teams should discover what works best for them in the various areas where leadership training is required. The following are some methods for the leadership training program:

First, One-on-one training: A pastor or another established leader works with a trainee leader using a personal counselling approach. For example, the trainer helps the trainee leader to prepare to lead a group meeting and then after the meeting the established leader evaluates his performance. Scriptural examples of this type of training include Moses and Joshua or Paul and Timothy.

Second, Apprenticeship or on-the-job training: Experienced leaders take on one or more trainee leaders and train them by watching their performance for a few months and giving feedback. The leader gives the trainee increasing responsibility of leadership. This should be accompanied by a leadership training course, usually carried out by the experienced leaders.

Third, Expert help: This style training bring in a specialist in the field of leadership training from outside the team or church to teach, advise, or direct the leadership training program.

Fourth, Observation: The trainee visits and observes an experienced more highly trained leader in action. This may be within the church or team or outside it. Any leadership training program should allow time for this type of observational training.

Fifth, Conferences, workshops, seminars, and the like: These cover a wide range of topics and trainee leaders should be allowed to attend a reasonable number of these events particularly when they are relevant to their field of leadership.

Sixth, Retreats: These occur when all of the leadership from the church meet together for an extended period of group training with input from a senior leader or pastor. This can be in the church, at a home, or at a conference centre. Retreats allow the leaders to evaluate relevant area of leadership; explain, discuss and plan for future activities; share ideas; spend time as a group in prayer and fellowship. This enables a team spirit to develop. New developments and resource materials in the field can also be shared. These times are for the inspiration and encouragement of leaders.

Seventh, Evening Bible schools: The trainer conduct on one or more nights of the week. These courses can be open to all church members or can be a more formal teaching program taught by a trained person and resulting in a qualification at the end.

Eighth, In-Service training: This method is for leaders already involved in leadership, and these can convey new methods and ideas on a regular basis for continued advancement.

Ninth, Libraries: Trainers should make available collections of resource books, videos, tapes, and other materials on the whole range of leadership activities

that the group carries out. It is important that trainers make church and team members aware of what is available, and that they especially encourage trainee leaders to use these resources.

Tenth, Correspondence courses: Highly motivated individuals can improve themselves on their own in a whole range of areas.

Need of Christian Leadership Training in India

A great need exists for true leadership and maturity in the body of Christ at this time. Christianity existed in India since the first century A.D. However, its existence and missionary expansion has borne little fruit. Institutional Christianity in India has created an impact upon the nation, and it is often broadcasted as a credit for the achievement of western missionary Christianity. Christian missions have made remarkable contributions to Indian culture and human development. Much of India's democracy is due to the influence of Christianity and western education. This is an external aspect of Christian influence in India. However, the Christian population in India is less than 3 percent of the total population of 1.25 billion people.

Although Christian leaders are called by God and may have attended formal training such as Bible college, these credentials alone are not enough to continue to do God's work. On-going Christian education and leadership training is necessary to be the best possible stewards of God's work. Any leader in secular employment is trained. This enables them to understand their job and carry it out effectively. The same needs to be true in the church. Christians cannot be expected to innately know how to lead or communicate effectively. They must be taught how to do so and how to learn necessary skills. Knowledge is necessary to perform according to the wisdom.

India is one of the fastest growing countries in the world in relation to its population. By 2035 India is projected to overtake China as the most populous nation

on earth, with over 1.5 billion people (1997 projection by Population Reference Bureau). Already it is the world's largest democracy, with a population of 1,210,193,422 (As of March 1, 2011, according to Provisional Population Date from Census of India 2011). India is also home to hundreds of unreached groups of people. Reports of bold new evangelic endeavors and rapid church growth are coming from numerous areas, especially in the tribal zones, but also among former Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. At least 440 indigenous Indian mission organizations are sending out more than 44,000 missionaries, 66 percent of whom are working cross-culturally in India, and 440 of whom are in foreign countries (Johnstone and Mandryk, 311).

These newly established churches need biblically-trained lay leaders and pastors. The indigenous missionaries, evangelists, and church planters who are establishing these congregations need to be equipped as well. Trainers of trainers need to be prepared at the highest levels, and have earned credentials such as recognized master's and doctoral degrees in order to teach in the seminaries. Furthermore, established churches and institutions need to be infused with new vision from leaders who have examined the theological and practical dimensions of the missionary task.

To understand the challenges in the propagation of gospel and leadership training one must know the demography and social settings of India. India is more like a continent than a nation. Within its twenty nine states and six union territories, 222 languages are spoken, including eighteen official languages, and twenty five scripts are used. Immense cultural differences can be observed between north and south, between west and northwest, and between urban, village and tribal areas. It can be assumed that nowhere in the world have so many streams mixed with such diversity. The Indian Mission association records 960 castes and tribes (David).

According to Ebenezer Sunder Raj, former General Secretary of the India Missions Association, India is home to approximately 450 million Hindus. In addition, nearly 300 million people of lower castes are classified as Hindus by the Census of India since 1931, but since they do not practice the Brahminical religion,

they are not properly called Hindus (Sunder Raj, np). In India there is the world's largest block of accessible Muslims, about 123 million, as well as 22.2 million Sikhs, 6.5 million Buddhists and 3.8 million Jains (“Leadership” *World Christian Encyclopaedia* edited by B. Barrett, 310).

The caste system is also important in India. At the top of the hierarchy are the Brahmins, the priestly caste, comprising only 44 percent of the population. The next two highest castes, the *Kshatriyas* (warriors) and *Vaishyas* (traders), comprise 8.3 percent. These first three castes are called “forward castes” by the government, because they are considered to be relatively wealthy and developed. Even though the forward castes comprise less than fifteen percent of the population, they hold the dominant influence in politics, education, and business. The lowest castes, called “backward castes” and “other backward castes” (*Sudras*) are 45.3 percent of the population. Together these four groups, the only ones properly called Hindus, comprise only 57.6 percent of the Indian population. Another 14.5 percent belong to the scheduled castes, also called outcastes, untouchables, or *Dalits*, renamed *Harijans*, which means “children of God” by Mahatma Gandhi (Busi, 170).

The rest of the Hindus 7.6 percent are tribals, the *Adivasis* or original peoples. Both scheduled castes and the tribals were enslaved centuries ago by the four higher castes, but for political purpose often are referred to as Hindus. All other religious groups comprise about 20 percent of the population. The different castes are separated by high social barriers, with numerous prohibitions related to intermarriage, food, and ritual purity. Even though caste discrimination is forbidden by the Indian constitution, it strongly influences social behavior and thinking for over 80 percent of the population including many Christians.

According to the official government census of 1991, Christians comprised 2.61 percent of the population of India. The new census of 2011 indicates that the percentage of has dropped to 2.3 percent The majority of the Christians are from four southern states: Kerala, 19.3 percent; Tamil Nadu, 5.7 percent; Andhra Pradesh, 1.9 percent, and Karnataka 2.1 percent, as well as the Northeastern states: Nagaland, 87 percent; Mizoram, 85 percent; Meghalaya, 64.6 percent, and Manipur, 34.1 percent.

Most of the northern states recorded less than 1 percent Christians, and in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh some were less than 0.1percent Christians. (Johnstone and Mandryk, 310)

Today India is undergoing rapid changes in many areas, mainly in political levels. In the last decade and a half, the relaxation of restrictions on foreign investment, the privatization of a number of industries, the explosion of the Indian software enterprise, and the introduction of satellite TV have contributed to far-reaching changes in the Indian economy as well as culture. Even though almost 41percent of the people in the cities and 51percent of the people in the rural areas live below the poverty line, the middle class is growing rapidly in purchasing power. In the cities, motorbikes and private automobiles are replacing bicycles and rickshaws. Computers, cell phones, internet cafes, and email addresses on business cards are multiplying. The influence of television reaches beyond the cities to impact the villages and rural areas as well (David).

Apart from the growth of the middle class and the increase of urbanization and globalization, the other most obvious change in India today is the rise of religious fundamentalism. Abuse and persecution of Christians, as well as destruction of Christian properties, have increased dramatically in the last three years. Churches have been burned. Christians at prayer have been beaten up. Christian workers have been killed. Some may argue that these are isolated instance, but the increasing frequency is difficult to deny. (Johnstone and Mandryk, 314).

However, in the midst of all the pressures and changes, the church in India is growing more rapidly than ever before. The persecution has begun to bring together many Christian leaders who have operated rather independently of one another in the past. The Christians in India are spread very unevenly by region and by caste. 70 percent live in the South, and 25 percent in the Northeast (Johnstone and Mandryk, 315). Only 5 percent of India's Christians live in the entire North India, and half of them are tribal Christians. Furthermore, more than half of the Christians in India are from Scheduled Caste background, and another quarter is from tribal origin. The Syrian Christians of Kerala, the Goans of Goa and Anglo-Indians together comprise

12 percent. Only about 25 percent of the Christians come from the Backward Castes, Other Backward Castes, and Forward Castes, even though these groups make up 60 percent of the Indian population (Albert, 6).

The definite progressive growth of Christians in the past decade indicates that the official government statistics are not correct. Even though the census of 2011 shows only 2.3 percent Christians, most Indian Christian leaders think the percentage of Christians is actually closer to 4 percent, or perhaps even more, if all the secret believers are included (Albert, 6) Everybody agrees that in many regions of the country the churches are growing at an unprecedented rate (Barrett, 838). The growth is seen not only in the multiplication of the churches in India but also in the number of indigenous Indian mission agencies. In 1998 the India Mission association estimated there were about three hundred indigenous mission agencies in India, but the number was increased to 440 in 2011 (Albert, 6).

The growth of the church has mainly occurred through cell groups, house churches, and small congregations that meet at a certain place as part of larger worshipping congregations.

The cell and house church models have drawn increasing attention, not only because of their rapid multiplication, but also because of their suitability for apprentice-style leadership development, their ease of cross-cultural adaption, and their ability to survive during the times of persecution. Due to the local agitation, official harassment, and media attacks, Indian Christian leaders are compelled to rethink their strategies of evangelism and leadership training. Two common criticisms that their opponents level against the Christians are that, first, they are outsiders, not true patriots, but mere agents of the West, kept alive by foreign money; and, second, all their good works are simply dishonest ploys to convert the ignorant (David).

In many places public meetings and street preaching have become nearly impossible, although in some areas well-published evangelism and healing services can still be conducted without interruption. In general there is a growing emphasis on personal evangelism, home meetings, and practical service, such as health, literacy,

and AIDS prevention programs, that plainly benefit the entire community, both Christians and non-Christians (David).

The last decade has brought a noticeable increase in the desire of Christian leaders, especially younger leaders, to network with one another and to partner together to focus on a particular group of people or region. The recent pressures on the church have accelerated these movements toward collaboration. The time is ripe to encourage broad-based, cooperative leadership training initiatives. Another encouraging trend is the increasing awareness and involvement of the overseas Indian community in mission work, church-planting, and leadership development in India (David).

According to the opinion of numerous Indian leaders, the number one need in the church today is leadership. Church leaders do not have any training in the Scripture or in ministry skills like counselling, teaching or administration. Leadership is required for the rapidly multiplying cell groups, house churches and newly planted congregations.

Many of the churches are led by illiterate new believers who know little other than that Jesus healed them, delivered them from the demonic bondage, or forgave their sins and gave them peace and joy. They lead their congregations in enthusiastic worship, fervent prayer, and joyful testimonies. They pray for the sick and the oppressed and continue to spread the name of Jesus, but they do not know how to spiritually feed themselves or their congregations in a way that moves them toward maturity. This same lack of training applies to most of the pioneer missionaries. Most have had minimal if any biblical or theological training, and very few have had any specialized training in missiology, cross-cultural communication, or church-planting, but they have great zeal and a willingness to live simply and sacrificially, often at considerable cost to themselves and their families.

Many of the newer organizations also have increasing leadership needs as their ministries expand. As people who began with no special training, and whose organizations have expanded rapidly around them, the founders often have little idea of how to develop the people coming along behind them. Often the passion of the founders is focused entirely on the goals of the ministry, not on the development of the people or leaders within the ministry. Another issue related to leadership in India is the scarcity of second-line leaders (David)

Some organizations have certain plans for the succession. However, in many ministries there is a very large gap between the top leader and everyone else within the organization. To avoid such issues, Paul writes to Timothy to be a “teacher of teachers” or a “trainer for trainers.” Paul writes, “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach other also” (2 Tim. 2:1-2).

This issue is not simply that these missionaries did an inadequate job of training their successors.

The frequent failure to train other leaders may be rooted in deep cultural patterns that are difficult to transform with biblical values. One of the foremost Christian anthropologists, Dr. Paul Hiebert, who grew up in Andhra Pradesh, observes that a common pattern across Asia is the patron/client relationship between leader and followers. In this pattern the leader receives wealth, influence, obedience, and loyalty from the followers, and then redistributes privileges to those same followers as a generous but authoritarian benefactor. Power and privilege flow up to the leader who sends them back down to followers

Within the Indian context, there is the additional influence of caste, which is a fundamentally hierarchical world view, in which people are not encouraged to think in terms of upward mobility within this life, but rather in terms of doing their duty in order to make progress in the next life. The result is a pattern of leadership sometimes compared to the banyan tree, which smothers its seedlings under its own luxuriant growth. The Indian society is highly segmented by differences in caste, religion and language. People think naturally in terms of lifting up their own extended family, clan, or language group. Although there may be benefits to a homogeneous organization in terms of communication or social cohesion, this can be limiting when trying to build a broader missionary organization. (David).

“Christian leadership among evangelicals and Pentecostals in India has been much stronger and more visible in the mission agencies and other para-church organizations than in the local churches” (David). However, there is an increasing need to train leaders for the local church and to relate para-church agencies directly to local church activity. “There is also a deepening desire to find more ways to train and

develop leaders in the areas” (David). There is a great variety of people who are influencing others toward Jesus Christ and the fulfillment of his purposes including parents with their children and cell group leaders with their small groups.

Contrary to popular perception, a leader is not just the one at the top of the organization chart. Anyone who has the ability to influence how others think, feel, and act can exercise a form of leadership. Anyone who is calling others to follow him as he follows Jesus is a leader. The village pastor or Sunday school teacher is a leader just as much as the bishop. The itinerant evangelist or cell church planter is a leader just as much as the general secretary of the mission (David).

Christian Leadership Training: Different Types of Leaders

Different types of training are necessary for different types of leaders. Variety of training produces different types of leaders. All leaders cannot follow the same methods and strategies. Strategies and methods are based on the kind of leadership that one is involved or would like to involve. The types of training and leaders that the church requires include the following.

1. Small group leaders: The first type of training is focused on the leaders of small groups. “This includes house church and cell group leaders, heads of families, Sunday school teachers, youth leaders” (David), and other who have direct, face-to-face influence in guiding and encouraging a limited number of people (David).
2. Self-supporting local supervisors or leaders: The second type of training is an attempt to equip the volunteer workers who supervise other volunteer workers in their own local area. Their influence is multiplied because they are encouraging and equipping others who are also leading, but their sphere of influence is still limited because of their other regular employment and because of their focus on their own locality. In some cases these could be volunteer workers overseeing a ministry in local church, or they could be an unpaid or normally paid pastor of a smaller congregation that consists of several home groups (David).
3. Full-time local leaders and pastors: The third group needing training is the pastors who are devoting most or all of their time to evangelize and equip the body of Christ. These would include local church pastors, church-planters, and missionaries, whether they devote all their time to one congregation, or to a circuit of several congregations in the same general locality. Some may be bi-vocational workers, but in such cases their Christian service would still be equivalent to a full-time job. This

dissertation will primarily focus on this category of leadership training (David).

4. Regional leaders: The fourth group is the leaders whose influence is felt within a region. They may be the leader of several mission teams, the district supervisor of a number of full-time church workers, or the principal of a small Bible college that serves a particular state. Their ministry is generally indirect, in that they work with and through the local leaders who have the primary face-to-face contact with the people. The ministry of the regional leaders is generally in the vernacular, but they will also interface with national leaders, primarily within their own group or denomination (David).
5. National leaders: The fifth group is comprised of leaders who have influence throughout the entire country or internationally. They may be leaders of denominations, national missions, Christian organizations, or training institutions that draw their students from the entire country. They may influence through policy-making, writing, mass media, or speaking at national conferences (David).

This study envelops the first three groups into one category, because the strength, health, and speed of expansion of the church depend largely on the effort and ministry of these groups. According to the status of pastors in North India, most of the uneducated and theologically untrained pastors are found in these first three categories, who are in fact the pioneers and church planters. They are the keys to rapid multiplication, since their influence is direct and personal. If these people can be trained they serve effectively and create other leaders; their impact will lead to multiplication rather than merely addition.

Theological training is necessary for the leaders of the first three groups. In many villages and tribal areas churches are multiplying rapidly, but most of the leaders are illiterate and may have only the barest understanding of the gospel message and the word of God. There is a very real danger of repeating the situation in Africa, where the church has been described as a mile wide and an inch deep, or the situation in China, where the rapid spread of the gospel through uninstructed new believers has allowed all sorts of cults and aberrant doctrines to flourish. It is vitally

important to identify and help strengthen those training initiatives that can deliver basic training rapidly, at relatively low cost, and in the vernacular language (David).

David makes the following observations.

Three factors are needed in the training and development of all five groups of leaders for the Indian church today. First, effective training must include an emphasis on knowledge, character, and application or skills. Second, the development process and training materials should be contextually appropriate. Third, the training should impart a vision for passing the training on to others who will pass it on in turn. This is the model of apostle Paul. He emphasizes training the trainers when he writes to his son in faith, Timothy, “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:1-2). A fundamental new mindset needs to be fostered in which people are set free to minister with their God-given gifts, and in which leaders see their fundamental, divinely-mandated task as equipping others.

A common observation is that Christian Leadership training in the South is far more developed than in the North. An all-too-common phenomenon is that even mission agencies and Bible schools that are supposed to be doing work in the north continue to be staged and led entirely by people from the south. Sometimes even the students studying at institutions located in the north are overwhelmingly from the four southern states or from the northeast... In some ways these disproportions are understandable, in that approximately 90 percent of the Christians in India are found in the south and the northeast, but there is a very pressing need for deliberate development of local leadership.

As we have seen earlier the northeastern states have the highest percentages of Christians (mostly nominal Christians) of anywhere in India. Some tribes are virtually 100 percent Christian, though there is a disturbing trend among some of the young people to revert to their pre-Christian animist roots. Problems of drug use, alcohol, and AIDS among the youth are epidemic. Yet many of the denominations and regions of the northeast continue to experience waves of revival. Some of the churches are aflame with mission passion that longs to be released more fully. Several Indian leaders have said that if it were not for the students from the northeast, most of the seminaries and Bible schools in the rest of India would go bankrupt; many of them draw 60 percent of their students from the northeast. Yet too often, those who populate these institutions do not have a genuine call to the ministry. Rather, many are the academic drop-outs, and “black sheep” of their family, who are not considered fit for any other kind of training (David).

Due to the contextual, cultural, and linguistic issues, it is difficult to conduct leadership training programs in northeast states. Because of the political and

economic isolation of the northeast, relatively fewer resources have been invested in recent decades for the development of Christian institutions in the northeast, even though there is some of the greatest potential and vitality among the churches, especially in the area of mission outreach.

The leaders from the northeast are concerned about the lack of training resources within the northeast itself, where their leaders can be trained in context. Many leaders of the Northeast have expressed a need for cross-cultural and missiological training. Most missionaries from the northeast go with strong backing from their local churches and virtually no training whatsoever (David).

Because of the diversity within India, a multi-faceted, segmented strategy is needed to ensure training throughout the entire country. Complete training can only be developed for the country by thinking in terms of people groups, geography, religious affiliation, and class divides. It will be important to train leaders from all divisions, castes, and classes to encourage rapid church-planting while also laying the foundation for long-term sustainability.

Training the laymen and untrained pastors should be a top priority for both biblical and practical reasons. First, the Bible mandates it, Ephesians 4:11-13 is a case in point. This popular text can be found on bulletin covers, letterheads, and logos. It articulates the Christian leader's responsibility to equip the rest of the body to do the work of the ministry. Most of the Christian leaders neglect this most vital area of ministry. They count the number of people who work for them rather than assess their quality. Most church boards are made up of individuals from widely divergent backgrounds, but a training program can provide everyone with common experiences and vocabulary, making communication easier. A training program enables a group to invest words, terms, and situations with an agreed-upon meaning. Even differences can be intelligently discussed with a shared frame of reference.

Training is also essential because a church is different from a business organization in that it is spiritually centered and run by volunteers. It has a radically different bottom line: relationships. While some of the leadership principles of business carry over, many do not. A training program can help a board recognize and respond to these differences. This is the age of continuing education. Additional degrees and further study are not only encouraged; in many cases, they are required. Few churches will be interested in settling for a pastor who lacks formal training (Shelley, 97).

There is a specific need for Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh due to many of factors. In Chhattisgarh, many of the pastors in North India are laymen without any theological training or studies. Chhattisgarh has more untrained pastors and leaders in the village or rural churches. Most of the pastors or laymen who serve God in the villages or tribal areas are married and having family responsibilities; therefore, they are unable to go for a long-term Bible training. These pastors are not able to afford the expenditure of studying the Bible in any institutions. Many of them are not full time pastors or leaders; they are farmers or working in different places. Therefore, it is difficult for them to leave their jobs and be away from their homes for long time. Even if they were available, many do not have enough secular education for admission. Most of these pastors speak their own tribal language or Chhattisgarhi and may not be fluent in Hindi. There are no Bible colleges in India taught in Chhattisgarhi or other tribal dialects.

These pastors are also not familiar with the modern technologies and media that would allow them to access the leadership training materials online. Their rural and tribal areas often do not have such advanced technologies, and many of the villages do not even have electricity or good transportation. Without a basic training in the Bible and fluency in Hindi, self-study of course materials is also not possible.

I along with some theologically trained pastors, conducted a leadership training program for laymen and theologically untrained pastors in the state of Chhattisgarh. The purpose of the training was to inform the leaders of practical tips

for leading small groups and to improve general leadership skills. The leadership training was in various forms: regular courses, seminars, special lectures, and annual retreat. Each church had its own system of leadership training. No one had previously trained the participants of this program in either an intensive leadership training program or theological education. Rather, they learned how to lead small groups by observing current leaders and taking on minor leadership roles within their groups. Participants had the opportunity to listen to other leaders 'testimonies and pastors' lectures addressing leadership topics. By contrast this was a year-long intensive training program, which was required for every prospective small group leader. During the leadership training program the participants were given opportunities to reaffirm their commitment to Christ, develop their understanding of the doctrine of the church, and practice theories of inductive study and small group leadership. Participants also had opportunities to observe how other leaders led group meetings as well as practice leading small groups under the supervision of other leaders.

Leadership training seemed to be beneficial for the participant in three ways. First, the participants of leadership training felt that their leadership capability had improved. They said that they had been instructed with practical guidelines and hands-on tips for leading a small group during the training. Some of them testified that they had gained a good understanding of how to lead an inductive Bible study through the leadership training program. There were a few people who also expressed an appreciation for the instructions on small group leadership given during the leadership training program. They testified that those instructions were applicable when leading their small groups. Second, the leadership training program seemed to broaden the leaders' understanding and perspective regarding the church, small groups and leadership in general. Some of them testified that they had gained a good

understanding of the purpose of the church, its relationship with church members, and the roles of the leaders in the church. Many acknowledged that they had become uncertain of the effectiveness of small group ministry, but during the leadership training they gained insights into how to lead others toward life transformation through small group ministry. Third, the leadership training provided the necessary knowledge to enhance the participants' effectiveness through leadership related lectures and seminars. These lectures and seminars dealt with topics such as personality developments, counselling, mentoring, preaching, and leadership. Participants particularly valued the lecture on sermon preparation as well as the seminar on personality types. They reported that their small group members had applied the knowledge of personality development into evangelism with great results. Trainees also found the counselling seminar especially useful for small group ministry.

Challenges for the Christian Leadership Training

There are a number of challenges for the Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh. Further challenges are explored in the next chapter on data collection.

Casteism, which is strongly prevalent in this state, as well as regionalism and nepotism have become barriers to leadership training in many churches and Christian organizations. Emerging leaders soon become aware of the barriers to further advancement in the organization, if they are not related to the top leaders or from the same caste or region. It is difficult to find truly national organizations where the board and the top leaders come from different regions and ethnic groups and in which leaders from any caste or background have equal opportunity for personal development and increased responsibility. Many Indian Christians come from lower caste backgrounds and lack the confidence, entrepreneurial skills, networks, and

business-oriented ethos of the traditional castes that dominate the worlds of finance, industry, and trade in India (Kumar, 36).

The need for land and buildings to accommodate the number of people who come for the training program, or to create nerve centers of communication, research, and coordination for training ministries is another challenge for the training program. Especially in northern states, Christians are considered the lower caste or scheduled or backward castes, and they are poor and live below the poverty line. Landlords and wealthy people fall into the Hindu religious groups; therefore, it is very difficult task to buy a piece of land to construct Bible colleges or church buildings. Hindus are not willing to sell their property to a Christian for religious activities (Kumar, 37).

Vast areas of forest and huge concentration of the terrorist group the *Maoist* are also challenges faced by the leaders who come here to train people. Besides being difficult to navigate, terrorist attacks, often aimed at outsiders, can break out without warning (Kumar, 39)

This state has also passed the anti-conversion bill (Samuel). Therefore, it is very difficult to conduct gospel meetings and training programs in open or common places. The tribal people who are poor and without any support from the government are afraid to attend such meetings. Persecution is a challenge for the Christian leadership training. On 6, September 2014, the anti-Christians attacked a church during a meeting in a place called Champa, near Bilaspur.

Though Hindi and Chhattisgarhi are the main languages spoken here, there are many other dialects spoken by the tribal people (Kumar, 37). This becomes a great challenge for the leaders who conduct the leadership-training program for the native and local pastors. This also becomes a big issue for the trained pastors from other areas in working among the local people. Since each tribe has its own dialect,

language, culture, lifestyle, food and distinct way of thinking, bringing people from different groups under one roof for training is also another challenge.

Lack of sufficient literature and training materials is another challenge for the Christian leadership training. The great majority of Christian literature and reference materials are still in English, and most of it is written by Western writers. Often the tracts that are available in the vernacular language are simply the translations of Western tracts, rather than serious attempts to change the Indian mind with an Indian style. Even the training materials written in India, by Indians, are largely in English. Bible reference tools and commentaries in most of the Indian languages, including Hindi, are scarce to non-existent. Books are also needed to address contemporary social and theological issues in India to help guide the thinking of the churches and their leaders in these rapidly changing times (Kumar, 38).

In the longer term digital technology may address some of these gaps, but it is not sufficient now due to gaps in technology in the area. There are still many institutions that have no computers, no email, and extended power outages. Many graduates work under conditions where a few well-chosen reference books will be far more useful than expensive electronic tools. Until modern infrastructure is available, investment needs to be made in upgrading existing libraries to make them most useful to students.

Cultural Context

There are a number of specific reasons that special training must be developed for the Christian leaders of this area rather than depending on education provided by Bible colleges and seminaries. Many Indian churches have pastors without formal theological education. These lay pastors, laymen, and clergies are without biblical education or training, and are unable to go to a theological institution for their

training. These pastors still need to be trained in the word systematically in order to enlarge their ministry and expand His kingdom. Some of the reasons they may be unable to attend formal training include the following:

1. Many are married and have a family and children. They work in the field for their livelihood and cannot leave their family or work for an extended period of time.
2. Churches are not in a sound financial position to be able to support a pastor for theological education since most of the believers are tribal and in below poverty line.
3. Existing caste system and cultures also limit their educational opportunities.
4. Language also limits educational opportunities. Most of these pastors are illiterate, or they speak their own language, dialect, or Chhattisgarhi; none of which are used in Bible colleges.
5. Cultural practices, food, lifestyle, and social issues are also hindrances in attending an institution for training.

More reasons are discussed with data analysis. Despite these challenges, there are many pressing reasons to provide a different type of Christian leadership training that can serve religious leadership unable to avail themselves of formal institutional training. Some of these reasons follow:

1. Growth is stagnated in most of the churches. These churches began with many believers but membership has waned.
2. No proper evangelical work is done in many places, and pastors are unaware of the need of evangelism and its activities.

3. Church programs are reduced to a Friday morning fasting prayer and Sunday worship.
4. The churches offer no spiritual activities for children, youth, or women.
5. The Bible is given secondary importance and experience begins to play out as the doctrine of the churches.
6. Misinterpretations and false teachings begin to dominate the churches.
7. There is no unity among the pastors and the churches
8. Pastors lose their self-confidence as servants of the Almighty

Besides the general challenges to Christian leadership training in India, research can help illuminate challenges that are unique to the geographic area of focus. Native Christians and pastors in these areas are the best informants about their unique challenges. Surveying individuals who have previously conducted Christian leadership training in these areas reveals additional perspectives. Most of the North Indian people are Hindus and anti-Christians. In some places they consider Christians to be lower class people and they do not allow the Christians to come to their houses or in the villages. In such places there is a chance of risk in conducting training for the local people in a public places. In the research questionnaire, questions two through five deal with the challenges and obstacles faced in previous Christian leadership training programs. The data collection revealed many other challenges for the Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh, and they are discussed in the third chapter.

Gaps Analysis in Literature

Leadership studies have often been too simplistic in their approach, assuming that the actions and attitudes of leaders determine the rise or fall of organizations. Much of the current leadership research has simply focused on leaders themselves,

specifically their actions, roles, attitudes, and characteristics. A more realistic analysis looks beyond leaders to what occurs within organizations. Some research has sought to look at the context in which leadership happens and other research has looked at the dynamics in the relationship between leaders and followers, but there is a gap in understanding the actual process of leadership within organizations that takes into account the complex realities of twenty-first century organizational leadership.

Many organizations today face adaptive challenges in relation to leadership training. These challenges require new leadership learning rather than simply an attempt to lead based on past experience. Everyone involved in the leadership training program, not simply the leaders themselves, must be engaged in this process. “Adaptive work creates an environment where values and assumptions can be challenged and revised and where learning and experimentation is welcomed” (Heifetz, 47).

“There must be distinction drawn between the work of leading itself and the process of leadership training. Leadership is most often defined as a process whereby one person influences a group toward achieving a common goal” (Northouse, 57). Leadership is now being understood as relationally constituted. Emerging literature called “complexity leadership theory” sees leadership “as a complex, dynamic process that emerges in the interactions of people and ideas”. (Lichtenstein, 2-12).

Another challenge is presented by the fact that some laymen and untrained pastors in village and tribal areas are not interested in any kind of training program for their ministry. They consider the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit is enough training for their ministry. Although these pastors are not theologically trained, their ministry in the villages and tribal areas are effective up to a point. They

may help manifest God's miracles such as healing or casting out evil spirits.

However, this cannot be a substitute for learning the word of God.

Further, the young men who do go out to cities for theological training from these remote areas usually do not come back to these villages and serve God. Some prefer city life once they have been exposed to an urban lifestyle. Some are motivated to go on to further studies, and once educated often do not feel they are fit for the village ministry.

This dissertation deals with the challenges and strategies of Christian leadership training in North India with the main focus of research on the state of Chhattisgarh. The field research was only from pastors and believers of Chhattisgarh, but implications are made as applicable and useful for others states in the Northern part of India.

Review of Chapter

This chapter surveyed the biblical and theological themes with regard to Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh. Examples from the Old and New Testaments described men of God whom God raised as leaders to stand for His mission and train the next generation of leaders. A brief survey of India and its people, culture, religious background, population, and current response to the gospel emphasized the need and importance of leadership training in India for the expansion of God's kingdom.

The chapter also described the need for Christian leadership training in the states of North India. There is a need both for the propagation of the gospel as well as the growth of the existing churches. Because many pastors are theologically untrained, both proper numerical growth in the churches and proper spiritual growth of the believers is lacking. Training is necessary because they are unable to go out and

get theological training because many are aged and have family responsibilities. Training is needed in their local area because of the different cultural and social lifestyles. Local leaders must be trained because of the diversity in caste, dialects, culture, food, and practices among each tribe. The chapter illustrated the challenges for the Christian leadership training in the villages and tribal areas. There are caste issue, different dialects, the anti-conversion bill, the presence of terrorists, huge area of forests, and the practice of black magic.

If local pastors are trained for their future ministry, it will promote great change in the ministry and growth of the church. Although there are persecutions and challenges against Christian leaders and missionaries in India, the country is in its best time for evangelization. The hearts of the people are ready for a great harvest. We pray for God to work in this country and claim it in Jesus' name.

CHAPTER 3

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

There were three methods used in this study to gather information: distributing questionnaires, conducting interviews, and collecting data from existing documents. A questionnaire obtains information from a sample of people by means of self-report through a series of questions posed by the researcher to the subjects. A qualitative questionnaire is prepared to elicit opinions, suggestions, beliefs, and other subjective information. In this case issues related to the growth of the church and its challenges were important. Hunter P. Mabry, in *A Manual for Researchers and Writers* (79) offers the following guidelines for making a useful questionnaire:

1. Use precise terminology in phrasing the questions.
2. Avoid making unwarranted assumptions about the respondent.
3. Avoid any words or phrase that would hurt a person, community, caste, or tribe.
4. Write the questions as simply as possible, avoiding difficult words and unnecessary jargon.
5. Conditional information should precede the key idea of the question.
6. Do not use double-barreled questions.

A qualitative approach was followed in this study. The questionnaires were largely distributed in the district of Durg and in some other districts of Chhattisgarh. The questionnaires were distributed to 250 to 300 respondents in random sample model including all kinds of people involved in the ministry and leadership. Three kinds of questionnaires were distributed to collect the information from three different groups of people. The first group includes presidents, directors, principals, deans, and

seminary staff. This group can help with new strategies and planning for the leadership program. The second group includes the pastors, laymen, and clergies who are in the field and facing challenges and issues directly in their ministry. The third group includes the believers and church members who witness and experience the ministry of theologically untrained pastors.

The questionnaires were primarily in the Hindi language and were translated to Chhattisgarhi as needed. The questionnaires were distributed to all castes, tribes, classes, and denominations and to both men and women in the ministry, including those who are involved in children's and youth ministry. This includes people from different tribes, such as *Satnami*, *Gonds*, *Muria*, *Dhurvaa*, and scheduled castes. People from different denominations including, the Indian Pentecostal Church of God, the Assemblies of God, the Church of God, Sharon Church, Baptist Churches, Brethren Assembly, and Believers church participated.

I recorded interviews on electronic devices or in written documents. In some cases, I conducted the interviews with the help of an interpreter because I did not speak or understand some of the local dialects.

Nature and Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this study was to understand the existing challenges and strategies for Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh, North India, in order to develop new strategies to improve missionary work in this area. The many categories of challenges include those related to the socio-cultural and geographical environment. The state of Chhattisgarh is a land of tribal people. The majority of the population belongs to different kinds of tribes with great diversity in dialects, culture, practices, food, dress code, and lifestyle. It is essential to understand how this diversity creates challenges for Christian leadership training in these places.

Outsiders, in particular, may have difficulty overcoming these differences in order to conduct training. Developmentally these areas are twenty to twenty five years behind other parts of North India. They struggle with issues of food, accommodation, and transportation as well as a lack of modern facilities like cellular networks, the internet, schools, and hospitals.

Each tribe is settled in its own village with its own culture. According to the information regarding the tribal groups in North India, given in *Unreached Mega Peoples of India* by Rev. S. Vasanthraj Albert, these different tribes have their own dialects and vary in food and practices from tribe to tribe. They do not mingle with other tribes in an open way; marriages are even conducted within tribes (6). Finding a way to bring people from different tribes together is another challenge for the leadership training.

Most of the North Indian villages are under the control of RSS (Rashtreeya *Swayam Sevak Sangam*), *Bagrangdal*, and *Viswa Hindu Parishath*. These communities are always against Christians and their missionary works. This can be a real problem for Christian missionary work. Understanding current religious practices can help illuminate these problems. There may also be information available on past attacks against and the persecution of Christians.

This project was a pre-intervention form of research. This project focused on a particular district called Durg, in the Chhattisgarh state of India. This study was done among the Christian churches in this particular district. It included people from Christian churches, Christian institutions, and non-government organizations (NGO). Pastors and believers became participants in this project in different capacities. I collected the information through the distributed questionnaires, interviews, and from existing documents. The research focused on three main questions. The goal was to

discover the existing challenges for Christian leadership training and to propose helpful strategies for change.

Research Questions

The questionnaires were of three kinds: one for the lay people or lay pastors, another for the believers of the church, and the third for the existing trainers. The first set of questions asked their name, designation, educational qualification, if any, and ecclesiastical background. The second set of questions inquired about their experience of challenges in relation to Christian leadership training. The third set of questions dealt with material used for the leadership training program. Finally, the fourth section of the questionnaire focused on changes they would suggest for leadership training. The information was geared toward answering the following three research questions:

Research Question # 1. What are the challenges for the Christian Leadership Training in Chhattisgarh?

The three versions of the questionnaire, and the various questions on each address different aspects of these research questions. In the first version of the questionnaire questions numbers 15-17 and in the second version of the questionnaire question numbers 16-17 dealt with the first research question related to challenges for Christian leadership training.

Research Question # 2. What the existing strategies are being used currently for the Christian leadership training?

Question numbers 11,12 and 18 in the first version of the questionnaire and questions 18 and 19 of second questionnaire dealt with the second research question.

Research Question # 3. What new strategies could be more effective for the Christian leadership training in?

Questions 19 and 20 dealt of the first questionnaire dealt with the third research question and in the second questionnaire questions 20 and 21 dealt with research question number three.

The Third Questionnaire

The third questionnaire did not deal with these issues, but rather dealt with the theological qualifications and effectiveness of the ministry of pastors from a believers' stand point. The goal was to determine present strategies used in leadership training and whether or not these methods are effective and relevant in the twenty first century. By analyzing existing methods, new strategies can be developed that better train these pastors for effective evangelism. A one-day seminar was conducted in three different places over the course of a month. At the seminars I distributed the questionnaires and conducted interviews with selected leaders and pastors.

Church and organizations need to revise their evangelistic methods to keep pace with modern methods of communication. Tools such as iPads, mobile phones, and various apps can be used for Christian leadership training and are common in most parts of the world. Understanding their availability and acceptance in these remote areas will allow updated training programs to be developed.

Ministry Context for Observing the Phenomenon

Chhattisgarh is a state in North-Central India. It is the tenth largest state in India, with an area of 135,190 km (52,200 sq. mi). With a population of 25.5 million, Chhattisgarh is the sixteenth most-populated state of the nation. Chhattisgarh accounts for 15 percent of the total steel produced in the country. The state was formed on November 1, 2000 by partitioning sixteen Chhattisgarhi-speaking southeastern districts of Madhya Pradesh. Raipur was made its capital city. Chhattisgarh borders the states of Madhya Pradesh in the north-west. Maharashtra in the south-west, Andhra

Pradesh in the south, Odisha in the in the east, Jharkhand in the North-east and Uttar Pradesh in the North. Currently the state comprises twenty-seven districts.

Chhattisgarh has one of the lowest standards of living in India as per the income index (0.127). Chhattisgarh has an education index of 0.526 according to 2011 census. In literacy, the state fared just below the national average. Recent estimates from the 2011 census reported a literacy rate of 71 percent (81.4 percent Males and 60.5 percent Females), which is close to the country's literacy rate of 74 percent. According to National Service Scheme (NSS) (2007–8), the literacy rate for scheduled tribes and scheduled castes was better than the corresponding national average; this is a positive sign. Among the marginalized groups, scheduled tribes are at the bottom of the rankings, further emphasizing the lack of social development in the state. Bastar and Dantewada in south Chhattisgarh are the most illiterate districts and the drop-out ratio is the highest among all the districts due to extreme poverty in rural areas. More than half of the rural scheduled tribes and urban scheduled castes are poor. In general, the proportion of poor scheduled caste and scheduled tribes' households in the state is higher than the state average and their community's respective national averages.

There are 12,832,895 males and 12,712,303 females in Chhattisgarh or 2.11 percent of the country's total population. The incidence of poverty in Chhattisgarh is very high but is better than Odisha and Bihar. The incidence of poverty in the rural and urban areas is almost the same. There were 25.5 million people in Chhattisgarh as per the census 2011 of which 93.25 percent were Hindu, 2.02 percent Muslim, and 1.92 percent Christian. Chhattisgarh now has the highest Hindu percentage in the world by state. The official language of the state is Hindi and is used by non-rural

population of the state. Chhattisgarhi, a dialect of Hindi language, is spoken and understood by the majority of people in Chhattisgarh.

The Durg district is situated in the west-central part of the Chhattisgarh plain. The district is bordered by the Kabeerdham and Bilaspur districts in the north, the Raipur and Dhamtari districts in the east, the Rajnandagaon district in the west and Uttar Bastar Kanker in the south. The Durg district was constituted on January 1, 1906. As of the 2011 census, the Durg district was the second most populous district of Chhattisgarh. The district derives its name from the headquarters town of “Durg,” which is the vernacular word for a fort. The headquarters town contains the ruins of a mud fort said to be of great antiquity. Now obliterated, Durg is an old town with a fort on the eastern bank of the Seonath river. It is likely that its full name was originally Shiv-Durg, two different deities of Hindu mythology. This district is home to two important religious sites: the principal Hindu temple, the *Ganga Maiyaat Jhalmala*, and the Jain shrine of *Uwasaggaharam Parshwa Teerth* at Nagpura. The Bhilai steel plant situated in Bhilai Nagar of Durg is the pride of the district. It has been the flagship integrated steel plant unit of the public sector steel company. It is the largest and most profitable production facility and the only manufacturer of rails in the country used by Indian Railways.

Conditions for ministry in the Durg district are similar to those in most of the North Indian villages. According to the 2011 census Christian population in Chhattisgarh is just 1.92 percent, it means in absolute number it is just 490,542, out of 25,545,198 people in Chhattisgarh. Christianity is more prevalent in the southern states of India so most of the pastors working in the North Indian states are missionaries from the south. This can be challenging for the southern missionaries so it is important to develop native leaders in the north. Native evangelists share the

language, culture, and lifestyle of those they preach to. Most of the pastors who serve God in the villages are untrained or uneducated. Many are not interested or do not have the resources to go to Bible colleges for training. They have faith and ability to preach and are content with that. They rely on the guidance of God. Faith and ability cannot be condemned, but their success is not stable.

India has become one of the largest software producers in the world next to the USA. More and more high-tech companies are establishing themselves in places like Hyderabad and Bangalore. A number of Christians, both Indians and Westerners, have found the high-tech field to be a very effective vehicle for providing technical assistance to Christian ministries and for generating income and jobs for the support of missions. This newly emerging group of “techno-Christians” is brimming with ideas for enhancing research, facilitating more rapid and secure communication, penetrating unreached areas, and linking Indian leaders with one another and with the larger Body of Christ. Many feel that the only way to address the vast challenges of India and to train a sufficient number of workers is through the massive use of digital tools, including the Internet, cyber-classrooms, and DVD, and more.(David).

Participants

Criteria for Selection

The three groups of participants cover the district of Durg. Most of them were from remote tribal villages while some were from urban and suburban areas. There were differences in the growth of churches in remote villages and urban cities. I selected participants from urban area to be the part of this study in order to understand the difference in the growth of urban and rural churches and the challenges they face. Most of the challenges occur in small villages and rural areas. Educated residents from other states occupied many of the cities, which provides urban churches with well-educated, qualified pastors and leaders. The persecution of Christians tends to be less in urban areas where there tends to be equality in general. In contrast, many villages are highly segmented by caste, religion, and / or language. Intolerance and attack of Christians happens more frequently in villages, which creates significant obstacles for leadership

training. I chose the participants to represent various institutions and individuals involved in Christian leadership training.

Description of Participants

Three groups participated in this study. The people who helped interpret the local languages and translated the questionnaires and other documents into local languages and dialects comprised the first group. I selected the interpreters after much prayer and spiritual discernment. They have worked with the researcher for years.

The second group of people served as research assistants. It includes those who helped distribute the questionnaires, arranged the seminars, and collected completed questionnaires. The group included ten pastors who serve in ten areas of the Durg district of Chhattisgarh and are indicated as P-1 to P-10 as follows:

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. P - 1 | - Patan |
| 2. P - 2 | - Nandini |
| 3. P - 3 | - Utai |
| 4. P - 4 | - Jamul |
| 5. P - 5 | - Bhilai |
| 6. P - 6 | - Durg |
| 7. P - 7 | - Maroda |
| 8. P - 8 | -Charoda |
| 9. P - 9 | - Damda |
| 10. P - 10 | - Kumhari |

Among these P-7, P - 8, and P -10 are working in the urban cities, the rest of the pastors are serving God in the rural villages of the Durg district. These ten pastors are theologically trained and have the leadership qualities to organize the meetings.

A total of 268 people participated in this research. They were of different, cultures, tribes, lifestyles, positions, educational level, status, and churches. There were founders and presidents of Christian organizations and ministries; principals, deans, registrars, and faculty members and staff of Christian colleges and seminaries; pastors; laymen; clergies; and missionaries in the Durg district of Chhattisgarh state; believers and church members. Those surveyed included individuals of almost all castes, tribes, classes, and denominations, covering both men and women in ministry and people involved in children and youth ministry. Tribes represented include the Satnami, Gonds, Muria, Dhurvaa, and scheduled castes. Among these tribes, the Satnamies are most like Christians because they do not worship any idol and are strictly against idol worship. The pastors, leaders, and believers are from different denominations, including the Indian Pentecostal Church, the Assemblies of God, the Church of God, Sharon Church, Baptist Churches, the Brethren Assembly, and Believers church. Methods and strategies vary at each location and in each denomination, and so a broad survey was necessary.

Procedure for Collecting Evidence from Participants

I used distributed questionnaires and interviews to collect evidence. Tim Sensing's *Qualitative Research* suggests how to make effective questionnaires for participant data collection (118, 119) and how to conduct effective interviews (120 - 124). I followed his methods in this study. For information collection I formed a team of ten pastors who had previously worked with me in leadership training. These pastors each had a record of active participation, a commitment to ministry, and a strong ability for the work. The Durg district was divided into ten divisions to facilitate the distribution of questionnaires. These were: Durg, Kumhari, Dhamdha, Bhilai, Jamul, Utai, Patan, Charoda, Maroda and Nandini. Each pastor was assigned

one of the divisions and asked to organize a one-day seminar there to include local pastors and select believers from the area.

I held a session to orient the pastors. This session explained the background material of this research project and the goal of the seminars. Understanding the purpose and intent of the research and the expectation of seminar participants enabled the pastors to appropriately select seminar participants. I instructed the pastors to visit local churches throughout the week to invite local pastors to the seminar. I also asked these pastors to announce the seminars after their Sunday worship services, select representatives to attend, and explain the purpose of the research. They advised the participants of their role in the research.

Ten seminars were carried out over two months. These seminars included a combined minimum of 250 to 300 participants and covered the entire district of Durg. I scheduled and ran the seminars in every division in September or October. Each pastor informed local churches of the seminars and invited representatives from each church to participate. They invited three to four participants from each church. The representatives from each church included the church pastor, an elder of the church, a mature believer from the church, a youth that had been born again, and a baptized believer. Each seminar had a minimum of 25 to 30 participants representing these categories. Women were included as well as men.

Each seminar had two sessions. Morning sessions were titled, "The Need of Christian Leadership Training for the Church Growth" while afternoon sessions included discussion and interaction with participants. This allowed participants time to discuss and explain any challenges they faced in attending training programs. Trainers also discussed their challenges in advancing training programs and the need they saw to implement new strategies for leadership training.

I used two different methods to collect the data during the seminars. First, a research questionnaire was given to participants in order to understand the challenges, obstacles, and issues of the Christian leadership training programs as well as the current methods and strategies used for the leadership training. After the questionnaires were distributed and completed, I asked the local pastors to collect the completed questionnaires. The local pastors gave them to the assigned division pastor who passed them on to me. After the completion of all the seminars and the collection of all questionnaires, there was a special meeting with the ten pastors to analyze and discuss the findings of the questionnaires.

Second, I conducted the interviews during these seminars. These were recorded in electronic devices and written documents. During the interviews, I asked the same questions found in the questionnaires. Because the questionnaires and interviews served the same purpose, only people who did not receive the questionnaires participated in the interviews. The research team mainly interviewed laymen, or pastors who do not have basic education and could not read or write.

Apart from these participants, a few selected church leaders, such as organizational presidents, Christian college principals, deans and lecturers also received the questionnaires. These individuals are involved in Christian leadership training programs and understand challenges to and existing methods used for the leadership program.

The ten pastors whom I selected to assist me in this research program took part in a one day training and discussion regarding the process and arrangements of the seminars to distribute the questionnaires. They signed in a confidentiality agreement form to ensure their willingness to be part of this research. A copy of the confidentiality agreement is included in this dissertation in Appendix E. I gave special

instructions to each one regarding how to reach the nearby churches to invite the pastors and representatives and how to make the necessary arrangements for the seminars. I gave invitation letters to the ten selected pastors to invite the nearby church pastors and representatives and inform them of the reason and subject of the seminar. I presided over all ten seminars conducted in ten different areas. Therefore, I conducted all ten seminars in the same manner.

Ethical Considerations

The participants of this study were mostly from the District of Durg, but a few were from other districts. The participants belong to different denominations. The participants were selected irrespective of denominations or doctrinal issues. As it was mentioned, earlier the participants had different cultures, adopted different life styles, were from tribes and had different backgrounds. Therefore, the research team respected their right to reject participation in the project and compelled no participant to oblige. Before the intervention I informed the participants of my purpose of meeting and asked for their consent. Each participant received an informed consent to give approval for their participation in the research. The letter of consent is included in this dissertation as Appendix F. I kept the confidentiality of the persons involved in the project. I kept all the filled questionnaires and interview recordings in safe custody and I did not pass them on to anyone.

Procedure for Analyzing the Evidence Collected

Two books were used as the basis for analyzing the questionnaires and interviews: Tim Sensing's *Qualitative Research, A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses*, and Ket De Vries' *The Hedgehog Effect: The Secrets of Building High Performance Teams*. The methods followed will be discussed in the next chapter in detail.

The completed questionnaires and interviews provided the information needed to tabulate the collected information and analyze it systematically according to geography, community, tribe, age, gender, and church denomination. I created a list of pastors and laymen who were not theologically trained and their reasons for being unable to study in training centers or seminars. I tabulated the existing challenges to leadership training, taking note of specific challenges in particular areas or groups. I also noted suggestions to address these challenges. I was especially interested in the different strategies that the different denomination use and the effectiveness of those strategies. I used this analysis of the data to create a list of practical and effective strategies for future training.

Reliability and Validity of Project Design

There is no question of reliability of information collected through the distributed questionnaires and interviews because I met each and every participant involved in this research. I appointed the ten selected pastors only to reach the local churches and invite the participants and make the necessary arrangements for the seminars. I did all teachings during the seminar sessions. Although the appointed pastors returned some of the questionnaires later I had personal interaction with all participants during questionnaire distribution and interviews. There was no outside influence on participants that they may manipulate any kind of information for personal benefits. All participated because they wanted to have change and development in their churches and their spiritual life.

I took certain measures to ensure that the tools for research aligned with the purpose of the research and the research questions. First, the research team chose locations that had already faced challenges for Christian leadership training. Second, I constructed and arranged the questions in the questionnaires to clearly address the

purpose of the research. During the seminar, I explained thoroughly the questions in the questionnaires so that participants understood that the purpose of the research was to facilitate their work. Third, instead of meeting people individually, I brought together a group of people from a particular area to overcome a common challenge. This gave them confidence of their ability to address these challenges as a group, and many of them returned the completed questionnaires on the day of the seminar.

Review of the Chapter

This chapter has explained the nature of and restated the purpose of the research as well as explained the research questions. It explained the criteria for selecting the participants for the research; what caused people to be selected to be part of this study and why they are part of this research. It also gives a brief description of the participants regarding their gender, education, castes, and involvement in the church and ministry.

It also explained the procedure of the data collection method. The chapters lays out the methods followed to reach the participants, distribute the questionnaires, conduct the interviews, and collect the information from the participants.

CHAPTER 4

EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

The purpose of this research was to discover the existing challenges and strategies for Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh and possibilities for implementing new strategies for the betterment of advancing the gospel in North India. This chapter presents the findings of a qualitative, phenomenological study involving 275 participants including church presidents, Bible college principals, Bible college teachers, pastors, trainers, and church believers including men, women, and youth from the churches of the District of Durg in Chhattisgarh state. The findings were derived from ten seminars conducted over a two-month period, followed by three months of data coding and analysis. This chapter analyzes the research collected to determine answers to the primary research questions. It also analyzes demographic information about the participants.

Participants

A total of 275 people participated in this study. I interviewed seven people and collected 268 properly filled out questionnaires of the 295 distributed, which constitutes the major part of the findings of the research. The participants were from the Durg district of Chhattisgarh. The ages of the participants were from 19 to 50 years. Most them were first generation Christians, and all were born-again baptized Christians. Out of the 268, sixty-three were pastors, including the pastors involved in the Christian leadership training program; eight were president, principals, or directors of Bible colleges; fourteen were leadership trainers; eighteen were elders from the churches, seventeen were Bible college students; and there were 116 believers, both male and females, thirty-two of whom were youth. The 268

participants belonged to different castes and tribes, had different backgrounds, and were mostly from the remote rural villages. They were from a total of twelve church denominations: Indian Pentecostal Church of God, Assemblies of God, Church of God, Church of North India, Brethren Assembly, Baptist Church, Mennonite Church, Marthoma Church, Jacobite Church, Roman Catholic Church, Sharon Church of God, and independent churches. Many of the women are not employed outside their home. The men's occupations included farmers, drivers, business people, and teachers. See Table 4.1.

Although I planned to interview more people, due to the lack of time I was unable to interview many. Only seven people were interviewed. Other than the three pastors who participated in the seminars, and were illiterate, I also interviewed a Bible college principal and three trainers of Christian leadership training program. The interviews were unstructured according to Tim Sensing's definition in his book, *Qualitative Research*. Tim identifies unstructured interviews as having "open-ended questions" and being "flexible," "exploratory," and "conversational." (106). The location and atmosphere were different for each interview. Interview duration averaged between sixty to seventy-five minutes. The recorded interviews are filed in a digital format on a pen-drive for use until the research completion. The interview recordings will be stored until the researcher has completed the research.

Table 4.1 List of Participants By Category

Category of Participants	No of Participants	Percentage
Pastors/Laymen	63	24%
President/Director/ Principal	8	3%
Trainers	14	5%
Church Elders	18	7%
Bible College Students	17	6%
Believers (Male)	84	31%
Believers (Female)	32	12%
Youth (Male)	19	7%
Youth (female)	13	5%
Total No. Of Questionnaires	268	100%

The above list is illustrated in the figure below by percentage:

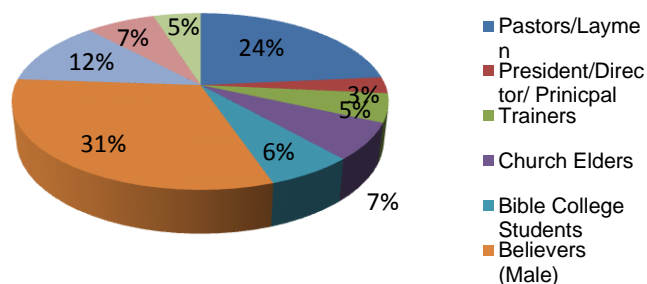


Figure 4:2 Participants according to the category

The researcher also analyzed the theological background of the pastors working in the villages who participated in the study. This helps to understand the need for Christian leadership training in the villages of North India. Part of the questionnaire specifically addressed the theological qualifications of these pastors. See Table 4.2. Many people who leave the villages for theological training do not return to the villages. They look for work within big cities at a Bible college or in a

mega church. The two pastors in our study holding Master of Divinity degrees serve in city churches. The two-year Master of Divinity degree is possible after the completion of a Bachelor degree. Of the four pastors with Bachelor of Theology degrees, two are working in city churches, and two are in the villages. One has his theological education in Hindi rather than English. The Graduate in Theology is a two-year program offered after the successful completion of high school. Out of six pastors with this degree, one received it after he became a pastor and had served in a church for three years.

Others become pastors without finishing high school. The Diploma in Theology is a two-year program offered to people who have failed high school. This degree is in the native language of the people studying. Out of the nine pastors with this degree, four of them went to Bible college after they have pioneered their churches and were ministers in the church for two to three years. Many of them wanted to study more but could not as further education is only available in English. Due to family issues and personal problems, many are unable to go for long-term training; people prefer to go for one year training. Some need certificates, and others just wanted to learn. Eleven pastors in our study have only one-year training, which is called a Certificate in Theology. Many enroll in this program as it allows them to visit their churches and homes every weekend, and they can manage their ministry while pursuing their studies. Among the eleven people, five of them do not have certificates. Moreover, four of them studied not as residential students in the college but as day scholars.

Nine people in the study who are currently pursuing their studies are pastors. Five of them have appointed mature believers from their churches to take care of their churches until they finish their training program. Among these nine people, four are

studying for the Bachelor of Theology, two for a Graduate in Theology, and three for a Diploma in Theology. Many have dropped out of their theological education due to many reasons including family issues, the food available in the Bible colleges, and classmates with different cultures and lifestyles.

Five pastors could not complete their theological education due to the following reasons: one had a problem with the climate; three with the food that was available; and one with the difficulty of the study.

Table 4.2 Pastors and Their Theological Qualifications

Sl. No	Degrees	No. of Pastors	Percentage
1	Master of Divinity	2	3%
2	Bachelor of Theology	4	6%
3	Graduate in Theology	6	10%
4	Diploma in Theology (2 Yrs)	9	14%
5	Certificate in Theology (1 Yr)	6	10%
6	1 Year Course (No certificate)	5	8%
7	Currently Studying	9	14%
8	Discontinued From College	5	8%
9	Attending Leadership Training	13	21%
10	No Bible Training	4	6%
	Total Number of Pastors	63	100%

Thirteen pastors involved in the research had attended leadership training. Three were involved in a theological distance education program but were not satisfied with their studies. Details about the leadership program will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. There were four pastors who did not have any kind of formal theological education. Of those four, three were above forty-five years old and

one was around thirty-nine years old. Although the pastors of the area do not have much theological education, a growing desire for theological education is seen from the following table.

Research Questions

The research questions were carefully designed to serve the purpose of the research. According to Creswell, “because research questions narrow and focus the purpose statement, they serve to restate the purpose in specific questions that the researcher seeks to answer” (124). There are three research questions in this research that each illuminates different areas of the study.

Research Question #1: What are the challenges for the Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh?

There are two aspects to this research question. The first is the challenges faced by the pastors who would like to take part in this training program. The second is the challenges faced by the leaders who conduct the leadership training for the theologically untrained pastors. These aspects differ since the leaders who conduct the training program are not natives of these villages but are from other states of the country, mostly from the Southern states such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh.

Challenges Faced by the Pastors

The pastors who would like to participate in the leadership training program have a number of challenges making it difficult for them to do so. In the questionnaire prepared for pastors working in the villages, the questions numbered fifteen and sixteen address this research question. There was not a single person who said that he does not have any kind of challenges or obstacles for the Christian leadership training. The nature of the challenges is different across individuals,

cultures, tribes, and locations. Many individuals face more than one challenge. The majority of the Christians in North Indian villages are first generation Christians so many suffer from persecution within their own families. Sixty-three pastors responded through questionnaires and three in personal interviews to the question of challenges. This data is summarized in Table 4.3. Overall there were fifteen categories of challenges. Each type of challenge will be explained in detail in this section.

Table 4.3 List of Categories of Challenges Faced by the Village Pastors

SL No.	Categories of Challenges	No. of Pastors	Percentage
1	Financial Problems	59	93.65%
2	Family Issues	53	84.12%
3	Personal issues	49	77.77%
4	Food Problems	47	74.60%
5	Health Issues	39	61.90%
6	Social Issues	37	58.73%
7	Lack of Time	33	52.38%
8	Black Magic	31	49.20%
9	Caste Issues	26	41.26%
10	Oppositions from the villagers	23	36.50%
11	Cultural issues	20	31.74%
12	Lack of people to assist their Ministry	18	28.57%
13	Language Problems	13	20.63%
14	Illiteracy	7	11.11%
15	Attacks by Naxalites	7	11.11%

1. Financial problems.

Financial problems are the most common challenge that pastors who want to go for theological training face. Sources of earning are limited, and they are very much dependent upon forest and agriculture, having mostly small land holding, labor work and migration. The tribal community is still depending upon moneylenders for its domestic purposes and social liabilities.

The two issues related to the financial problem are the cost of education and the cost of living. The first issue is the fees and expenses related to study and the seminary life. Today in India, theological education is costly. There was a time when most of the theological seminaries offered free education and training for the committed and willing Christians. A very few colleges will still offer free education to committed students, but even if a student is given free education in a particular seminary, he has to find resources to meet the financial expenses for his family. Eleven pastors did have someone to sponsor them or an offer for free education, but they were still concerned about their family's daily financial needs.

The second issue related to the finances is the income required to take care of family expenses during the period of study. Since many pastors are married and have family, they must find the financial resources to meet their seminary expenses and the daily needs of their families. Family expenses are varied and include food, medicine, and children's education. Out of fifty-nine pastors, seven have other family members to take care of the family's financial needs. These family members included a brother, father, or adult child of the student. Forty-one of the fifty-nine pastors did have financial challenges related to both study and family.

Table 4.4 Financial Issues

SL. No	Financial Issues	No. of Pastors
1	Financial expenses related to study	7
2	Financial expenses related to family	11
3	Financial expenses related to both study and family	41

2. Family issues.

The pastors surveyed have many responsibilities at home. Chhattisgarh's roughly twenty-one million residents live in and around twenty thousand villages and

towns, and 80 percent of the population lives in rural areas (Office of the Registrar General). The people in the rural villages are mostly farmers who work daily for their livelihood. Therefore, they have many responsibilities at home and dependents to take care of. One of the major family issues is that many of the pastors are married and have a wife and children to look after. Many of the tribal people get married at a young age. Of the pastors surveyed, 84.12 percent have family issues. According to the data collected the family issues are: 1) Responsibility towards a wife and children and providing for the daily needs for the family; 2) Education of children; 3) Responsibility for unmarried sisters and brothers; 4) Responsibility for aged parents; 5) Construction of a house; 6) Looking after a farm and cultivations; and 7) Disabled or sick people at home. Most of the pastors have more than one issue. Table 4.5 summarizes these issues.

Table 4.5 List of Family Issues

SL. No	Family Issues	No of Pastors
1	Responsibilities towards wife and children	31
2	The education of children	39
3	Responsibility towards unmarried sisters or brothers	15
4	Responsibility towards aged parents	27
5	Construction of house	9
6	Taking care of farm and cultivation	29
7	Disabled or sick family members	6

3. Personal issues.

Many of the pastors who responded that they have personal issues did not reveal what they meant by that. A few did speak of specific issues such as a phobia in mingling with other people, a problem in living in a hostel with strangers, sickness, and issues like homesickness.

4. Food problems.

Food is another challenge that people face when they go for leadership training programs in other places. Every tribe and caste has its own authentic food according to its traditions. Most of the people converted from Hindu religion are still vegetarians. They do not eat any kind of meat. Some people cannot tolerate even the smell of fish or other non-vegetarian food. Eating beef is considered a crime in most of the states of India, especially in North Indian states.

5. Health issues.

Out of fifty-nine pastors, thirty-nine have some kind of personal health issue. Many of those surveyed suffered from malaria, and most of the women are anemic. The other health issue is that most of the pastors from remote and tribal villages suffer from the lack of proper nutrition in childhood. In spite of these health issues and dietary deficiencies many of them still work from morning until evening in the fields.

6. Social issues.

Social issues are another barrier for Christian leadership training in most of the North Indian villages. If the community realizes that someone from the village converted to Christianity and is trying to convert others, they often boycott him from society. Since the villagers collect drinking water from the common well, they will ban him from collecting water. He may also be prohibited from working on other farms, and his children may be suspended from the village school.

7. Lack of time.

There are severe time constraints on the villagers' daily lives that limit their availability to attend theological or leadership training. Villagers work 365 days a year, and most work from morning until evening in the fields. Other evening time is spent going to market for their daily needs. Many of them work under Hindu landlords

for their livelihood and are not given leave or holidays for any kind of Christian activities or training programs.

8. Black magic.

Chhattisgarh villages are known for their black magic and sorcery. Many believe and practice the sorcery in these villages. Some of the Hindu people attack the Christians through the evil practices such as sorcery, black magic and necromancy. During the seminar, a village pastor happened to explain his encounter with a sorcerer and the issues he faced later in his life due to the sorcery done against him and his ministry.

9. Caste issues.

Most of the North India villages are under the crippling hands of casteism. People of Chhattisgarh belong to different castes and tribes. Each has its own cultures and untouchabilities. They do not mingle with people of other castes or tribes. Usually each tribe settles in a particular place. They do not inter-marry with other tribes or castes. Some are high caste, and some are low caste. Usually schedule caste and schedule tribes are underestimated by other caste or tribe people. This becomes another challenge for bringing the different caste or tribe people under one umbrella.

10. Opposition from the villagers.

Most of the North Indian villages are ruled or controlled by the head of the village. He is known as *sarpanch* of the village and makes decision for all the villagers. If a person converts to Christianity, his neighbors inform the *sarpanch*, and he will declare the punishment for the converted person or family. Since India is ruled by a Hindu led government, the local Hindu religious people take advantage of their government and persecute the Christians in their vicinity. They used to destroy their

cultivation, kill their cattle, ban children from going to school, or not allowing them to work in their fields.

11. Cultural issues.

Culture differs from caste to caste and tribe to tribe. Each caste has their own cultural traditions. It is found in their costume, food, job, practices, and behaviors. Each caste and tribe is proud of its cultural traditions and customs. Most of the time this becomes an obstacle to bringing them under one roof for the leadership training program.

12. Lack of people to assist the ministry.

It is always a big challenge for the pastors to hand over their church to someone in their absence. When a lay pastor goes for the Bible training, he is compelled to hand over the responsibilities of his church to someone who is able to take care of the spiritual matters of the church until he comes back. It is normally very difficult to find an able person to hand over the responsibility of the church during an absence.

13. Language problem.

Language problems are another main obstacle for the theological training of these village pastors. The common language is Hindi, however, 80 percent of rural village people do not speak Hindi. They speak Chhattisgarhi instead. "The many tribal groups in the state speak a number of different languages and dialects. Officially, Chhattisgarhi has yet to be recognized as a language. Instead it is considered a dialect derived from Hindi." ([http://journeymart.com /de/india/chhattisgarh/language.aspx](http://journeymart.com/de/india/chhattisgarh/language.aspx)). It can be difficult to obtain or develop training materials appropriate for the non-Hindi speakers.

14. Illiteracy.

According to the census in 2011, the male literacy rate was 80.27 percent, and the female literacy rate was 60.2 percent. The rural literacy rate of Chhattisgarh is 65.99 percent. Roughly 64 percent of people in the rural villages are non-literate in Chhattisgarh. This number includes many pastors in the rural villages of Chhattisgarh. Out of sixty three pastors, seven of them are non-literates or have only limited literacy skills. It is interesting to note that four of the seven have learned to read the Bible. They say that this was by the grace of God: they do not read other books, but they are at least able read the Bible and preach the word of God.

15. Attacks by Naxalites.

Chhattisgarh is one among a number of states, which have the presence of Naxalites group called Maoists. They often threaten and kill believers and evangelists. A pastor shared an incident that happened in a church on Sunday April 17, 2016. Two unidentified men armed with sharp-edged weapons barged into a church in Chhattisgarh's Bastar district and allegedly set ablaze a Bible and other articles besides thrashing the pastor and his pregnant wife. Similar incidents happen often in Chhattisgarh rural villages. Therefore, pastors from remote villages are afraid of such groups of people and keep themselves away from Bible training programs.

The Challenges Faced by the Trainers

Besides the preceding challenges faced by village pastors who need training, the people who work as trainers for the pastors face their own challenges. Seventeen trainers participated in this study, fourteen through the distributed questionnaire and three in interviews. Two trainers were from Chhattisgarh; four from South India and raised in Chhattisgarh; seven from South India and settled in Chhattisgarh for ministry purposes, and four were sent from other states by organizations to teach leadership

seminars in Chhattisgarh. There were fourteen types of challenges revealed by the trainers in the interviews and questionnaires. Table 4.6 summarizes them.

Table 4.6 List of Challenges Faced By the Trainers

Sl. No	Category of Challenges	No. of Trainers	Percentage
1	Anti-Conversion Bill	17	100%
2	Language Problem	14	82.35%
3	Cultural Issues	11	64.70%
4	Casteism	17	100%
5	Lack of Literatures and Study Materials	17	100%
6	Terrorist Attacks	6	35.29%
7	Attacks by Villagers	10	58.82%
8	Lack of Cooperation from other pastors	6	35.29%
9	Transportation	9	52.94%
10	Accommodation	11	64.70%
11	Food	12	70.58%
12	Lack of Electricity	9	52.94%
13	Drinking Water	15	88.23%
14	Phone Network & Internet Facility	13	76.46%

1. Anti-conversion bill.

Anti-conversion legislation in India refers to the laws enacted by several Indian states that prohibit Hindus from converting to Christianity. There are five states in India that have passed the anti-conversion bill: Gujarat, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh. Hindu fundamentalists claim Christian missionaries forcefully convert Hindus to Christianity. “The stated purpose of the anti-conversion laws is to prohibit religious conversions allegedly made by ‘force,’ ‘fraud,’ or ‘allurement’” (http://www.conservapedia.com/Anti-conversion_legislation_in_India). It also provides that “the return to ancestor’s original religion

or his own original religion by any person shall not be construed as ‘conversion’.” (<http://www.firstpost.com/politics/hindutva-targeting-of-christians-in-chhattisgarh-over-conversions-really-about-land-1842511.html>). Many see this provision as a means to allow the continuance of programs by right-wing Hindu organizations – branded as *Ghar Wapsi* or homecoming to reconvert Christians to Hinduism. The bill requires a person intending to convert to another religion to apply to the district collector at least 30 days in advance. The Collector is vested with the right to refuse permission to convert. This is seen as an infringement of one’s constitutional right to choose one’s religion.

In an interview, one of the trainers shared his experience of being in prison for ten days due to the accusation of conversion. It took almost three and half years to close the case and become free from the issue. This is the biggest challenge the trainers face in Chhattisgarh in relation to the leadership training, especially the trainers who are from states other than Chhattisgarh.

2. Language problem.

Language problems are another significant issue that trainers face in their leadership training programs. Most of the missionary trainers work in North India and have learned the language Hindi. Chhattisgarh has two official languages: Hindi and Chhattisgarhi. Most of the people in the remote villages and tribal area do not speak Hindi; they use Chhattisgarhi. “According to the Indian Government, Chhattisgarhi is an eastern dialect of Hindi, but it is classified as a separate language in Ethnologue”. (<http://www.echhattisgarh.in/index.php?cmd=articles&articleid=184>). There are even more dialects spoken by the tribal people besides Chhattisgarhi. “In addition to Chhattisgarhi Proper, there are several other identified dialects including Baighani, Bhulia, Binjhvari, Kalanga, Kavardi, Khairagarhi, Sadri Korwa, and Surgujia”.

(<http://www.echhattisgarh.in/index.php?cmd=articles&articleid=184>). This becomes a challenge even for trainers from Chhattisgarh who speak Chhattisgarhi.

Besides speaking, written language is also an issue in training. Most training materials are in English and Hindi only. Usually trainers use the books in English and Hindi in their teaching and interpret the content to the languages of the audience. There are issues of getting equivalent words in Chhattisgarhi for the English words. Since the materials are not available in the Chhattisgarhi language, the trainees cannot fully understand the content of the seminars and teachings. The pastors who are coming for the leadership training are not well educated. Most of them have not completed high school or college, and it has been several years since they have left their studies. Most trainees are at least thirty years old and have lost touch of reading and writing in the Hindi language. This becomes a challenge for both trainers and trainees in their leadership program.

Teaching with an interpreter is not possible most of the time. Since the villagers are not very educated overall, one cannot trust the interpreters completely. Moreover, it consumes a lot of time for teaching. Many times trainer cannot satisfy the queries of the participants. Interpreters often do not get the apt words for many of the biblical terms.

3. Cultural issues.

Cultural differences often become a great challenge for missionary activities. In particular, North Indian cultures are entirely different from South Indian. Differences in social life, food, clothing, beliefs, and customs become barriers for smooth communication and interaction. Untouchability among the Hindi, who consider Christians as low caste or untouchable, is another issue related to the social status. Another big cultural problem is the sanitation in the tribal areas. Most of the

villages do not have closed toilets or bathrooms. Stagnated and contaminated water is everywhere as are mosquitoes and flies. In some houses cattle share the house and are kept in the adjacent room.

4. Casteism.

Another big challenge is seen is the casteism that has prevailed among the rural people. Casteism is one of the rural social problems which is very peculiar to the Indian society. Indian society is a country of various religions. Each religion is sub-divided into different castes, and these castes again into sub-castes. The culture of each caste varies though they all belong to one religion. Among these castes, some are given a high status and others a low status, depending upon their caste occupation. People are divided into many groups by castes. Usually tribal people stay together according to their tribe. Rural people in most places are found as groups according to their castes. Casteism even divides the unity of the churches and Christian fellowships. People are asked to follow endogamy. They are restricted from marrying the other caste people. All seventeen surveyed trainers mentioned casteism as an issue for leadership training. It affects trainers from Chhattisgarh, those who moved there, and those visiting from other states to conduct leadership training (Mondal).

5. Lack of literatures and study materials.

Lack of sufficient literature and training materials are another challenge for the Christian leadership training. The great majority of Christian literature and reference materials are still in English, and most of them are written by Western writers. Often the tracts that are available in the vernacular language are simply the translations of Western tracts, rather than serious attempts to change the Indian mind with an Indian style. Even the training materials written in India, by Indians, are largely in English. Bible reference tools and commentaries in most of the Indian

languages, including Hindi, are scarce to non-existent. Books are also needed to address contemporary social and theological issues in India, to help guide the thinking of the churches and their leaders in these rapidly changing times.

6. Terrorist attacks.

There are many reported attacks by terrorists on churches and missionary activities in Chhattisgarh. Reports say that from March 2013 to 2014, there were forty-two such assaults against Christians in Chhattisgarh and in the same period from 2014 to 2015 that total rose to fifty-one (<https://cruxnow.com/church/2016/04/19/latest-attack-on-christians-in-india-confirms-climate-of-fear/>).

7. Attacks by villagers.

Most of the rural villages have concentrations of *Hindutva* groups, who are in tune with the *Bharatheeya Janata Party* (BJP) and attack the Christians, missionaries, and churches in the villages. One of the participants recounted an incident that occurred in 2014 in his village Mudhota. A mob of thirty-five people entered the church and beat up everyone, including women and children, and told them to become Hindu or else prepare to be killed. Most of the villages have the influence of the Hindu religious groups: *Vishwa Hindu Parishath*, *Siva Sena*, *Bajrang Dal*, and *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS). Therefore, most of the Christians and missionaries are in fear always in rural villages. Recently, a pastor trainer was taken with his fellow minister from a village while they were having a seminar in the village for the believers. They were taken to their temple side and beaten up badly through most of the night and left bleeding in early morning.

8. Lack of cooperation from other pastors.

Cooperation between pastors can be another issue within the Christian churches. Christians are divided by denominations. Many leaders do not allow their

local pastors to attend other organizations' seminars or training program. Therefore, these pastors do not allow their believers to attend the seminar or training programs either. Six pastors surveyed reported this. One described his experience when a leader warned him not to entice this leader's people to his own organization. These divisions limit the number of people that can be trained in each session.

9. Transportation.

Connectivity through transportation is very poor. Most of the state highways and village roads are in bad condition, and bus traveling in these areas is a nightmare. Most of the villages have *kacch* roads, with small streams, in between them. Hence, during rainy season, they are cut off from the main market places and big cities. Ordinary buses, mostly private, frequently travel among the towns in the districts, but few buses reach out to the remote areas in the north and central parts of Chhattisgarh. Private buses, auto rickshaws, and taxis are the major modes of transport in the villages. Primitive means like hand pulled rickshaws, *tuk tuks*, *tangas* (a light carriage or curricule drawn by two horses used for transportation in India), and *bailgadis* (a kind of bullock cart made of metal) are common in the rural belt of the state. Therefore, it is very difficult to reach these villages most of the times. Due to the bad conditions of village roads it is difficult to reach by private vehicle and even the taxi drivers do not come to such places. If they do come, they charge double the normal charge due to the bad condition of the roads.

10. Accommodation.

There is almost nowhere for visiting trainers to stay within the villages. Most villagers live in poor conditions in small bamboo houses. Most of the houses do not have sufficient space for guests to stay. There are no hotels or lodges near the villages for trainers to stay during the leadership training program. A missionary trainer

coming from outside of the state often has difficulty adjusting to the accommodations that are available in these villages.

11. Food.

Food is another issue faced by the trainers in their ministry field. Many have difficulty adjusting to the food offered to them in the villages. Village people usually use the vegetables cultivated in their fields in recipes relating to their culture or traditions. Their way of cooking and the combination of ingredients are always different from those of the people who live in the towns and cities. They are entirely different from that of the people or missionaries from other states of the nation.

12. Lack of electricity.

In terms of household electrification of states, there is not a single state or Union Territory in India, which has 100 percent household electrification.

According to Rolland and Patel,

More than 18,000 villages do not have electricity in India. According to the International Energy Agency, 404.5 million people do not have access to power. Many who do receive electricity face constant blackouts and the lack of a steady energy supply from their utility company. Erratic voltage levels and an unreliable power supply are major problems due to the inadequate energy supply and ageing transmission leading to power cuts. Rural areas face serious problems with the reliability of power supply. (Rolland and Patel).

Chhattisgarh is a new state and still under development with many tribal residents. It suffers badly from the scarcity of electricity in most of its rural villages. This creates another challenge for trainers staying in these villages and conducting the leadership seminars. They are unable to meet their basic needs such as fans during hot summers, charging points for mobile phones or laptops, and access to the internet.

13. Drinking water.

Most of the trainers reported that water in the open dug wells seemed to be contaminated. Hand pumps seem to be the next most popular source of water,

followed by stream water and tube wells. There are ponds in all villages, but the ponds are used mostly for taking baths and for cattle to drink and bath. During the summer season poor households, who do not have their own wells, have to depend on the small streams and rivers for drinking.

14. Phone network and internet facility.

The apathy of mobile networks is hitting Chhattisgarh really hard. Although twelve cellular operators are trying to outdo each other in terms of business in the state, people still suffer from poor network connectivity and call-drop issues. The trainers coming from outside the state always have a roaming phone, but it may not have a provider in the rural villages. Thus the trainers are disconnected from family and friends. Poor Internet facilities also disconnect people from other side of the globe. Today, every person traveling expects a phone connection and Internet access.

Research Question # 2: What existing strategies are being used currently for the Christian leadership training?

Existing Strategies for Leadership Training

There are different strategies used in conducting current leadership training seminars. Twelve different strategies were collected from the interviews and questionnaires. They are summarized in Table 4.7 and will be discussed further below.

Table 4.7. Existing Strategies For Leadership Training

Sl. No.	Existing Strategies
1	One week seminar once in six months
2	Three day seminar once in three months
3	One day seminar every month
4	Providing study materials
5	Audio devices for illiterate people
6	Focusing on discipleship
7	Focusing on evangelism
8	Focusing on church based theology
9	Social awareness seminars
10	Setting ministry goals
11	Group discussion on current issues
12	Giving financial support

Conducting Seminars for One Week Once in Six Months

This strategy offers two one-week long seminars a year for three years. Each seminar lasts six days for a total of twelve teaching days a year. This program is geared to pastors who want to learn the Bible in their own village. Local pastors help the teaching organization find an appropriate place to conduct the seminars. These seminars bring together village pastors irrespective of their organizations, caste, color, or any other social issues. These seminars run from Monday to Saturday, leaving Sunday free for pastors to conduct their normal worship services. Classes run from 9:00 am to 8:30 pm with breaks for eating. Lunch and tea are provided by the organization conducting the seminar, which accommodates participants who have traveled to attend and cannot easily return home at night.

The seminar presenters also provide Hindi language study materials as well as notebooks, pens, and folders for each participant for each subject. Three different

teachers teach at each seminar and they cover three different subjects. Over the course of three years, eighteen subjects are taught. These include: practical training related to conducting Sunday worship, home visiting, cottage meetings, and fasting prayers as well as biblical subjects like foundations of Christian life, discipleship, evangelism, cross-cultural evangelism, Bible surveys, basic doctrines of the Bible, and pastoral theology. After the successful completion of the course participants are awarded the degree of Graduate in Theology.

Three Days Seminar Once in Three Months

Three-day seminars every three months are an alternative to six-day seminars every six months. Similarly, there are twelve days of education in one year. These seem to be one of the most effective methods of Christian leadership training. I am part of an organization that conducts three-day seminar for the Christian leadership training. These seminars are conducted on weekdays, and run from 9:30 am to 8:00 pm. Each seminar covers one specific subject and is taught as a mix of lecture and group discussion. The students are provided Hindi language study materials, and books related to the subjects are in Hindi. Daily meals are provided by the organization conducting the seminar. Participants return home at night to eat and stay. Trainers stay in hotels in nearby towns. The organization conducting the seminar provides transportation for the trainers to and from the hotels.

Each three-day seminar is an intensive learning session with three daily sessions: morning, afternoon, and evening. The morning session is used for lectures; the afternoon session for lecture and discussion related to the lectures as well as social and spiritual issues. The evening session is a practical seminar where the pastors are assigned to lead the session, which allows them to grow as leaders.

The four seminars each year consist of a set curriculum. The first seminar covers elementary material such as how to conduct Sunday worship, house visiting, fasting prayer, and the fundamental doctrines of the Bible including prayer, faith, repentance, salvation, fellowship, baptism, lord's supper and Christian living. The second seminar delves into some of the theological teachings of the Bible: God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, man, and sin. The third seminar also deals with the doctrinal issues like salvation, church, angels, and the second coming of Jesus. The fourth seminar deals with the pastoral theology such as how to conduct a baptism, the Lord's Supper, child dedication, house dedication, weddings, and funeral services. At the successful completion of the course each student is given a diploma certificate.

One Day Seminar Every Month

Some trainings are conducted for one day each month. I attended one such training on December 14, 2016. It included eighteen student pastors. The meeting started at 9:30 am with prayers, Hindi songs, and a worship session. This twenty-minute session was led by one of the trainee pastors as practical training. The trainer then taught a practical class on developing good habits for home and ministry. It was character formation for the leaders. The passage was taken from 1 Thessalonians 4:1. During the class the trainer gave the students assignments to find the three issues that Paul deals with in that chapter. Most of the students were able to do it in the given time. The trainer then expanded the lesson by asking what issues Paul would see in the church today. After a ten-minute tea break, the researcher had time to share from the word of God as well as speak about the need and importance of Christian leadership training. During a lunch break that lasted from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm the organization provided a non-vegetarian meal.

One of the pastors started the afternoon session with a prayer and a song. Then time was given to the pastors to share their last month's experiences in the ministry, testimony, and prayer matters. Seven pastors shared their experiences in the ministry. Two of them explained how they brought a few people to Christ in the last month. Three pastors explained about the miracles that happened through their prayers in the life of unbelievers, and two others shared the challenges they faced from neighbors and other people and asked for prayers their ministry. During this time, attendance was taken by passing around an attendance register. After the sharing of testimonies, there was a small session of intercession, and all the pastors prayed for each other. The trainer then prayed and concluded the session. After the meeting was over the trainer distributed the monthly financial support to the pastors who attended the leadership training program.

Providing Study Materials

All the organizations working in the villages provide study materials in the Hindi language. However, not many books are available in Hindi. Most of the study materials are translated from English to Hindi. The books translated from English to Hindi deal with a foreign context and situations, and much of the things are not relevant within an Indian context.

Audio Devices for Illiterate People

Some organizations provide audio devices with the Bible and Bible stories (see Appendix 1 for pictures). This helps illiterate pastors understand the word of God as well as learn the Bible stories by heart. These devices can also be used in small gatherings to teach or to hear the word of God. Most of the devices used are run on solar energy so that they can be used in rural villages, where electricity is not available.

Focusing on Discipleship

Most of the leadership training programs set their first priority as teaching about discipleship. They teach: who is a disciple, the need of being a disciple, the cost of discipleship, and the responsibilities and rewards of a disciple. They aim to create second-generation leaders to work in their own native villages with the hope that they will reach more villages and establish new churches.

Focusing Evangelism

The ultimate goal of the leadership training is to equip the pastors to reach the unreached with the good news of Christ. Therefore, the main focus of training is to equip them to be more effective in evangelism. They equip the pastors for personal evangelism, house visiting, street evangelism, child evangelism, and tract distribution.

Focusing on Church Based Theology

Another main focus in the leadership training is the pastoral theology. Since the pastors are not theologically trained, many of them are not able to conduct certain services in the church, such as the Lord's Supper, baptism, child dedication, house dedication, church dedication, marriages, and funeral services. This training prepares them to be well equipped in performing these services in their churches.

Social Awareness Seminars

People need to be more aware about the social life and their part in the society. Some trainers conduct social awareness seminars for the pastors and believers. This kind of seminar is necessary in village areas, rather than in cities. Since the villagers are not well educated, people need to be instructed about their part in the development of society. These seminars help them to grow socially as they grow spiritually.

Setting Ministry Goals

Another training strategy is helping pastors to set their ministry goals. First, they need to understand and recognize their call and their ability to carry out the ministry. By mingling with these pastors for more than one year, trainers begin to recognize the pastors' strengths and weakness in their social and spiritual life. Based on the trainers' evaluations they help the pastors to set a specific ministry goal for a certain period and encourage them to achieve their goals.

Group Discussions on Current Issues

Group discussion on current issues is another leadership training strategy. Discussions are held about the instances of persecution, political changes, religious issues, current issues in the churches, and any other relevant current events. This helps the pastors share their own experiences related to ministry and social life. Most of the time pastors speak of the opposition that they face from other people of the village and the changes that are happening in the politics. The group discusses these issues and suggests some solutions to handle the situations and continue with ministry. It helps the pastors to pray for each other and create awareness of the hostile situation. It also helps them to stay unified and help each other in times of trouble.

Giving Financial Support

A few organizations conducting Christian leadership training programs support their student pastors financially. This is not true in most cases, however. Although it is not a big amount as salary or remuneration, it is an encouragement for the pastors who work daily for their livelihood. It shows that the organization has a concern for these pastors.

Research Question #3: What new strategies could be more effective for the Christian leadership training?

In the questionnaire for the pastors who are taking the leadership training program, the seventeenth question was, “If you are undergoing Christian leadership training now, are you satisfied with the curriculum and the training?” The response to this question revealed much about the present strategy in the leadership training program. In fact, most of the pastors were not satisfied or wanted to have changes made in the present strategy. Out of the sixty-three pastors, forty-nine people said that they are not at all satisfied with the present strategy that is being used now for the Christian leadership training. See Table 4.8.

Table 4. 8 Response to the Question, “Are You Satisfied with the Curriculum and Training?”

Sl. No	Response of Pastors	No of Pastors
1	Yes	5
2	No	49
3	Ok	2
4	Not bad	4
5	Very Good	1
6	I do not know	2

The following new strategies are the outcome of the research on the challenges and strategies on leadership training in Chhattisgarh state. They are based on the response of the participants of the seminars, including denominational leaders, Bible college principals, teachers, trainers, laymen and the believers. The following strategies are not currently used by any of the leadership training team. The new

strategies involve the use of social media and new technologies, involvement of women in the ministry, ongoing training and supervision even after the completion of leadership training.

Table 4.9. List of New Strategies

Sl. No.	New Strategies	No. of Pastors
1.	Provide ongoing training in the field even after the training	72
2.	Develop second level leaders to train others	52
3.	Provide leadership training to female leaders	7
4.	Provide training on new technologies and social medias	67
5.	Select one or two able pastors and provide them higher education	34
6.	Appoint a leader to oversee, and to give guidance to these pastors	48
7.	Provide study materials in Indian context and in Indian languages	70
8.	Provide social awareness to eradicate casteism	10
9.	Include English as an optional subject	47
10.	Provide more electronic devices for illiterate pastors	63
11.	Provide electronic equipments for the expansion of the ministry	49
12.	Provide basic computer education along with the training	71

Interview with Serve India Ministry

Serve India Ministry is an organization committed to serving in the North Indian villages to prepare the leaders and pastors to reach the unreached with the good news of Jesus Christ. Serve India Ministry conducts leadership seminars in most of the North Indian states. The leader interviewed works in the state of Chhattisgarh and the state of Odisha. Serve India Ministry sets certain requirements to be part of the leadership training. The person should have the call for ministry, must have vision for

church development, should have their own church or a house gathering with not less than fifteen believers, and should not be part of any other organizations.

Serve India Ministry conducts leadership seminars once a month from 10:00 am to 3:00pm. The leadership training program is for five years and offers 13 subjects as well as practical training. They provide a church based theology. At the end of the fifth year they award Bachelor of Ministry diplomas to the pastors who successfully completed the course. Their strategy includes: Power point presentations, literature on doctrinal issues, printed notes, group discussions, presentations, teaching, and film projectors. Since they meet once every month the trainers give the students certain assignments and presentations to do by themselves, which equips them to be more creative in the ministry. Serve India Ministry provides a small financial stipend to all the participants of leadership training every month.

Serve Indian Ministry provides two kinds of audio devices to the pastors who find difficulty reading the Bible. One has Bible stories, and the other is an audio Bible of the New Testament. Both have the function buttons of forward, rewind, pause, skip, and play. These devices are run by solar energy. They are especially made for the rural, remote villages, as many of the villages have no electricity. This helps illiterate pastors understand the Bible, and they can also use it in their churches to teach Bible stories to the believers. Since it runs by solar energy, pastors can use it without any expense. Serve India Ministry also provides a film projector in each unit of the leadership training center. The film projector and related materials are left with pastors who are part of the training program. The pastors use it in their villages to show Jesus' films and to share gospel with the villagers.

They have certain goals as part of the training, set for the pastors who are part of their training. Their goals are that each pastor should reach five villages by 2020

and establish churches in each village. They help the pastors find the villages and pioneer the ministry in each village. In the initial stages, the trainers take the pastors along with them to the village to expose them to ministry. At the end they select five potential and committed pastors from the group and send them to Delhi or another city for a week of special training, where all the pastors who have been trained under the Serve India Ministry convene for the next level of leadership training. The Serve India Ministry pays all related expenses. These pastors will be trained to be second level leaders to train others in their villages. Serve India Ministry asks the second level leaders to select young, committed people from their villages and train them to be leaders in their place. These pastors will be part time workers of Serve India Ministry. They are expected to give a minimum of two days a month for the work of the organization, and the organization provides them a small amount of financial support every month.

Summary of Major Findings

I came up with six major findings through the analysis that I made on the collected data. They reveal the present situations of villages pastors, the need for the Christian leadership training, the ineffectiveness of some of the present strategies, and the need for changes and improvements in the strategies to be more effective in the expansion of His kingdom in this advanced world.

Table 4.2 (page 92) illustrates that out of sixty-three pastors there are only twenty-one pastors who have at least two years of Theological training and who are, therefore, qualified to be pastors in the churches. The rest of the pastors need theological training to be more effective in church ministry. This list only includes pastors whom the researcher has distributed the questionnaires to and met personally. This is not the actual number of pastors who do not have any kind of theological

training. It is merely a number of pastors in one of the districts of Chhattisgarh. In fact, Durg is the main educational hub in Chhattisgarh, many students come from different districts of Chhattisgarh and other North Indian states to do their further studies there. Because of the Bhilai Steel Plant in Durg, which is the largest steel producer in India, Durg city is occupied by a diverse people group including engineers, doctors and other high officials from different parts of the country and abroad. This is not the situation in other districts of Chhattisgarh and other states of North India, where even more village pastors are working without proper theological education.

Since there are forty-two pastors out of sixty-three who do not have a minimum of two years of Bible training, there is a compelling need for leadership training in these areas for the better advancement of the gospel. The testimony of the pastors about their experience in the ministry prior to the leadership training and after the successful completion of the training further illustrates the need for Christian leadership training.

1. Both the Pastors and the Trainers Face Significant Challenges Regarding Leadership Training in Chhattisgarh.

The Christians and Christian missionaries working in the North Indian villages face opposition and challenges from all areas. The pastors struggle with issues related to social, financial, family, personal, religious, and cultural challenges. These challenges vary from place to place and people to people. However, the research reveals the true challenges of the North Indian villages. This explains the writings of Johnstone and Mandryk, cited in the second chapter, regarding the persecutions and challenges faced by Christians in North India.

The anti-conversion bill passed in the state of Chhattisgarh is the major challenge faced by the trainers. It gives legitimacy to the anti-Christians who attack and persecute the Christian missionaries and believers in this state. It restricts the freedom of propagating the gospel as well as training the next generation of leaders for the expansion of His kingdom. As long as the anti-conversion bill is in effect, Christians have no recourse if anything happens against them. The fanatic Hindu religious people take advantage of the bill. Social and cultural diversity also play a big role for many Christian leaders and trainers who may move their mission to somewhere more convenient.

2. Most of the Strategies are Ineffective Today

According to Table 4.8, (page 115) only six pastors are satisfied with the current strategies of the Christian leadership training that they are taking. Forty-nine of them are not at all satisfied with the strategies, and the rest of them are only somewhat satisfied with the training strategies. As discussed in the second chapter of this research, Northouse states that, “leadership training should be a process that involves influence, a process that occurs within a group context, and a process that involves goal attainment” (24). As long as it does not obtain these three goals it is not effective and does not do its purpose. The perceived need for change in the training implies that it is not presently effective.

3. High Degree of Motivation to Find a Better Way to Provide Leadership Training.

Change is always necessary and never stops in this changing world. People today do not use the devices they used fifteen to twenty years earlier. As the world advances old things become useless and ineffective. For example, people once used the postal service to communicate with others but today postal communication is

found to be ineffective and time consuming. Today people use the internet and mobile phones for communication. In the same way, the strategies for Christian leadership training that were effective and useful in the past are not very effective today. The world is advancing; therefore there should be similar changes in the strategies used for training.

Review of the Chapter

This chapter explained the motivation for this research and discussed the experiences of the participants in the study. These participants included organizational presidents, a principal of a Bible college, pastors, leaders, laymen, leaders, believers, and Christian leadership trainers. Data collected considered training from different angles and provided a wide range of information regarding the challenges, strategies, inadequacy, and ineffectiveness of the present methods. It also spoke to the need for a change in training strategies.

The challenges related to Christian leadership training and evangelism are increasing every day. The assembly election that took place in five states in March 2017 resulted in the *Bharateeya Janata Party* (BJP, Hindu Religious Party) coming to four more states. Every area has challenges that keep Christian from growing strong spiritually. This chapter also details the poor condition of pastors in the remote, tribal areas and the different issues that they face in their ministry and theological education. Out of sixty-three pastors four are without any kind of theological education, but they are pastors and God is working through their ministry. Their issues such as financial problems, cultural issues, and persecution are very genuine. The other group that faces challenges is the trainers who come from different parts of the country, mostly South India, to these remote villages to train these uneducated

pastors. Outside trainers are necessary because of the lack of leaders in the native villages where most of the Christians are first generation believers.

The research described in this chapter also shows that there is a great need of change in the strategies and methods of present Christian leadership training. The influence of the internet, mobile phones, and social media are pervasive today, but many of the organizations still teach with outdated methods. The study describes how the training program can be a complete package that includes all the aspects of ministry instead of simply teaching the doctrines of the Bible. One of the major changes that pastors suggested is the need for ongoing training in the field after the completion of the classroom training. In spite of the challenges, the pastors' commitment towards the ministry and the training program is great.

CHAPTER 5

LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

The lack of pastors available to work in remote parts of India has limited the spread of Christianity throughout the country. Indian Christian history goes back to A.D. 53 to the St. Thomas tradition. It is believed that India received the gospel of Jesus Christ much earlier than many other countries of the world (Mundadan, 21). However, the Christian population of India is only 2.7 percent of the total population (Religion Census 2011). This is not due to a lack of pastors or missionaries since there are thousands of people graduating from various Bible colleges and seminaries in India. Rather it is due to the lack of trained pastors to work in the remote and unreached villages of North India.

The researcher has been to almost all the North Indian states since 1994 and has the first hand experience of being in these remote villages and tribal areas of North India. It became clear that most of the pastors who work in the remote and tribal villages are theologically untrained. In fact, they are self proclaimed pastors without any theological education but with an enthusiastic commitment to the service of God. Due to the lack of theological training, these pastors are not effective in their jobs and do not have much growth in their ministries. In many churches, the growth is stagnated. Though they are very much committed, enthusiastic, and Spirit-led they have limitations in taking the gospel effectively to different people and growing their ministries as they do not have any kind of biblical training.

Many organizations focus on the quantity of pastors rather than on their quality. They do not have training programs to train pastors. Nevertheless, there are some independent NGO's conducting Christian leadership training programs to train

these pastors theologically to be more effective. I had the privilege to work with an organization for a year and to teach and train pastors in the state of Odisha, in India. The result of the program was very evident afterwards, and the churches began to grow in number. However, many pastors face different kinds of challenges in attending this kind of Christian leadership training program.

Purpose

The purpose of this research was three-fold. The first goal was to discover the challenges and obstacles that keep the village pastors from getting theological training. Second, I hoped to understand the present strategies and methods used in training these pastors and to know which are currently effective. Third, the research illuminated new strategies, relevant today, to better train these pastors to be more effective in their ministry.

Major Findings

First Finding: Significant Challenges for both Pastors and Church Leaders regarding Leadership Training in Chhattisgarh.

There are two sets of challenges for Christian leadership training in North Indian villages. The first is related to the pastors and laymen who want to be part of this training program. Through the distributed questionnaires and interviews it was revealed that there are fifteen challenges faced by the pastors in relation to the Christian leadership training. They can be divided into two divisions: internal and external challenges. Internal challenges include health issues, financial problems, family problems, lack of time, language problems, illiteracy, and food problems. External challenges include cultural differences, caste issues, black magic, persecutions, oppositions from the villagers, and attacks by *Naxalites*.

The second set of challenges are faced by the trainers who commit their lives to come down to these remote, tribal villages to train the theologically untrained pastors. They also face both internal and external challenges. Most of the trainers working in North India are missionaries from South India. They have more internal challenges than external. Things are new to most of them, since they are not familiar with the customs, social issues, tribal issues, climate, and cultural differences. However, they also face some of the same issues related to the anti-conversion bill, persecutions, and social barriers.

These findings agree with the discussion in the literature review related to the challenges for the Christian leadership training in North India. There has not been a single time in history when the Christian church and its missionaries did not face many kinds of challenges in relation to their ministry. Other than persecutions there have been different kinds of challenges that servants of God faced in ministry, when they were involved with preaching, teaching, and training others. 1 Peter 5:1-11 says how to manage the challenges that come in our training. Verses 1-3 say that the challenges of the ministry become manageable when we embrace the right mission, and when we have right motives that are not by compulsion, or eagerness to impress people, but are focused on the heavenly reward and use the right method. Matthew 5:10-12 teaches about the religious challenges for those in the ministry such as insults, false accusations, ostracizing, oppression, and abuse. However, Jesus says when you experience all these things understand that you are blessed by God.

Second Finding: Current Ineffective Strategies

This study reveals that there are twelve existing strategies and methods used in the Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh. The strategy of conducting a seminar once every six months is not as effective as the other two strategies of once in

a month or three days every three months. Since the pastors are without any theological education and are working in the field for their livelihood, it is difficult for them to keep in touch with the training program and its teaching when they go too long without a training session. However, trainers conduct the training sessions according to the convenience of trainers and the trainees rather than for their effectiveness to the pastors. Most of the materials are very old and need to be replaced. The audio devices with the Bible and Bible stories are a new invention, which is particularly good and useful because they are solar powered and can be used in the remote village which lack reliable electricity. The discussions on current issues are good methods to keep the pastors updated about the things happening in their surroundings and in other states in relation to the Christians.

Third Finding: The High Degree of Motivation to Find a Better Way to Provide Leadership Training.

We have a biblical foundation for the concept of strategic planning, it is not something we have taken from the secular business model and applied to our churches. God honors the process of strategic planning. God's word establishes strategic planning as one of the ways He works in and through His people. The Scriptures tell about a number of leaders who thought and acted strategically. Strategic planning is found in Scripture, and God used very effectively the people who had strategically planned their mission.

Below are examples of some of the strategic thinkers and leaders of the Bible:

Moses was a strategic thinker. Moses was struggling as a leader soon after he led the nation of Israel out of Egypt. Moses listened to the words of Jethro and began to think differently. He used the manpower resources more effectively, and the

ministry was accomplished. Moses was also thinking strategically when he sent spies to the land of Canaan. Mark D. Harris says, “Moses spent significant time communicating God’s commands and vision to and for the people. He did not have to face outdated procedures and policies but instead developed effective ones. He did not have to deal with an organization that was falling apart but rather built a nation from the ground up” (M. Harris, 22)

Joshua, the successor of Moses, also demonstrated strategic leadership. As a spiritual leader, Joshua was careful to observe all religious duties. Joshua was always concerned about the spiritual condition of his people. For example, after the campaign of national conquest was over, Joshua realized the people were in danger of falling away spiritually. Although he was old and near death, he first summoned the leaders (chapter 23) and charged them to remain faithful to God. Then he summoned all the people and did the same thing (chapter 24). He concluded with the challenge to choose which gods they would serve, and then he set the example by declaring: “But, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (vs. 15).

Nehemiah was a God-appointed leader who used a strategy. When God laid it on his heart to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, Nehemiah began to establish and then work through a well planned strategy to accomplish the vision God had given. Nehemiah’s strategic plans are evident in his book. He understood the root cause of the problem and current situation of his land and people (1:3). He started with prayer, fasting and sought the will of God (1:4; 2:4). He confessed the sins, including his and his people (1:4). He sought for the permission, agreement, protection and resources from those who are in authority to rebuild the city and the walls (2:7-9). He inspected the Jerusalem walls before starting the works (2:11). He invited others to join him and made a team to work with him, vesting the power on different people systematically

section by section under different governance, each taking responsibility for different aspects to carry out the work smoothly. (2:17-3:32). He stood in prayer and persistence in face of trouble, exhaustion and confusion (4:4-9). When the enemies came against him, he strengthened his people and maintained defense, family by family at the exposed point, trusting God (4:11-18). He used different media for communication in critical situations to gather the people (4:19-23). He had a strategy of self funded, servant leadership focused method to rebuilding the city. (5:14-19). The city wall was successfully completed in the midst of diverse situation.

David was a strategic thinker from boyhood. He did not defeat Goliath with his might or strong armour. He defeated Goliath using a God-given strategy that pinpointed the weakness of his enemy. Later, as a leader of soldiers, David used strategy in battle. David needed men who could think and plan strategically, and God gave him the men of Issachar (1 Chron. 12:32).

Jesus Christ is a great example of one who had a strategy. He began by recruiting His leadership, developing them, then sending them “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). His strategy included some public teaching and miracle working. Ultimately, His strategy took Him all the way to the cross, the grave, and the resurrection.

The apostle Paul, a key player in establishing the early church, had a strategy. He chose cities where he might have the greatest influence on the largest number of people. Ephesus, for example, was the gateway to Asia Minor.

God’s purpose is the element in strategic planning for the church that is vastly different from the secular strategic planning models. Proverbs 19:21 says, “Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.” Setting our hearts and minds on God is the beginning of the strategic planning

process. God expects us to plan. He has given us a number of clear principles along with some great examples. He makes it clear that we are not to trust our own plans and strategies and ignore the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Strategic planning is not only a biblical concept, it is a biblical mandate. It is God's chosen method of working to establish how you and your church intend to carry out the Great Commission. Don't just repeat last year. Be intentional in getting God's heart and knowing how you will accomplish His mission in your setting.

The book of Proverbs has a number of clear practical principles regarding strategy and planning:

Proverbs 14:15: A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps.

Proverbs 15:22: Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.

Proverbs 16:3: Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.

Proverbs 16:9: In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.

Proverbs 20:18: Make plans by seeking advice; if you wage war, obtain guidance.

Solomon being the wisest man the world ever had seen speaks through the proverbs that, an effective man is always one step ahead of others. The one who succeeds will be the one who is ready to think differently, take new steps, and be prepared to change the things according to the need. The successful leader should be a thinker, seeker of counsel, God fearer, and totally committed for his work. Above all,

he repeatedly says, all the wisdom and knowledge for a successful life comes from the fear of the Lord.

Ministry Implications of the Findings

This research has revealed a number of interesting things about the status of Christian leadership training in North India's rural villages. It has illustrated the condition of the pastors who serve God in these remote villages and highlighted the need of a training program for these pastors. This will empower them with better knowledge of the Word and allow them to carry out their vision effectively. This research has also developed ideas for new strategies to train these pastors for today's world.

Adopting new strategies for Christian leadership training is essential to the present situation. In Acts chapter 17, we read that Paul changes his strategy of sharing the gospel with the people in a particular situation and emphasizes that the unknown God is the Jesus Christ. Strategy must be dependent upon the context and situation. Strategies developed in the past may not be useful or effective today. The leadership training program should take relevant steps to train these pastors to be more effective by providing them training on modern technologies, computer education, and basic English language knowledge. Since many of the new strategies outlined are the suggestions of the pastors who currently attend the leadership training programs, it is clear that they are eager for change in the training with more relevance to their pastoral lives. If the new strategies are implemented in the leadership training programs, the result will be a great revival and growth in the village churches. The new strategies will not only empower the trainees spiritually but also strengthen them physically and psychologically. This will help give them a boost in their ministry, in

dealing with others, and in social equality. It is time to plan for a change and adopt new ways to reach the unreached for Christ.

Recommendations

As a result of my research, I suggest twelve new strategies to be tried in the Christian leadership training program to train and equip the pastors to be more effective in their ministries. These following new strategies are based on the need and situation of the pastors working in the North Indian villages.

Provide on Going Training in the Field even after the Training

Chapter four describes three kinds of Christian Leadership training programs currently in existence. They are: one day a month, a three-day seminar every three months, and a six-day seminar every six months. Meeting a group of approximately twenty pastors on any of these schedules has limitations. The training organizations have their own limitations in relation to their programming and the availability of trainers and time. However, the trainers do not get sufficient time to spend with each pastor or to train the pastors according to their level or types of ministry. Since trainers do not get adequate time with the pastors, many pastors face new issues and cannot be as fruitful as they like. Usually after the completion of a training program, the organization moves on to a new place for the next leadership program. They never come back to the old locations to see or help the pastors whom they have trained in the past. Therefore, it is wise to include a new strategy of ongoing training in the field that continues after the completion of the original training program. This may psychologically help the pastors to be more confident and effective in their ministry.

Develop Second Level Leaders to Train Others

In many of the leadership training programs the organizations train the pastors to be fruitful leaders in the church and be effective in their ministry. They are

not trained to train the next level of leaders. Although not all pastors can be trainers, there should be at least five people in every group who are trained to develop the next generation of leaders for their village. This has two benefits. The first is that village people and pastors feel more comfortable talking to others of the village, and the second is that these pastors are more comfortable hearing the word of God in their own language or dialects. This removes disturbance caused by translation. Local trainers will always be available in the villages to attend to the issues of these pastors.

Provide Leadership Training to Female Leaders

The one thing that surprised me in all the leadership training program was the absence of female leaders. It is true that according to Indian culture most of the churches do not support or accept female pastors, however, there are some female preachers and leaders in the ministry in a few churches. Being well familiar with the culture and the nature of Indian churches, I am not promoting the issue of appointing females as pastors in the churches but rather emphasizing the need of leadership training for the women in the churches. Most of the village churches have more females in attendance than males, and in many cases the woman of the family is the first to come to church and the rest follow her gradually. Open evangelism such as open-air meetings, tract distribution, Jesus film screenings, or conducting meetings are impossible in most of the north Indian villages. The only way to reach the people is through personal evangelism. In such cases, women are the best people to reach others through the gospel of Christ. In such situations, it is good to provide training to women, particularly to pastors' wives, so that they can work with the pastors and elders in the church.

Provide Training on Modern Technologies and Social Media

There are two kinds of benefits in providing training in modern technologies. The first is that it helps in reaching the youth of the villages or area, and the second is that it helps people access study materials and get ministry related information and guidance for their ministry. The majority of young people today utilize new technologies and social media with much greater regularity. In fact, the use of media is so popular among the youngsters that it is difficult to reach them without using this technology. Therefore, it became an inevitable need for every pastor and leader to know and use these technologies with the unreached youth and others in their villages. Today, relationships and communications, are changing at a rapidly increasing rate. Pope Benedict XVI said in one of his messages:

The new digital technologies are, indeed, bringing about fundamental shifts in patterns of communication and human relationships...

...The desire for connectedness and the instinct for communication that are so obvious in contemporary culture are best understood as modern manifestations of the basic and enduring propensity of humans to reach beyond themselves and to seek communication with others. (Benedict XVI).

The new technologies and media, if adequately used, can help the pastors and leaders with the immense amount of information, study materials, and notes and can be a valid and effective instrument for effective evangelism and ministry.

Select One or Two Able Pastors and Provide Them Higher Education

There are always one or two pastors in every group who are qualified for higher education and could be sent to a Bible college or theological seminary. Doing this can change the face of their ministry and the growth of their churches. When people are exposed to a new place and new atmosphere, mingle with new and different people, and develop a new system of learning, it changes their level of capacity and expands their vision. They can return to the villages equipped to develop

new strategies for further ministry and help eradicate the feelings of caste discriminations and the burden for the dying souls.

Appoint a Leader to Oversee and to Give Further Guidance

Most of the churches in villages are independent churches. They are not part of a denomination or any organization. This is because most of the denominations require a basic secular qualification and theological qualifications to be part of their organization. Since most of the pastors do not have secular and theological qualifications they are compelled to stand independent. Therefore, once the leadership training program is completed, these pastors are like sheep without a shepherd. In such cases, appointing a leader to oversee their work and encourage them with further guidance can help these pastors to be effective and motivated in their ministry.

Provide More Study Materials in Indian Context and in Indian Languages

Unfortunately, most of the materials used in Christian leadership training are written by Westerners. Some of the writers had never been to India. Therefore, the material is written in a Western context, and most of the specifics are not relevant to the Indian context and culture. Even in the leadership seminars the trainers teach from English textbooks, and the study materials are in the English language. The pastors have to depend on their class notes to understand and learn the biblical truths. Many are not able to write down the all of the material covered in the class hour. Study materials should be available that are written by Indian leaders who are theologically qualified and have firsthand experience in these villages. These should be written in Indian languages. This change will help the pastors learn the biblical teachings clearly and apply them in their practical life more effectively.

Provide Social Awareness to Eradicate Casteism

Casteism is very strong in these villages. One of the main challenges for the trainers is bringing together all of the pastors from different castes and tribes to study together. Because of the caste system, little or no social interaction occurs between people belonging to different castes. The Christian leadership training programs should take steps to unite these pastors without the discriminations of caste, color, or tribes. Casteism is one of the major hindrances in taking the gospel to other people groups. Casteism prevents other people groups from coming to the churches, and it affects the growth of the church and the salvation of many individuals.

Teach English as an Optional Subject

Offering basic education on the English language will allow pastors to use modern media and technologies. The intent is not for local pastors to preach and teach their congregations in the English language. Rather, a basic knowledge of English should be taught so that they may be able to use modern social media and technologies to facilitate their ministry.

Provide More Electronic Devices, like Audio Devices, for Illiterate Pastors

The invention of audio electronic devices allows pastors and trainers to reach the people who are unable to read and understand the scripture. Such devices should be provided to the pastors so that they can hear and understand the scripture better in their own languages and carry out their ministry. Audio devices should be provided that contain not only the Bible and Bible stories but also the fundamental doctrines of the Bible and biblical teaching for pastors. The audio Bibles are useful for believers who are illiterate and want to know the scripture to improve their spiritual life.

Provide Electronic Equipment for the Expansion of the Ministry

Other electronic equipment may be helpful for the ministry. During the interview with Serve India Ministries they described how they provided a film projector to the pastors, which was rotated between them according to their convenience and for their use in ministry. Other electronic equipment including public address systems, generators, and musical instruments can also be effective.

Provide Basic Computer Education along with the Training

Computer education is essential in the modern world. India is moving toward making everything digital. Things have changed from the age of bullock cart to the computer age. People depend on computers for anything and everything now, and they facilitate and accelerate their work. The Government of India has launched the Digital India program with a vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. Therefore, it is good to provide basic computer knowledge to the pastors along with the leadership training.

Limitations of the Study

The findings in this research are primarily applicable to the churches in Durg district and its vicinity in the Chhattisgarh state in India. However, it is applicable to the village churches in other districts of Chhattisgarh and other states of North India with similar cultural contexts and tribal issues. In the same way, the strategies are primary applicable to the Christian organizations working in the district of Durg. However, these strategies can be used by organizations with similar visions and missions working in village in the other states of North India. Most of these strategies would not be useful in the southern states of India, since the cultural context in South India is entirely different from North India. Most pastors in South India are

theologically trained. Immediate results are not possible as the strategies are not intended for quick results.

Unexpected Observations

Two unexpected findings arose in the research. The first was the audio device with the Bible and Bible stories. Today, most people have the Bible on a smart phones or tablets. Inventing an electronic device solely for the purpose of studying the word of God was interesting and unexpected. Moreover, those devices were run by solar energy, which is a perfect invention for these North India villages where most of the time people do not regularly have electricity.

Second, the absence of women in the leadership training program was surprising. Not a single woman came to the training. This was not because women do not want to have leadership training but because the training organizations only allow admittance to male pastors already serving in the ministry.

Future Directions for the Study

This research was directed to only one district of Chhattisgarh state, Durg. Further study can be done in more than one district with different cultural settings and different groups of people. This would bring out more challenges related to Christian leadership training and help develop more new strategies relevant to each cultural setting. The research in this study could only deal with three organizations conducting leadership training program. Further studies may include more organizations. Another topic worth researching further is the use and role of modern technology in village evangelism.

Review of the Chapter

This chapter describes major findings of the research. The three original research questions have been answered in this chapter. The first question related to the

challenges for Christian leadership training. The findings proved that the challenges discussed in the literature review are relevant to the situations of the Durg district of Chhattisgarh as well as other states of north India. The second question discovered current strategies used by the organizations to train villages pastors and found that many of the strategies are not relevant in current context and need to be replaced with new strategies. Finally, the third and final question helped the me develop new strategies for better, more effective training of these pastors. They can be ready to adapt new ideas and ways to reach the unreached and to take the gospel of Christ to the uttermost part of the world according to the commandment of Jesus Christ.

Postscript

The subject of this research was birthed out of my North Indian ministry experience year in 1996 while I was student in the Bible college. From the beginning of my ministry I deeply felt a burden for the perishing souls in the Northern part of India. I had a burning desire to do something for the evangelization of North Indian villages. Therefore, I left the South and went to North India to study in the Bible college. I spent my summer vacations with gospel teams in North India, where I realized the poor state of the pastors working in the remote villages. Most of them were not theologically trained.

Many years later when I was working as an academic dean in a seminary, I shared my burden with my friend, and we conducted a leadership training program in the state of Odisha for one year, three-day seminars once every three months, a total of four seminars in a year. We conducted the seminars without the proper strategies or much planning and just based it on the available strategies and materials. However, the impact of these trainings was great. We could literally see the changes in the life and ministry of the pastors and the numerical growth happening in their churches. I

realized the need for relevant strategies and methods for this training programs; that paved the way for doing this research. The research journey provided me fresh motivation and great hope for the future ministry. These inventions help the organizations develop new curriculum for their training programs and make the necessary changes in their strategies to train the pastors better and more effectively. I strongly believe that these new inventions will be a great help and motivation for trainers who work in the remote and tribal villages of North India to develop and train the leaders to reach the unreached for Christ.

APPENDIXES

A. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE FIRST GROUP

1. Name (Optional):
2. Gender:
3. Age:
4. Denomination:
5. Name of the Church/Organization
6. Designation: President/Principal/Dean/Registrar/Bible Teacher/District Pastor
7. Qualifications:
8. How long are you in this position:
9. If you are a president, district superintendent or district pastor, how many pastors are working under you :
10. How many of them are theologically trained pastors:
11. What are the strategies you follow to train these lay pastors:
12. Do you have Christian leadership training program for the untrained pastors or laymen:
13. If yes, how often do you conduct:
14. Do you have a written curriculum to train them:
15. What are the main challenges you face in leadership training program:
16. What do you do to overcome such challenges?
17. Do you think the strategies you follow now are useful to train these people?
18. How do you think that you can face these challenges:
19. If you are given an opportunity to change some of the strategies that you use now, what strategy would you change? And what will be the new strategy?

20. What changes have you observed in these pastors after the training program?

Date.....Signature.....

B. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE SECOND GROUP

1. Name (Optional):
2. Gender:
3. Age:
4. Denomination:
5. Name of the Church/Organization
6. Designation: Pastor/Lay leader/Clergy/Missionary/
7. Qualifications:
8. How long are you in this position:
9. Have you ever had a Bible Training?
- 10.If yes, Where?
- 11.For How many months/years?
- 12.What degree you achieved?
- 13.If no, Do you like to have a leadership training for your future ministry?
- 14.Does your organization or church have a leadership training program?
- 15.Do you think that you need to go through a leadership training?
- 16.What are the challenges you face in relation to leadership training?
- 17.How you can overcome those challenges related to leadership training?
- 18.If you are undergoing a training now, are you satisfied with the curriculum and the training?
- 19.What changes would you like to have in the program?
- 20.What do you think would be better than the current strategy is being used for the training?

21.If you are given an opportunity to change some of the strategies that you learn now, what strategy would you change? And what will be the new strategy?

Date.....Signature.....

C. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE THIRD GROUP

1. Name (Optional):
2. Gender:
3. Age:
4. Denomination:
5. Name of the Church/Organization
6. Designation: Believer/church member/regular visitor
7. What is the name of your pastor/leader in the church?
8. Are you satisfied with his ministry in the church?
9. Is your pastor a Bible college graduate or a trained pastor/leader?
10. Do you think that all pastors must be biblically trained for the ministry?
11. What do you think about a lay pastor or untrained minister?
12. Do you think that a leadership training can make your pastor more effective in his church ministry?

Date.....Signature.....

D. PHOTOS OF AUDIO BIBLE DEVICES



Picture of solar audio Bible



E. INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

An Analysis of The Challenges and Strategies for Christian Leadership Training in The State of Chhattisgarh, North India

You are invited to be in a research study being done by **Shibu Joseph** from the Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you are a Christian leader and this study is focused on the challenges and strategies for Christian leadership training.

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to fill a questionnaire and will be invited to attend a leadership training program at least once. You will have to bear your travel expenses, food and accommodation will be provided.

Your family will know that you are in the study. If anyone else is given information about you, they will not know your name. A number or initials will be used instead of your name.

If something makes you feel bad while you are in the study, please tell Shibu Joseph. If you decide at any time you do not want to finish the study, you may stop whenever you want.

You can ask Pr. Shibu Joseph questions any time about anything in this study. You can also ask your parent any questions you might have about this study.

Signing this paper means that you have read this or had it read to you, and that you want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be mad if you do not sign this paper or even if you change your mind later. You agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done and what to do.

Signature of Person Agreeing to be in the Study

Date Signed

F. CONFIDENTIALITY FORM

Dear Pastor/Leader

You are requested to assist me in this research study which is entitled “An Analysis of The Challenges and Strategies for Christian Leadership Training in the State of Chhattisgarh.” The purpose of this study is to find out the existing challenges for the leadership training and to plan and prepare new strategies for the Christian leadership training in Chhattisgarh.

There are many organisations, associations, pastors and leaders are working in different parts of Chhattisgarh but the churches do not have proper growth. You will be asked to conduct a seminar in your area including these organizations, associations, local pastors / leaders and believers on a given date to distribute the questionnaires and to interview the participants and to collect the data regarding the study. Please be ensured that your response will be kept confidential and all the information will be kept safe till the end of the study and will be disposed completely once the study is done.

Kindly express your consent by signing below. God bless you

I volunteer to participate in the study described above and so indicate by my signature below:

- 1.P - 1
- 2.P - 2.....
- 3.P - 3.....
- 4.P - 4.....
- 5.P - 5.....
- 6.P - 6.....
- 7.P - 7.....
- 8.P - 8.....
- 9.P - 9.....
- 10.P - 10.....

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