

**Responses of African Pentecostal Churches to African Refugees in
Düsseldorf between 2015 and 2020:
A Case Study of Mission and Migration**

by

CHARLES GYASI

**DISSERTATION PRESENTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY IN THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY
AT STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY**



SUPERVISOR: PROF. D. X. SIMON

DATE: DECEMBER 2022

DECLARATION

BY SUBMITTING THIS THESIS/DISSERTATION ELECTRONICALLY, I, CHARLES GYASI, DECLARE THAT THE ENTIRETY OF THE WORK CONTAINED THEREIN IS MY OWN, ORIGINAL WORK, THAT I AM THE SOLE AUTHOR THEREOF (SAVE TO THE EXTENT EXPLICITLY OTHERWISE STATED), THAT REPRODUCTION AND PUBLICATION THEREOF BY STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY WILL NOT INFRINGE ANY THIRD-PARTY RIGHTS AND THAT I HAVE NOT PREVIOUSLY IN ITS ENTIRETY OR IN PART SUBMITTED IT FOR OBTAINING ANY QUALIFICATION.

Copyright © 2022 Stellenbosch University
All rights reserved

ABSTRACT

This study presents the African Pentecostal Churches' (APCs') response to the plight of African refugees in Düsseldorf, Germany, between 2015 and 2020. The APCs' response reveals their understanding of compassionate mission, appreciation of identity as a context for mission, and integration of African refugees and asylum seekers.

Approximately one in seven people migrate daily. An estimated figure of over eighty million people have become displaced globally as of 2020. Migrant churches in Europe have become a context for receiving refugees and immigrants from their continents. APCs in most cases are the greater beneficiaries from the arrival of African refugees and migrants in Düsseldorf. They also share similar cultural and social identities with the refugees and immigrants.

Twenty-four (24) research participants (four APC leaders and 20 African refugees/asylum seekers) were selected through non-probability sampling for this case study. Data were collected through semi-structured online interviews and examination of written church documents on social action. The data collected were thematically analysed. This experiential research explores the question: "How have APCs responded to the situation of African refugees in Düsseldorf between 2015 and 2020?"

Some key findings are that African refugees and asylum seekers have pressing needs such as language skills, basic legal orientation, emotional therapy/counselling, accommodation, employment/financial, and prayer support. APC leaders see themselves as missionaries sent by God to carry out mission in the research field; however, their response to the refugee crisis lacks proactivity and compassion. APCs serve as a context for reception and integration of African refugees and asylum seekers. There is a lack of written social action policy within the APCs in Düsseldorf. What they have are welfare policies. There is also a lack of public advocacy on behalf of African refugees and asylum seekers. Furthermore, voluntarism is a paradigm for mission in the research context. Additionally, African refugees and asylum seekers confessed to the use of creative survival tactics, many of which are in conflict with their faith as Christians. APCs and African refugees see prayer as fundamental to their survival. Government sponsored welfare

schemes, integration programmes, the activities of NGOs, previous negative experiences with African refugees, financial challenges, and non-registration of some APCs weakened their ability to offer a compassionate response. The APCs' response suggests that the relationship between privileged and vulnerable African minority groups requires compassion and structure. African refugees however see the church not only as a place of prayer and spiritual formation but as a family, and a place that facilitates their integration. Thus, this research makes a case for the importance of identity to mission and the integration of Africans in the research area.

Several recommendations are made to provide different perspectives to the issues of mission, migration, and integration. The study provides primary data for discussions in the area of mission and migration; makes a case for a contextual definition of African Pentecostal Christianity; highlights the importance of the prosperity gospel in Africa; and constructs a diagram to depict compassionate mission based on the universal interpretation approach of Matthew 25:31-46 as its original contribution to knowledge.

Keywords: Düsseldorf, Identity, Migrant, Migration, Mission, Pentecostalism, Refugee, Response.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie lê voor die African Pentecostal Churches (APC) se reaksie oor die toestand van vlugteling in Düsseldorf, Duitsland tussen 2015 en 2020. Die APC se reaksie stel hulle begrip van ‘n barmhartige sending bloot, en waardering vir identiteit as ‘n konteks vir sendingwerk en integrasie van Afrika vlugteling en asielsoekers.

Min of meer een in sewe mense migreer daaglik. ‘n Geraamde 80 miljoen mense is wêreldwyd onthoem sedert 2020. Migrantekerke in Europa het ‘n konteks geword waarin vlugteling en immigrante uit hulle kontinente ontvang word. In meeste gevalle is die APC die groter bevooroordeelde van die aankoms van Afrika vlugteling en immigrante in Düsseldorf. Hulle deel ook soortgelyke kulturele en sosiale identiteite met die vlugteling en immigrante.

Vier-en-twintig (24) navorsingsdeelnemers (vier APC leiers en 20 Afrika vlugteling/asielsoekers) is uitgesoek deur middel van nie-waarskynlikheidsteekproewe vir hierdie gevallestudie. Data is ingevorder deur semi-gestruktureerde aanlynonderhoude en die nagaan van geskrewe kerksdokumente oor sosiale-aksie. Die data wat ingevorder was, is tematies geanaliseer. Hierdie belewenisnavorsing ondersoek die vraag: “Hoe het die APC gereageer op die situasie van Afrika vlugteling in Düsseldorf tussen 2015 en 2020?”

‘n Paar sleutelbevindinge is dat: Afrika vlugteling en asielsoekers het dringende behoeftes soos taalbekwaamheid, basiese regsoriëntasie, emosionele terapie/berading, akkommodasie, finansiële/werks- en gebedsondersteuning. APC leiers sien hulself as sendeling deur God gestuur om sendingwerk te doen; hoewel in die navorsingskonteks gesien, is hulle respons tot die vlugtelingkrisis gebrekkig in proatwiteit en barmhartigheid. Die APC dien as konteks vir die ontvangs en integrasie van Afrika vlugteling en asielsoekers. Daar is ‘n gebrek aan geskrewe sosiale-aksiebeleid binne die APC in Düsseldorf. Wat hulle het is welsynsbeleid. Daar is ook ‘n gebrek aan openbare voorspraak ten bate van Afrika vlugteling en asielsoekers. Verder, is vrywilligheid ‘n paradigma vir sendingwerk in die navorsingskonteks. Bykomend, Afrika vlugteling en asielsoekers erken dat hulle kreatiewe oorlewingstaktiek gebruik, baie waarvan in konflik is met hulle geloof as Christene. Die APC en Afrika vlugteling sien gebed as

fundamenteel tot hulle oorlewing. Regeringsgeborgde welsynskemas, integrasieprogramme, die aktiwiteite van NRO's, vorige negatiewe ervarings met Afrika vlugteling, finansiële uitdagings en nie-registrasie van sommige APC's het hulle bevoegdheid verswak om 'n barmhartige respons te lewer.

Die APC se respons suggereer dat die verhouding tussen bevoorregte en kwesbare Afrika minderheidsgroepe barmhartigheid en struktuur benodig. Afrika vlugteling sien die kerk egter nie net as 'n plek vir gebed en spirituele formasie nie maar as 'n familie, en 'n plek wat hulle integrasie fasiliteer. Dus, maak hierdie navorsing 'n saak vir die belangrikheid van identiteit vir sendingwerk en integrasie van Afrikane binne die navorsingskonteks.

Verskeie aanbevelings word gemaak om so verskillende perspektiewe oor die kwessies van sendingwerk, migrasie en integrasie te lewer. Die studie verskaf primêre data vir gesprekvoering in die area van sendingwerk en migrasie, maak 'n saak vir 'n kontekstuele definisie van African Pentecostal Christenskap, beklemtoon die belangrikheid van die evangelie van voorspoed in Afrika en ontwikkeling van 'n diagram wat barmhartige sendingwerk uitbeeld gebaseer op die universele interpretasiebenadering van Matteus 25:31-46 as die oorspronklike bydrae tot kennis.

Slutelwoorde: Düsseldorf, Identiteit, Migrant, Migrasie, Sendingwerk, Pinkstergelowig, Vlugteling, en Respons.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*O For a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!*

– Methodist Church Ghana, Hymn 1, stanza 1.

- It has been a journey of ups and downs with moments of excitement and bewilderment. Through it all, I give glory to God for the grace, courage, wisdom, and strength he bestowed upon me to embark upon this dream of my life and bring it to a fulfilling end.
- I acknowledge the selfless contributions of my main supervisor, Prof. D.X (Xolile) Simon, of Stellenbosch University. His dedication to excellence, guidance, patience, and words of encouragement are very much appreciated.
- This journey would not have been possible without the support of OCRPL-UK and its dedicated team: Dr. Chris Sugden, Dr. Vinay Samuel, Dr. Patrick Sookhdeo, Dr. Rollin Grams, Dr. John Joshva, Dr. Ruth Samuel, Dr. Prasad, and my OCRPL mentor, Dr. Wenjuan Zhao. All the facilitators and my colleagues deserve a special mention for helping to shape my research from the very first day.
- I also pay a special tribute to Very Rev Prof. J. K. Asamoah-Gyadu, Most Rev Titus Awortwe – Pratt, and Prof. Geoffrey K. Writes whose constant monitoring of my development both as a student and minister of the gospel kept me on track. To all the authors whose work, both in print and online I consulted, I say thank you very much for the ideas you espoused. Your diligence has paved the way for us to follow and find our own space.

- It is unfortunate that my father, Nana Marfo Gyasi, did not live to see this day. He was particular about my education and offered me a good foundation to build the rest of my academic life upon. I give a special thank you to my beloved mother, Theresa Adjei Brentuo Gyasi, whose prayers and godly counsel guides me even when I live far away from home. My siblings Martha, Nathan, and Zita also deserve a special mention.
- My dear friends, Very Rev Henry De-Graft Appiah, Very Rev Kofi Annan, Very Rev Dr. Patrick K. Amissah, Very Rev Trudy Wright, Nana Yaa Twum, Dr. Emma Sarah Eshun, Dr. Ellen Konadu Antwi-Adjei, and Alexandra Bonsu were there for me whenever I needed their support.
- Lastly, to my lovely wife, Rita Sarfo Gyasi, and our children Maame Abena Ohenewaa Gyasi, Nana Akosua Gyamea Gyasi, and Nana Kwabena Marfo Gyasi I say thank you very much. I am deeply indebted to you for your love and companionship.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Aduro Fie	This is a Ghanaian Akan language which literally means a house of medicine. This has become a common term to refer to all refugee camps in Germany. The idea is that when you are screened and transferred to the refugee camp, there is hope for you to be permitted to live in the country just like when you are admitted in a hospital, there is a chance for the patient to survive.
African Refugees	This expression simply refers to refugees in the context of the research who come from Africa and bear official documentation to that effect.
APC Leaders	This refers to both ordained and lay leaders of the African Pentecostal Churches.
Ausala	This is a term coined from the German word “Ausländer” which means foreigner. At the refugee camp newcomers are called Ausala.
Ausbildung	This is a training programme comprising of different modules organised for new persons recruited into the German economic system. It could be called apprenticeship.
Mainline churches	This refers to traditional churches like the Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and the Lutherans.

LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

AIC	African Independent/Indigenous Church
APC	African Pentecostal Church
App	Application
AUC	African Union Commission
CCME	Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe
CNBC	Complete Breaking News Channel
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DMI	Department for Migration and Integration
EMK	Evangelisch Methodistische Kirche
EU	European Union
G20	Group of Twenty
ICC	International Church Convent
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IT	Information Technology
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIV	New International Version
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OCRPL-UK	Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life

P1 - P4	Pastor 1 – 4
PEF	Pentecostal European Fellowship
PRC	Protestant Reformed Churches
PRS&D	Presbyterian Relief Services and Development
R1 – R20	Refugee/Asylum Seeker 1 – 20
RQ	Research Question
SPD	Social Democratic Party
UEM	United Evangelical Mission
UMC	United Methodist Church
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN OHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCC	World Council of Churches

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Themes of the study	112
------------------------------------	-----

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework: A Model for Compassionate Mission.....	78
--	----

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Individual consent form for participation in research interview **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Appendix 2: Interview questions for a qualitative research.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Appendix 3: Ethical clearance**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Appendix 4: Editor's letter.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	II
ABSTRACT	III
OPSOMMING	V
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	VII
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	IX
LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS	X
LIST OF TABLES	XII
LIST OF FIGURES	XIII
LIST OF APPENDICES	XIV
TABLE OF CONTENTS	XV
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 CONTEXT & BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	4
1.1.1 Contextual background	4
1.1.2 Missiological background.....	5
1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY	8
1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY	10
1.3.1 Further clarification.....	10
1.3.2 Refugees, asylum seekers and migrants	13
1.4 RESEARCH PROBLEM.....	14
1.5 AIM & OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....	14
1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	15
1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN.....	15
1.7.1 Research philosophy.....	16
1.7.2 Research methodology.....	16
1.7.3 Research methods	18
1.7.3.1 Sampling.....	18

1.7.3.2 Data collection procedure	19
1.7.3.3 Data analysis	22
1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	23
1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH	24
1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH	24
1.11 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS	24
1.12 CONCLUSION	25
CHAPTER 2	26
LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	26
2.0 INTRODUCTION	26
2.1 PENTECOSTALISM	26
2.2 PENTECOSTALISM AS A MOVEMENT FOR TRANSFORMATION	36
2.2.1 <i>Religious transformation</i>	36
2.2.2 <i>Personal transformation</i>	41
2.2.3 <i>Social, political and economic transformation</i>	42
2.3 MISSION & MIGRATION	45
2.4 MIGRATION AND MINORITY IDENTITY GROUPS: A MISSIOLOGICAL REFLECTION	55
2.5 RESPONSES TO THE REFUGEE AND MIGRATION CRISES	62
2.5.1 <i>Selected political and academic responses</i>	62
2.5.2 <i>Selected religious responses</i>	64
2.6 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	70
2.7 CONCLUSION	78
CHAPTER 3	79
RAW DATA PRESENTATION & FINDINGS	79
3.0 INTRODUCTION	79
3.1 DATA PRESENTATION	79
3.1.1 <i>Phase One</i>	79
3.1.1.1 Section One of Phase One – responses of the APC leaders	82
3.1.1.2 Section Two of Phase One – Responses by African refugees and asylum seekers	95
3.1.2 <i>Phase Two</i>	105
3.1.2.1 Written church documents	107
3.2 FINDINGS AND EMERGED THEMES	111
3.3 CONCLUSION	113

CHAPTER 4	114
DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION OF PHASE ONE	114
4.0 INTRODUCTION	114
4.1 DATA ANALYSIS OF PHASE ONE	114
4.1.1 RQ 1.1. <i>What is the situation of African refugees in Düsseldorf and how have APCs responded to their plight?</i>	114
4.1.1.1 Needs of African refugees and asylum seekers	117
4.1.2 RQ 1.2. <i>How do APC leaders see themselves, interpret their migration as well as the refugee crisis in relation to mission?</i>	123
4.1.2.1 APCs' understanding of mission	123
4.1.2.2 APCs mission pattern and mindset	127
4.1.2.3 Volunteerism and mission	129
4.1.3 RQ 1.3. <i>How have African refugees survived and how do their survival tactics reflect on the mission work of APCs in the research context?</i>	133
4.1.3.1 Survival tactics	133
4.1.3.2 Importance of the church	136
4.1.3.3 Identity and APCs' mission praxis	138
4.2 INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA OF PHASE ONE	139
4.3 CONCLUSION	145
CHAPTER 5	146
DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION OF PHASE TWO	146
5.0 INTRODUCTION	146
5.1 DATA ANALYSIS OF PHASE TWO	146
5.1.1 <i>Welfare scheme versus social action policy</i>	149
5.1.2 <i>The church and social action</i>	153
5.1.3 <i>APCs & orality</i>	154
5.1.4 <i>The importance of personnel</i>	156
5.1.5 <i>Volunteerism and mission</i>	157
5.1.6 <i>Public advocacy</i>	158
5.1.7 <i>APCs and state relationship</i>	160
5.2 INTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED FOR PHASE TWO	161
5.3 CONCLUSION	163
CHAPTER 6	165

INTEGRATION AND IDENTITY OF AFRICANS IN DÜSSELDORF	165
6.0 INTRODUCTION	165
6.1 INTEGRATION IN THE RESEARCH CONTEXT	166
6.2 IDENTITY AS AN AGENT FOR INTEGRATION	175
6.3 RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION	177
6.4 CULTURAL/ETHNIC IDENTITY AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AMONG AFRICANS IN DÜSSELDORF	181
6.5 CHALLENGES TO RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL/ETHNIC IDENTITY INTEGRATION AMONG AFRICANS	188
6.6 PROPOSAL FOR MISSION	191
6.7 CONCLUSION	191
CHAPTER 7	193
SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSION	193
7.0 INTRODUCTION	193
7.1 KEY SECTION(S) OF THE RESEARCH	193
7.2 SUMMARY OF ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION	198
7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS	199
7.3.1 <i>Mission</i>	200
7.3.2 <i>Migration</i>	204
7.3.3 <i>Integration</i>	206
7.3.4 <i>Recommendations for further research</i>	211
7.4 THE RESEARCHER’S REFLECTION	211
7.5 FINAL CONCLUSION	213
REFERENCES.....	217
APPENDICES.....	233
APPENDIX 1: INDIVIDUAL CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH INTERVIEW	233
APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	239
APPENDIX 3: ETHICAL CLEARANCE	243
APPENDIX 4: EDITOR’S LETTER	246

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This study set out to explore the response(s) of African Pentecostal Churches (APCs) in Düsseldorf to the plight of African refugees within the context of compassionate mission. God's mission serves as the primary basis for a compassionate response of God's people to social challenges. This is because, through God's mission (*missio Dei*), God's people received mercy. APCs, through the *missio Dei*, have a duty to participate in God's agenda to reclaim and sustain creation in its entirety. The church as a compassionate community exists to reflect the nature of God (Ireland (ed.), 2017:19-25; Harold, 2019:1-2).

An understanding of the *missio Dei* leads to a developed theology and mission praxis founded on compassion. This elevates the need for practical compassion as an issue critical for the Christian faith (Harold, 2019:2). Compassion as used in this study in relation to the church, broadly refers to all its activities in missions which constitute a response to human needs. The need for love and compassion toward the disadvantaged in society in order to avoid judgement cannot be overemphasised as depicted in Matthew 25:40: "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me'" – (New International Version [NIV]).

This parable which teaches about judgement on nations for failing to show love and compassion is the last of a series of eschatological discourses running through Matthew Chapters 24 to 25. DeYoung and Gilbert (2011:163) posit that the "least of these" in verses 40 and 45 (of Matthew 25) refers to the same category of persons. Lutz (2005: 267-274) offers a simplified way of interpreting the "least of these", namely - there is the: (i) *universal interpretation*, which suggests that it refers to all needy people in the world, be they Christians or otherwise: (ii) *classical interpretation*, which refers to members of the Christian community: and (iii) *exclusive interpretation*, which refers to Christian apostles and missionaries (Brown, 2016:12-16).

This research leans toward the *universal interpretation* because of its implication for mission in a broken world such as ours and Jesus' posture of non-discrimination in matters of love and compassion. The issues in the above-mentioned parable resonate with the realities of the life of African refugees and asylum seekers and the expectations of APCs as God's people in the research context. The universal interpretation also fits the African traditional orientation of communal living. It is through the underprivileged that we can show love and compassion to Jesus Christ in the human society (Ireland (ed.), 2017:20; Rivera-Pagán, 2013:42-45).

Although the *missio Dei* does not depend on the church, the church is integral to God's mission in the world (Bosch, 2002:390; Okesson, 2020:65-93; Tennent, 2010:101). The *missio Dei* precedes the church and through it, the church recognises that God is the agent who prompts and sustains human participation in mission. The implication for grounding this study in the compassionate element of the *missio Dei* is to submit to the biblical assumption that God created the universe, and that all human actions in mission ought to focus on his purpose of restoring creation. Thus, the *missio Dei* is for all creation (Taylor, 2020: 52-55; Louw, 2016:336-354; Bosch 2001:10).

Despite the fact that mission belongs to God and begins with him, the attempt to suggest a clear distinction between mission and the church takes away from the identity of the latter as a compassionate community (Okesson, 2020:67-68; Hanciles, 2008:1). Inherent in this *missio Dei* is the divine agenda to reclaim and restore God's creation through love and compassion. This divine agenda has the human being at the centre. For the church to participate in God's mission is to participate in the spread of God's compassionate love toward people irrespective of who they are and from where they come (Taylor, 2020: 54; World Council of Churches [WCC], 2012:273; Bosch, 2011).

The church participating in the *missio Dei* is a response to the conditions of human beings and their environment. This response is based on both the church's mandate and identity as a compassionate community. Mission, thus expressed as a response, considers both the spiritual and physical dimensions of life. The spiritual dimension focuses on proclamation of the gospel and worship. The physical dimension in the form of social action, focuses on tangible efforts to support the people on the margins and transform society (Bevans and Schroeder, 2011:324-326). The

transformation of society focuses on both living and non-living members of creation. This is critical because all parts of God's creation depend on each other. Christian mission is therefore goal-oriented and multidimensional. It transcends physical and relational frontiers and examines various events going on in the world that impact God's mission (Montgomery, 2012:3; Bevans, 2013:160-161).

Beyond the issue of the *missio Dei*, Pentecostalism as the fastest growing Christian tradition, APCs' composition as churches for Africans whose members have experience as migrants, and their history in Düsseldorf places an obligation on them to respond to the plight of African refugees with whom they share a lot in common (Anderson, 2013:1; Ma, Kärkkäinen, and Asamoah-Gyadu, (eds.), 2014:8; Lindhardt, 2018:1). These factors and the mandate of the church in general occasions the question: "How have APCs responded to the plight of African refugees in Düsseldorf between 2015 and 2020?" Fundamental to this question are the following issues: (i) the place of compassion in mission; (ii) the relationship between mission and migration; and (iii) identity as a context for mission and integration of Africans in Düsseldorf.

Thus, this study, in addressing these issues, relies upon the virtue of compassion deemed an integral part of the *missio Dei* to measure APCs' understanding and participation in God's mission within the stated period (2015–2020). This is important because instead of focusing on the category of imperialistic power associated with the *missio Dei*, the focus is rather on the category of compassion, recognised as a fundamental aspect of the *missio Dei* and what it means to be God's people. This image of God as the source of compassion connects the essence of God to the vulnerabilities of contemporary African refugees and asylum seekers in Europe (Louw, 2016:336-354; Ireland (ed.), 2017:12).

This study discovered that although APCs see themselves as missionaries sent by God to carry out missionary work in Düsseldorf, their response to the refugee crisis lacks proactivity and compassion. In most cases, they waited for them to be approached before they offered a response. The APCs, however, indicated that even in the absence of meaningful interaction, prayer, which they deem as a spiritual response, was offered on behalf of the refugees and asylum seekers. The research contributes to knowledge in the following ways: provision of primary data for academic

and non-academic discussions in the area of mission and migration. In addition to making a case for a contextual definition of African Pentecostal Christianity, it also goes ahead to suggest one. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of the material benefits of the cross in Africa and develop a diagram to depict compassionate mission based on Matthew 25:31-46.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. The first section provides the context and background to the study. Thereafter, the motivation and rationale for conducting this research is outlined, followed by the problem statement, research questions, as well as aim and objectives of the study. Attention is then given to the research design, along with a description of the research limitations that were encountered and the significance of the study. The penultimate section outlines the forthcoming chapters, followed by a brief conclusion that brings the chapter to a close.

1.1 CONTEXT & BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This section provides both the contextual and missiological background of the research, each discussed under their own respective sub-headings.

1.1.1 Contextual background

Düsseldorf, the context of the research, is in the western part of Germany and the capital of the North Rhine Westphalia State. According to statistics obtained in 2020, the city has an estimated population of 644,280.¹ Germany became one of the most preferred destinations due to its open border policy at the height of the international migration crisis in 2015. From the United Nations' Global Trends Report, the country recorded over a million refugees at the end of 2018 when its open border policy faded out.² This policy produced an immediate result of finding refugees a destination but created a humanitarian crisis due to integration challenges.

¹ Landeshauptstadt Düsseldorf. (2022). *Office for Statistics and Elections*. Viewed 3 August 2022, from <https://www.duesseldorf.de/statistik-und-wahlen/statistik-und-stadtforschung/statistics.html>.

² InfoMigrants. (2019). 'Almost 700 migrants across Channel in one day', *InfoMigrants*, June 20. Viewed 3 August 2022, from <https://www.infomigrants.net>.

Whilst the campaign was ongoing to draw attention to the plight of the refugees, two unfortunate items of publicity complicated the life of refugees in the research context at different times. Czymara and Schmidt-Catran (2017) authored an article in the *European Sociological Review*, Volume 33, Issue 6, entitled: ‘Refugees Unwelcome? Changes in the Public Acceptance of Immigrants and Refugees in Germany in the course of Europe’s Immigration Crisis’, stating that the arrival of the refugees had brought in its wake a sudden surge in criminal activities in the German cities. The crimes included sexual assault and robbery. These crimes were linked to some refugees whose appearance according to the police fitted the description of men from North Africa and the Middle East. A case in point is the sexual assaults that occurred on New Year’s Eve of 2015/2016. This situation resulted in a low public acceptance rate of persons from these regions (Czymara and Schmidt-Catran, 2017:2-3).

Just when the effects of the first publication were dying off, another article by Bathke (2020) in a local news and information site, namely InfoMigrants, suggested that migrants were the group most affected by coronavirus (Covid-19) owing to the sector of the economy in which they are mostly employed. Most migrants in Germany work in the service sector of the economy. The implication of this situation is that they interact more with the public so their risk of infection is immense. From the perspective of the ordinary native, to interact with a migrant means to predispose oneself to contract the Covid-19 virus. To complicate this situation further were the massive job losses in the service sector during the first lockdown in March of 2020. The situation rendered many migrants jobless and despondent (Bathke, 2020:1-8). Although these cases put African refugees in a bad light, they highlighted the presence of this minority group and the compassion they require from the church.

1.1.2 Missiological background

The Evangelisch Methodistische Kirche (EMK), a Protestant Methodist Church in Düsseldorf, made up of migrants and part of the United Methodist Church (UMC) Germany, received a request from the “*Diakonie*”. They requested the use of the church’s premises for language study and weekly meetings with some Syrian refugees. This request brought into perspective the question of religious response to social challenges. Based on our Christian faith which teaches us to be a

compassionate community, the UMC's social principles and experience as migrants, the leaders' meeting granted the request (EMK, 2016).

Apart from this migrant congregation, other migrant congregations also operate in Düsseldorf. Amongst them are the APCs who are of interest in this research. According to Pastor Kwame Sarpong's oral narration, between 1988 and 1989, a group of Ghanaian migrants, most of whom had applied for refugee status, decided to meet and pray about their uncertain conditions. This simple idea to come together to pray about their condition was fundamental to the religious orientation of these Africans. The reason for this is that Africans believe in the inseparable interrelatedness of spiritual and physical conditions of the human being (Onyinah and Ntumy (eds.), 2016:50-52).

This platform offered them a space where they could worship in their mother-tongue and express themselves as they did back home. Notable amongst those who gathered were Bishop Aidoo, Richard Narh, Charles Donkor, Edmund Sackey Brown, and Richard Darko. This group was named African Migrants Fellowship. It soon attracted nationals from Nigeria, Kenya, and Cameroon.

A similar fellowship had commenced in Dortmund, Essen, Bochum, and Oberhausen under the name 'Christ for all Evangelistic Ministry' in 1991. In Wuppertal and Aachen, another fellowship emerged under the name African Christian Fellowship. The Faith Revival Ministry also emerged in Hamm, Paderborn, and Osnabrück, with Pastor Kwame Sarpong as its leader. The vision was to pray, fellowship with, and support one another as migrants and asylum seekers.

In January 2000 under the leadership of the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (Social Democratic Party of Germany [SPD]), the new nationality law provided financial support for foreign children born in Germany. This simplified the integration process but introduced a compulsory test in the German language as part of the naturalisation proceedings. These changes followed the Green Card Initiative of the Federal Chancellor Mr. Schroeder on March 3, 2000, which was to make employment of highly-qualified foreign Information Technology (IT) skilled

workers in Germany possible (Hailbronner, 2001; Kohlmeier, and Schimany, (eds.), 2005; Anil, 2005).

Specifically, on the church front, Währisch-Oblau, a member of the United Evangelical Mission (UEM), provides another perspective to this historical account. She lays claim to the efforts of the UEM around the period of the SPD rule to strike a relationship of trust with all migrant churches. The UEM mediated between the government and these churches, and assisted them to establish legal structures for their operation in order to get them legally recognised in Germany (Währisch-Oblau, 2009:1-12). It appears that their breakthrough arrived because of a combination of efforts and not just through the change in government.

The African Migrants Fellowship later became a church known as New Life Church. Two Nigerians, Philip Idogon and Franklyn Onwordi, who were originally part of the African Migrants Fellowship, broke away and formed the Brand-New Life Church and Holy City of God Ministries, respectively. The African Christian Fellowship in Wuppertal became known as International Christian Fellowship when native Germans married to Africans joined the church. Another Nigerian, Tony Kiwa, who was a member of Richard Narh's African Christian Fellowship, also left and formed the Winner's World Chapel.

The formation and growth of APCs within the North Rhine Westphalia give credence to the role of migration in mission. Their dynamism has resulted in the creation of many APCs. The incidence of refugees and migrants engaging in missionary activities as depicted by the history of APCs lends support to Hanciles' (2008:6) observation that "every Christian migrant is a potential missionary".

From the history of African Pentecostals narrated here, two strands of mission images emerge. Firstly, the missionary activities of the African Migrants Fellowship focused and operated among African migrants. Secondly, as a result of inter-marriage between these African migrants and native Germans, some native Germans and the children produced out of such relationships also attended church. No evidence exists of a deliberate attempt to reach out to native Germans except those who were married to Africans at the time. The question worth considering is whether these

first wave of migrants deem their missionary activity as purely migrant mission or reverse mission (Adogame, 2010:68-70).

According to Währisch-Oblau (2009:53-60) however, students, refugees and other migrants who found it difficult to settle into existing churches of German orientation formed APCs in the German cities. Established churches in Africa later sent missionaries to begin branches of their churches in Germany. Overall, Währisch-Oblau's account does not contradict the narrative the researcher obtained from the pioneers of the APCs in Düsseldorf. It rather adds some more information to the oral narration. This history of the APCs in the metropolis points to the following issues:

- 1) Identity as a context for mission among refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants. The sense of belonging to a community of people with a common goal and similar identity helped to establish the faith-based groups.
- 2) Migration as a tool for Christian mission. Although the original intent was not to establish a church, the argument that migration facilitates the spread of God's mission is valid.
- 3) Crisis as a platform for religious growth. The African refugees and asylum seekers turned to prayer and religious faith in their bid to find strength and solution to their crisis. In so doing, a new religious faith was birthed in the city and its environs.

1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The researcher arrived in Germany a year after the 2015 open border policy. The timing of his arrival meant that he personally witnessed the struggles refugees and asylum seekers go through. As stated in the introduction (section 1.0) and the background (section 1.1), public perception arising from media publications heightened the vulnerability levels of African and Syrian refugees. Available statistics suggest that African refugees are in the minority among the population of refugees in Düsseldorf. The total number of refugees living in Düsseldorf is 4,550 out of which 908 are Africans. This includes persons from Africa and Asia.³

³ They come from Somalia, Sudan, Algeria, Libya, Nigeria, Egypt, Morocco, Angola, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Benin, Mali, Congo, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Niger, Liberia, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Togo, Tunisia, Senegal, and Ghana (Department for Migration and Integration [DMI], 2018).

The African refugees per their numerical strength could be considered as a minority. They migrate with their religious and cultural worldview. This intersects with the religious and cultural worldview of the destination country (Hanciles, 2008:218). According to Kenneth-Nagel (2018:139-145), the current religious plurality of German society is mainly attributable to migration. Thus, migration resulting in immigration has become a crucial factor for religious and cultural pluralisation, especially in the last 50 years (Hanciles, 2008:3). The question is whether religious groups and, in this context, APCs, identify with disadvantaged migrants.

From the researcher's informal conversations with those in his neighbourhood and in the church, it appears that the concerns of a minority group do not receive the needed attention in the larger scheme of things. In the light of the aforementioned information, the researcher was motivated to read around responses of the church, particularly APCs, to the plight of refugees and the relationship between mission and migration. This is because APCs are the greatest beneficiaries of the arrival of African refugees and asylum seekers in Düsseldorf and also share similar cultural identity with them. Great insights were drawn from the work of scholars such as Hanciles, Adedibu, Asamoah-Gyadu, Anderson, Montgomery, Taylor, Bosch, Mooney, Ireland, Harold, and Bevans and Schroeder, just to mention a few. As an African churchman living in a context where Africans are in the minority and the church they mostly attend is also in the minority, the question of the response of APCs toward the plight of African refugees is compelling.

Based on their identity as Christians, Africans and migrants, APCs are expected to offer a compassionate response to their needy compatriots both in society and within the congregations. This highlights the importance of identity to mission and integration in Düsseldorf. Identity as mentioned here refers to how individuals see themselves and are categorised by others both at the individual and group level. Thus, identity answers the question: "Who are you?" (Vignoles, 2018:1-5; Bhugra and Becker, 2005), but at the same time clarifies who we are not.

The overall personal experience of living close to refugees and the desire to contribute to the body of knowledge motivated me to embark upon this research endeavour. Discussions on this subject could be raised at church synods and conferences. Dealing with it in academia however guarantees an intellectually dispassionate investigation, objective analysis of the phenomenon, and scientific

data for reference. Although African and a churchman, the researcher embarked upon this study as an outsider since is neither a refugee/asylum seeker nor a member of the African Pentecostal tradition. This stance enabled him to carry out the research objectively.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

This study recognises the need to undertake in-depth research on the responses of African Pentecostal denominations to the refugee crisis in the research field. This is because the importance of the relationship between proclamation of the gospel and social action, which together constitute God's mission for the church, is sometimes overlooked within Pentecostal Christianity. While some scholars assert that social action does not form part of Pentecostal conception of mission, others argue that there is currently a shift in favour of social action among Pentecostals. In recognising this gap, the researcher set out to contribute to the body of knowledge by providing perspectives from primary data on the responses of APCs to the plight of African refugees in Düsseldorf.

1.3.1 Further clarification

Reference to APCs in this research encompasses both the Classical and Neo-Pentecostal strands of the Pentecostal phenomenon (Ma et al., (eds.), 2014:3-4; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2010:9; Währisch-Oblau, 2009:46). APCs in the research area were formed by African refugees and asylum seekers with the agenda to pray and provide a platform for such individuals from Africa to fellowship. Many years have passed since its formation, and each year hundreds of African refugees and asylum seekers migrate to Düsseldorf. These African refugees and asylum seekers who form the core of the APCs' membership have many challenges.

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has stated that the number of international migrants saw a rapid surge in 15 years and reached 244 million in 2015 (i.e., 3.3% of the global population). This represents an upward turn of 41% since 2000 (IOM, 2015:5). These statistics, and the German government's 2015 open border policy, informed the choice of the range of the years (2015 – 2020) as the reference point for this research.

Approximately one in seven people migrate daily (IOM, 2015:1). At the end of 2015, it was reported that approximately 65 million people globally were forcefully displaced according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).⁴ By 2020, the number shot up to over 80 million.⁵ This includes men, women, young people, and children who sometimes do not have a clear destination in mind. Their aim is to make it to a country with improved security, economic, and social conditions.

International human migration is not simply an individual choice. The historic-structural approach, social capital theory, push-pull theory, and cumulative causation theory all contribute to the incidence of international human migration (Hanciles, 2008:184-186). The “fluidity and variability” of migration phenomena suggest that these theories, fixated on choice and compulsion, may not be the only contributing factors (Hanciles, 2021:17-20).

APCs’ mission concerns must therefore have a response to contemporary migration challenges as part of a multidimensional approach or response. Refugees in general are vulnerable and need help to integrate. The burden of integration must not be laid only on them, but also on society, of which the church in this case APCs is a significant part (Klarenbeek, 2019:1-20).

Integration is here understood as a comprehensive action plan aimed at the successful incorporation of refugees and migrants into the destination community’s socio-economic life (European Union, [EU], 2018). The question could therefore be raised: “How have APCs responded to the condition of African refugees in Düsseldorf and how does that reflect on their understanding of mission?” This question interrogates the extent to which APCs have used their identity as a context for mission and integration of African refugees in the Düsseldorf. It also speaks to their conception of mission.

⁴ Emma Quinn. (2016). ‘The Refugee and Migrant Crisis: Europe's Challenge’, *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 105(419), 275-285.

⁵ Emma Wallis. (2020). ‘UNHCR: Numbers of displaced people in world passes 80 million’, *InfoMigrants*, December 10, 2020. Viewed 29 June 2021, from <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/29030/unhcr-numbers-of-displaced-people-in-world-passes-80-million>.

Thus, the extent to which APCs have applied their identity to help current African refugees integrate became the primary focus of this research. A religious response must also consider how vices against African refugees such as racism, inequality, and injustice can be minimised, if not eradicated. Contemporary migration challenges make the church's response even more compelling (Bevans, 2013:173).

In this regard, the issue of public advocacy and voluntary social services comes into focus as an integral part of the APCs' participation in the *missio Dei*. With the wealth of experience under their belt in the research context, i.e., the number of years spent, ability to speak German, the presence of family members, social connections and economic power, most members of APCs may be classified into the category of a privileged minority in relation to the current vulnerable state of African refugees.

The introduction of the labels 'privileged' and 'vulnerable' as used in this research indicate the current socio-economic condition of the groups and how each group could impact the other. The reason is that vulnerable minority groups are generally found in a non-dominant position whilst privileged minority groups are normally found in a dominant position. The basis for the categorisation is therefore not hinged on numerical strength but cumulative influence.

The issue of how privileged majority groups sometimes treat vulnerable minority groups receives much publicity. The question is: "How do two minority groups of the same religious faith and similar cultural identity relate in the face of their different social and economic circumstances?" This enquiry influenced the chosen title for this study: 'Responses of African Pentecostal Churches to African Refugees in Düsseldorf Between 2015 and 2020: A Case Study of Mission and Migration'.

The APCs' attitudes, actions and policies give a sense of how their leaders understand and interpret their migration in relation to mission. This is because a better understanding of their migration to a greater extent determines their involvement in mission. An inadequate response to the refugee crisis in a sense constitutes a misunderstanding of the impact of human migration on mission and the essence of Christian mission. It also reflects unfavourably on the APCs' understanding of who

they are and what they represent in the context of the *missio Dei* (Vignoles, 2018:1-5; Bosch, 2011:24).

1.3.2 Refugees, asylum seekers and migrants

Whilst words like ‘refugees’, ‘asylum seekers’ and ‘migrants’ are usually used interchangeably, differences do exist among them in the legal sense. According to the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (UNOHCHR) Convention on Refugees Report (1951), a refugee is unable or unwilling to go back to their country of origin because of a justifiable fear that when they do, they will face persecution. And this persecution is due to factors such as race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.⁶ Furthermore, this definition highlights the compelling motivation for their migration, namely persecution. It also connotes the idea of vulnerability and insecurity. This category of vulnerability is central to the determination of one’s status as a refugee.

Refugees whose claim for recognition as refugees is not yet formally determined are referred to as *asylum seekers* and *migrants* are people who move from one place to another, either within the native country or across borders mainly for economic reasons.⁷ Refugees therefore require protection in territories where they seek to take refuge (Hinger, 2020:3). The definition of a refugee also demonstrates the ineptitude of governments of their native countries in failing to protect and ensure the safety of their own people. The life of a refugee is fraught with incalculable psychological, emotional, social, economic, and spiritual challenges which sometimes result in a distorted identity. Being a refugee on the other hand provides the opportunity for the reconstruction of shattered lives through structured integration programmes (Hanciles, 2008:142).

In Germany, a refugee is offered a three-year resident permit subject to a further three-year renewal if conditions in the refugee’s home country have not seen any significant improvement. Since some

⁶ UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Adopted 28th July, 1951. Viewed 3 August 2022, from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-relating-status-refugees>.

⁷ International Rescue Committee (IRC). (2019). *Refugee, migrants, asylum seekers and immigrants: What’s the difference?* Viewed 7 August 2020, from <https://www.rescue-uk.org/article/refugee-migrants-asylum-seekers-and-immigrants-whats-difference?>

refugees remain in touch with their families back home, the reconstruction of their lives positively impacts both their relatives and the national economy as well (Trines, 2019).

Connected to persons granted refugee status are those who do not meet the requirements for a permit as a refugee; but if they prove that returning to their home country will expose them to serious harm, they are considered under humanitarian protection status and have leave to remain under the EU Qualification Directive. According to a local news outlet publication on 29th April, 2019, “Deutsche Welle” (German Wave) titled: ‘InfoMigrants’, Germany has made use of humanitarian admissions as part of its refugee policy to ensure orderly entry for migrants.⁸ Whilst all these nuances sound political, they fall within the interest of the church’s mission demands.

1.4 RESEARCH PROBLEM

In 2015, the EU member states registered over 1.3million asylum seekers. Germany received more than one third of this figure through the government’s open border policy. This created a huge humanitarian crisis (Trines, 2019; UNHCR, 2021). They faced challenges such as accommodation, learning German, acquiring a resident permit, dealing with discrimination, and getting a job. A majority of the Africans amongst them became members of the APCs which are made up of migrants and former refugees. The initial APC in Düsseldorf was formed to pray and provide the platform for African refugees and asylum seekers to fellowship. However, the APCs appear not to have proactively attended to the challenges of current African refugees. This situation does not only undermine the integration of African refugees, but it does further question the APCs’ understanding of who they are and what their place in the *missio Dei* is. This research therefore investigated how APCs’ Christian faith, African orientation and experience as migrants have interacted with the plight of African refugees in Düsseldorf between 2015 and 2020.

1.5 AIM & OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

⁸Deutsche Welle (German Wave) publication on 29 April, 2019, in *InfoMigrants*.
<https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/16563/refugees-in-germany-legal-entry—without-asylum>

This research aimed to investigate the responses of APCs in Düsseldorf regarding the conditions of African refugees within the context of compassionate mission. The objectives of the study were to:

- 1) Examine the situation of African refugees in Düsseldorf and the response of APCs to their plight.
- 2) Explore how APC leaders see themselves and interpret their migration and the refugee crisis in relation to thoughts expressed in social justice passages such as Matthew 25:31-46.
- 3) Discuss the survival tactics of African refugees as a minority group and how that reflects on APCs' participation in God's mission.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the light of the research context and the problem stated, the main research question of this study was:

“How have APCs responded to the situation of African refugees in Düsseldorf between 2015 and 2020?”

To address this research question, the following sub-questions were formulated:

- RQ 1.1) What is the situation of African refugees in Düsseldorf and how have APCs responded to their plight?
- RQ 1.2) How do APC leaders see themselves, interpret their migration as well as the refugee crisis in relation to mission?
- RQ 1.3) How have African refugees survived and how do their survival tactics reflect on the mission work of APCs in the research context?

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN

This research design encompasses the following components: research philosophy, methodology, and methods. There are many ways research questions can be addressed. The methodology and methods selected for this study were influenced by the main research question and the researcher's

understanding of how social reality is studied. This section discusses the research design by paying specific attention to the selected research philosophy, methodology, and methods.

1.7.1 Research philosophy

The selected research philosophy, also known as a research paradigm, is *interpretivism*. This contrasts positivism in which case scientific quantitative methods are preferred. Interpretivism refers to theories that relate to how knowledge of the world can be acquired. It is an option for qualitative research such as this because reality is constructed by people's understanding of a phenomenon. This approach relies on both the researcher and human subjects as tools to measure a phenomenon. It involves the use of both observation and interviews, be they structured or semi-structured (Sarantakos, 2013:40-41; O'Reilly, 2009:119).

Thus, researchers who use the interpretive approach presume that reality is only arrived at through social constructions, for example, through awareness, language, a common understanding of words, and instruments. It is associated with idealism and usually employed to categorise different approaches such as social constructivism, hermeneutics, and phenomenology. These do not lean toward the objectivist position, which suggests that meaning exists in the world independently of awareness or consciousness (Collins, 2010; Myers, 2008). Research that uses the interpretive approach focuses on unearthing meaning through different methods so that multiple aspects of an issue are interrogated. It is generally based on two beliefs, i.e., Relativist ontology and Subjectivist epistemology.⁹

1.7.2 Research methodology

The selected research philosophy, on the other hand, provides an ontological and epistemological framework for the research while the research methodology on the other hand, helps to narrow this framework to a specific approach adopted by the researcher for the study. This research sought to study a social phenomenon in a defined context. To this end, a qualitative research methodology

⁹ Relativist ontology views reality as occurring between two separate minds that are conscious and founded on meanings and understandings at both the social and experiential levels. Subjectivist epistemology postulates that people cannot be separated from their knowledge. This means that there is a relationship between the researcher and subject under investigation. The point of an interpretive research study is to gain in-depth insight into the lives of the participants to obtain a better understanding of why an individual or a group of persons behave the way they do. The main disadvantage associated with an interpretative approach lies in its subjective nature.

was adopted. This approach was deemed appropriate because it works within a natural space to offer an interpretation of a phenomenon (Sarantakos, 2013: 36-37; Denzin and Lincoln (eds.), 2017, 2005:3). It used an inductive approach and relied heavily on primary information and knowledge from the research area. This approach was selected because it would help to establish a clear link between the stated objectives and the research findings. It also assisted in compressing raw textual data into a concise, summary format. With an inductive approach, the premises are viewed as some evidence for validating the conclusion. It travels from data collected to theories (Starcher, Dzubinski and Sanchez, 2018:52, 58).

Several approaches for framing qualitative research exist, namely: biography, ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, and case study. This current study utilised the case study approach. The latter usually refers to the studying of a problem or situation of an individual or group of persons within the boundary of time or space. It is based on an in-depth investigation of a case in a real-life context. A case study approach was selected because it offered the ability to establish the link between the phenomenon, context, and the lived realities of the people under study. It also offered flexibility in data collection. With this approach, data was collected through multiple sources such as interviews, observation, examination of documents, and artifacts (Creswell and Poth, 2017; Yin, 2018).

The case study approach has three types namely: an instrumental case study; a multiple case study; and an intrinsic case study. An *instrumental* case study is the study of a single case so that insight into that case is provided out of which a theory or general concept is created. The objective of an instrumental case study is to facilitate understanding. The *multiple* case study refers to a study in which more than one instrumental bounded case is selected and creates a more in-depth understanding which a single case study is unable to provide. For an *intrinsic* case study, the case under study is of primary interest to the research. Thus, the case itself is studied. This is unlike the instrumental case study where the case is of secondary consequence to the exploration (Creswell, 2013:97; Yin, 2018).

This research used the single instrumental case study approach to allow for an in-depth investigation. The aim of an instrumental case study is to identify the factors that define a pattern of behaviour or phenomenon. The challenge associated with the case study approach is the ability

to determine the type suitable for a research project and definition of boundaries. The selected approach recognised important issues such as validity, reliability and ethics. Through these, the voices of research participants are heard and analysed (Sarantakos, 2013:222-228, Kromrey, 1986:302).

1.7.3 Research methods

The selected methods were the most appropriate tools and processes utilised by the researcher to address the main research question: “How have APCs responded to the situation of African refugees in Düsseldorf between 2015 and 2020?” They also helped to address the secondary research questions derived from the main research question. The following methods were used:

1.7.3.1 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting a survey population from a target population of interest in order to achieve a result that, through focusing on the survey population, objectively represents the target population. This instrument offers the following advantages: necessity, effectiveness, economy of time, economy of labour, overall economy, and detailed information (Sarantakos, 2013:166-187). Sampling becomes an important step in research as it informs the quality of deductions made by the researcher. The researcher used two sampling techniques to recruit participants i.e., snowball and purposive sampling.

1.7.3.1.1 Snowball sampling

This sampling technique is sometimes referred to as the chain-referral sampling. In this method a few contact persons were identified among the APC leaders who then led the researcher to other potential participants (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016:98; Sarantakos, 2013:166-187). This sampling method was used because of the difficulty of finding suitable participants. A total of 38 refugees and asylum seekers were identified in the selected APCs.¹⁰ Out of the population size of 38, 20 took part in the research. In addition, 3 pastors and 1 lay leader of the selected APCs participated. Thus, the total sample size for the research was 24.

¹⁰ The first selected church has ten (10) refugees. The second has twelve (12) refugees in its membership. The third has nine (9) refugees, and the fourth has four (4) refugees and three (3) asylum seekers on its membership roll.

1.7.3.1.2 Purposive sampling

The purposive sampling technique involved the purposeful selection of suitable participants who are relevant to the research study (Sarantakos, 2013:166-187; Bryman, 2012:416). This was determined by two factors underpinning the research, namely: (i) The first was the stated period of interest, i.e., 2015 – 2020. This meant that refugees and APC leaders who lived in Düsseldorf within this timeframe were most suitable for the research (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016:97).¹¹ (ii) The second was that refugees who were first and foremost Africans and members of APCs were suitable to participate in the interview. The idea was to gauge APCs' responses to the plight of African refugees. The selection of APC leaders was to obtain information from persons who reflect, implement church programmes, and can better explain them in the context of mission.

The research participants were coded as follows: P1, P2, P3 and P4 to represent the pastors/ leaders of the selected APCs. Similarly, R1 – R20 represented the refugees and asylum seekers who participated in the research. RQS 1-3 corresponding to RQ 1.1–3 represents the sub research questions which helps to answer the main research question. They were aligned to the methodology of this research (Busher and James, 2012:90-105). Although the focus of the research was to find out APCs' response to the refugee crisis, it sought the views of some African refugees and asylum seekers who are members of the APCs to give priority to the voice of the vulnerable.

1.7.3.2 Data collection procedure

The data collection procedure is the plan of action by which a researcher collects, evaluates, and analyses data obtained using scientifically validated methods. The researcher organised the data collection exercise in two phases. These are described next.

Phase One

Phase One consisted of: (a) contact tracing church leaders and their members via telephone to discuss and select those who were suitable to participate in the research. This phase aided the

¹¹ The selection of the year range, i.e., 2015 – 2020 for this research was influenced by the fact that the German government's open border policy began in 2015 and ended in 2018. It suggests that those three years represent the most challenging period for both the refugees and the destination country. This study however covers two more years after the expiration of the policy. The idea was to find out whether the APCs' responses to the refugee crisis, if any, ended in 2018 or continued afterwards particularly as the world was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.

researcher to establish an understanding of who would best contribute information that would meet the research objectives and were ready to participate. (b) It also involved conducting semi-structured online interviews. This allowed the researcher to ask questions and obtain responses from the research participants (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Starcher et al., 2018:55-58).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted telephonically or via online platform of WhatsApp video call. Although Skype video conferencing is widely used for collecting data for qualitative research and reportedly claims over 3.5 billion users,¹² and WhatsApp currently claims about 2.5 billion users worldwide, the latter was found to be the most effective means of communicating with the research participants. Its convenience, familiarity, and easy handling made it suitable for use among a poor and vulnerable population.¹³ Even though provision was made to cover the cost of the data used by the research participants, not all of them accepted the offer.

Four APC leaders and 20 African refugees/asylum seekers who come from Guinea (1), Zimbabwe (2), Nigeria (5), Ghana (10), Togo (3), South Sudan (1), and Cameroon (2) were interviewed. The number of participants interviewed from each country mentioned above depended on their suitability and availability in the selected APCs. In each APC, the researcher interviewed a leader and five African refugees/asylum seekers. Out of the total of 24, 15 were males and 9 were females. The survey population size was influenced by the homogeneous nature of the target population. Each interview session was allotted up to 60 minutes per person. The research participants had the opportunity to choose the medium and time for the interview. This was to show them respect and to make them comfortable to ensure authentic dialogue. The use of a semi-structured online interview requires that questions are constructed in a manner that allows for clarity of their content (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Sarantakos, 2013:277-279).

Generally, online interviews can take two forms, namely: synchronous and asynchronous modes. The synchronous mode is where both the researcher and research participant meet online at the same time for the interview session. The asynchronous mode is where the researcher sends a

¹² Complete Breaking News Channel (CNBC). (2022). *Latest News*. Viewed 3 August 2022, from <https://www.cbn.com>.

¹³ BusinessofApps. (2022). *Home page*. Viewed 3 August 2022, from businessofapps.com.

message or question for example through an email and waits for some time to get a response. This entails a long period of time between the communication of the researcher and the participants (James and Busher, 2016:1-22; Kazmer and Xie, 2008:257-278).

The synchronous one-on-one mode used in this research afforded the researcher the opportunity to engage the participants in a sustained interaction. It avoided delay or non-response from the participants. Interactions were recorded and later transcribed. Data collected were uploaded into a protected cloud storage device. In presenting the findings, pseudonyms (instead of real names) were assigned to all the participants. For vulnerable people, the anonymity provided was crucial. The development of technology along with increased accessibility to the Internet has enabled online interviews as a viable tool in itself for data collection in qualitative research. Its usage removes many of the challenges associated with the traditional face-to-face interviews (Hooley, Wellens and Marriott, 2012:1-29).

Online interviews became even more prominent with the outbreak of the coronavirus which is also a reason why the researcher chose this medium. Another motivation is that it offered maximum freedom and anonymity to the participants as they are considered vulnerable. It also allowed the participants the opportunity to express themselves freely as they are not physically seated before the researcher. Moreover, it offered the researcher an opportunity to interact with and collect data concerning real life phenomena from participants who may not be geographically close to the researcher. In addition to being effective and less expensive, this method allowed data to be collected in real time. Through the WhatsApp video calls, both the researcher and the participants were afforded the opportunity to interact closely and pick up some non-verbal signals just as in face-to-face interviews (Nehls, Smith and Schneider 2015:18; Deakin and Wakefield, 2013:3).

The downside of using online interviews is that discussions between the researcher and participants can move at a faster pace. Therefore, the interviews ended earlier than anticipated. In other instances, some non-verbal actions like feet tapping may elude the researcher and in a context where the Internet is unstable, communication becomes difficult (James and Busher, 2016).

In recent times, the use of interviews has become integral to studies that focus on producing knowledge using different sources. It prioritises the voices of participants and their analysis of a contextual situation (Zapata-Barrero and Yalaz (eds.), 2018:172). Furthermore, to obtain fuller understanding of issues in such a study, the interview as a means of data collection does not usually stand on its own. Other methods such as “participant or non-participant observation, focus group discussions, or oral history and life story data collection” are paired with the interview (Zapata-Barrero and Yalaz (eds.), 2018:173). This research thus used interviews in Phase One and examination of written church documents in Phase Two as its data collection tools (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016).

Phase Two

Phase Two of the data collection focused on examining written church documents of the selected APCs. These documents were obtained electronically, i.e., through email and WhatsApp. The researcher requested written church documents covering the social action activities of selected churches. This includes publications, official meeting minutes, social action policy, and welfare scheme documents. The idea was to examine them and identify discussions and policies that bordered on the church’s compassionate response to social challenges of the disadvantaged (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Starcher et al., 2018: 58).

1.7.3.3 Data analysis

In qualitative research such as this, analysis of data can be done after data collection just like in a quantitative study, or during data collection. For qualitative research that collects data through electronic means, data analysis is done after data collection as in quantitative research. In other cases, both methods are combined. This study analysed the data after the data were collected. Whilst data was mostly analysed through content, discourse, narrative, grounded theory, thematic and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), this research applied the thematic analysis approach to analyse the collected data (Sarantakos, 2013:379-380; Guest et al., 2012).

Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke developed thematic analysis for researchers in the field of psychology. Due to its flexible nature, it is also used in other fields of study. Currently, in both qualitative and quantitative research, thematic analysis is an option for analysing data. It has

different approaches such as the inductive, deductive, semantic, and latent.¹⁴ Thematic analysis has various steps, but the most popular follows the process of understanding the data collected, developing codes, developing themes, revising themes, defining themes, and then, finally, writing the report. This research followed the inductive approach of thematic data analysis as it focused on themes that emerged from the data (Starcher et al., 2018:61; Braun and Clarke, 2013). The common themes that were identified and developed by the researcher were coded in relation to the research questions.

As with all studies that involve human participants, ethical considerations needed to be abided by. These are described next.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study complied with best practice in research ethics. The Ethics Committee of Stellenbosch University on 1st July, 2021, approved this research under the Project No: 15212. Permission was sought from other appropriate authorities and a participant information sheet provided (Appendix 1) to make sure that full informed consent was obtained. Whilst heads of selected APCs offered written consent, verbal consent was sought from the refugees and asylum seekers who participated in the research (Sarantakos, 2013:243).

Other ethical considerations adhered to included voluntary participation of the participants; maintaining anonymity and confidentiality; using pseudonyms instead of the participants real names; and storing the collected data on a password protected computer accessible only to the researcher. Furthermore, the expertise of a certified psychiatrist and clinical psychologist was made available to the research participants should any need help during and after the interviews. It is however instructive to report that none of the participants incurred any adverse emotional or psychological crisis after their interviews.

¹⁴ The inductive approach derives its themes from the data. Thus, the data determines what themes are generated. The deductive approach on the other hand approaches the data collected with predetermined themes based on existing theory or knowledge. The semantic approach literally analyses the content of the data collected in a very explicit manner. The latent approach utilizes the subtext and underlying assumptions within the data. Scribbr, (n.d.). Presenting your Path to Academic Success. Viewed 3 August 2022 from <https://www.scribbr.com>.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Due to the language challenge, African refugees and asylum seekers who could express themselves in English and the researcher's mother tongue (Twi) were engaged in the interview. Owing to the Covid-19 outbreak and restriction laws, person-to-person interaction was avoided. The use of online interviews, i.e., telephone and WhatsApp video calls, meant that interactions were not as lengthy as a face-to-face interview. It was difficult to Skype African refugees and asylum seekers selected for the interviews because they had not installed or activated the Skype application (app) on their cell phones. However, they all had WhatsApp installed on their phones and were familiar with how to use it. Despite these limitations, the researcher was able to collect sufficient data for data saturation to be reached.

The following section discusses the significance of the research.

1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This research contributes to the ongoing debate on the role of the church in solving contemporary migration challenges. Not only does it provide reliable data, but it also creates a better understanding of as well as insight into, the humanitarian crisis among minority African refugees in a context where their home language is not spoken anywhere on the migrants' continent except Namibia. Additionally, it fills the practical knowledge gap regarding how APCs as a privileged minority group, respond to African refugees, a vulnerable minority group, in a foreign land. Lastly, it lends support to constructive theology and praxis within African Pentecostal Christianity.

The following section outlines the forthcoming chapters to give the reader a 'road map' of what is to come.

1.11 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

This study comprises of the following seven chapters.

Chapter 1 introduced the topic under investigation and discussed the main elements of the research process.

Chapter 2 explored existing literature on the topic and described the conceptual framework underpinning the research.

Chapter 3 discussed the data collection and findings.

Chapter 4 presented the data analysis and interpretation of Phase One.

Chapter 5 presented the data analysis and interpretation of Phase Two.

Chapter 6 examined the issue of identity and integration as key components from the data.

Chapter 7 provided a summary, recommendations, and a final conclusion.

Attached to this research is a list of printed and online sources consulted, and samples of the consent forms. These are headed as References and Appendix 1, respectively. Appendix 2 is the list of semi-structured online interview questions. Appendix 3 is the letter of approval obtained from the Ethics Committee of Stellenbosch University and appendix 4 the editor's letter.

1.12 CONCLUSION

Chapter 1 provided the introduction; the context and background of the study; the motivation and rationale for conducting this research; the statement of the problem; the aim and objectives; the research design; the ethical considerations that were adhered to; the limitations and significance of the study; and the organisation of the study. This chapter has thus set the stage for the literature review in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews concepts and practices of Pentecostalism in relation to mission and migration. It examines how the definition of Pentecostalism relates to the phenomenon's response to social challenges. It reviews the concept of Pentecostalism as a movement for transformation in the context of current happenings in Africa and the relationship between mission and migration. The chapter reflects missiologically on mission and minority identity groups and reviews selected responses to the refugee crisis. Lastly, it discusses the virtue of compassion as the conceptual framework underpinning the research.

2.1 PENTECOSTALISM

Definitions of a phenomenon and the practices of practitioners are usually related. This section reviews some earlier scholarship on the term 'Pentecostalism' which Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:12), Anderson (2004:13), Hollenwenger (1997:1) and Hempelmann (2009:1-2) offered and how those impact on compassionate mission.¹⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu (2010) suggests that in most of Africa, there are the Mission Churches, African Independent/Indigenous Churches (AICs), and the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches. These diversities represent the strength, vitality, and innovative sense of the African religious experience. The Mission Churches were founded through the activities of European and American missionaries in the 15th – 19th centuries. Africans who left the mission churches for one reason or the other founded the AICs to enculturate Christianity to suit the worldview of the Africans. The Pentecostals/Charismatics are also African yet differ slightly from the AICs. They are made up of different strands and, with their emphasis on oral liturgy, transformation, personal experience, the Holy Spirit, and the gifts He brings to the believing

¹⁵ Terminologies help us to clarify diversities when they are unified in a particular field. This does not solve the challenge in all cases. The definition of the term 'Pentecostalism' attempts to clarify the ever-evolving Pentecostal phenomenon within Christianity.

community, currently represent the face of Christianity in Africa (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2010: viii; Lindhardt, 2018:3-4).

According to Asamoah-Gyadu and other scholars, within Africa, three main strands of the Pentecostal movement are found. These are the older independent churches, Classical Pentecostal churches, and the Neo-Pentecostal denominations also known as Charismatic denominations. Connected with the Neo-Pentecostal strand are the prophetic churches which operate a system of Christianity comparable with the older AICs (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2010:9-11; Währisch-Oblau, 2009:46; Ma et al., (eds.), 2014:3).

Währisch-Oblau (2009:36-46) alludes to the challenge of producing a definition of the term Pentecostalism acceptable to all. This is because the Pentecostal phenomenon has many expressions. Although common elements run through the reflections of scholars who have studied the phenomenon, there are also areas of divergence. Anderson (2013:3) similarly indicates that as a phenomenon, Pentecostalism is not a homogenous movement but manifests different expressions in diverse contexts.

In many parts of the world, Pentecostalism offers practitioners a particular attraction that symbolises its uniqueness. This means that Pentecostalism as expressed in Africa, Europe, America and elsewhere may not be the same. Their symbolic importance may also differ. Scholars suggest that in foreign lands, for example, religious migrant organisations like the APCs are important as they serve as a kind of cultural refuge where migrants can regain their identity and self-awareness from experiences of discrimination and inequalities (Mooney, 2013:100-110; 2004:1455-1468; Cruz, 2013:113).¹⁶ This may not be the case in the migrants' home country. Thus, for Anderson (2013:5), "Defining anything is a hazardous exercise".

Nevertheless, as complex and evolving as the Pentecostal phenomenon is, scholars have offered their reflections on the term Pentecostalism. Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:12) reflects on Pentecostalism

¹⁶ Thus, they do not only stand for religious beliefs but cultural education and formation too. This is evident in the usage of local languages, songs, native clothing, observance of national holidays and other cultural activities by APCs operating in the host countries. So, although the theology and liturgical approach may be similar, the points of emphasis and general delivery will differ.

as encompassing Christian groups, churches, movements, and fellowships which highlight salvation in Christ as a transformative experience that the Holy Spirit engineers. He writes that Pentecostals see spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues, prophecies, visions, healing, and miracles as standing in historic continuity with the experience of the early church as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.¹⁷

Asamoah-Gyadu's (2005) reflection succinctly captures the content of Pentecostals' beliefs, practices, and biblical orientation. Thus, in trying to conceive what Pentecostalism is about, the generally accepted theology of the phenomenon becomes fundamental. The importance of salvation, and some of the gifts of the Holy Spirit which Pentecostals cherish and are listed in his reflection offer answers to daily human problems. For example, spiritual gifts like healing, prophecy, and deliverance conveyed through prayer are cherished and sought after as the sole option in communities where insecurity abounds and which do not have hospitals.

Anderson (2013:1) notes the mission mindedness of Pentecostals referring to them as "fundamentally an 'ends of the earth', missionary, polycentric, transnational religion". His subsequent definition of Pentecostalism, however, only points out that the term Pentecostalism describes globally all churches and movements that stress the working of the Holy Spirit. This covers the patterns of how individuals experience the gifts of the Holy Spirit and their theology, although with some variations. This global perspective of the Pentecostal phenomenon seems to take care of both publicly acclaimed Pentecostal denominations and those operating as a movement. However, he concedes instances where Pentecostal movements could arise in mainline churches. He terms this 'charismatic' (Anderson, 2004:9-15).

Scholars like Hollenwenger (1997) also reflected on the Pentecostal phenomenon along with similar ideas. To him, the term Pentecostalism could be understood in either general or specific terms. In general terms, Pentecostalism will refer to all movements formed independently or found

¹⁷ In Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity, these spiritual gifts and experiences are cherished. Members of the Pentecostal family are therefore consciously encouraged to seek these spiritual gifts and experiences which signify the presence of God. The belief of Pentecostals that through the power of the Holy Spirit human problems can be solved makes the phenomenon appealing to poor communities. What Pentecostalism generally represents resonates well with the needs of poor African communities.

operating within existing Christian groups, whose major theological paradigm is centred on the role, function, and manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. He, therefore, suggests that Pentecostalism refers to those Christians who stress the power and presence of the Holy Spirit directed towards the proclamation that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. In specific terms, however, the term Pentecostalism would refer to the recent Christian movement that traces its origin of birth to the American Holiness Movement or Churches. These groups were known largely for their claim of Spirit baptism denoted by the gift of speaking in tongues, also known as *glossolalia* (Hollenwenger, 1997:1).¹⁸

Another view, attributable to Hempelmann (2009), suggests that Pentecostalism is a global Christian revivalist and missionary movement that emphasises the workings of the Holy Spirit and the gifts He brings to the believing community. Four fundamental teachings define this movement, namely: salvation, healing, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and expectation of Christ's second coming. All are accompanied by certain practices. To him, Pentecostal spirituality focuses on experience and phenomena, for example, deliverance from demon possession, miracles, visions, and ecstatic states (Hempelmann, 2009).

These scholarly reflections provide insight into the theology, beliefs, and practices of Pentecostals. A common element running through their reflections is the importance of the Holy Spirit and the gifts He brings to the believing community. The centrality of the Holy Spirit to all that the church is called to accomplish is fundamental to Pentecostals. The emphasis on tongue-speaking (*glossolalia*) highlights the importance of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and prayer within Pentecostalism. Through prayer, human concerns such as healing of the body and protection from evil forces are offered to worshippers.

Experience in worship is something Pentecostals strongly cherish as evident in the definitions. This is anchored in the testimonies of worshippers through encounter with the Holy Spirit which occurs in both private and corporate life of the believing community. They have a narrative orientation and lean toward spontaneity. The important elements within Pentecostalism which

¹⁸ It is instructive to note that currently, many Christian denominations identify themselves as Pentecostals but have no links to the American Holiness Movement. Examples of this category of denominations can be found in Africa.

these scholars captured make a claim on the way Pentecostals are expected to live. This is because worship life and teachings are expected to produce a way of life among adherents (Ireland (ed.), 2017:15-16).¹⁹

Despite these scholarly efforts to define and capture the essence of Pentecostalism as the new paradigm for Christianity, the researcher identifies the absence of mission orientation in the definitions; although Anderson, for example, acknowledges the mission mindedness of the phenomenon, he did not emphasise it in his definition. This is important because from its beginning at Azusa Street²⁰ and the period thereafter, scholars like Anderson (2013) and Kärkkäinen (2014) highlight the mission orientation that characterised the activities of early Pentecostals. They travelled the length and breadth of the globe to spread their Pentecostal faith and contemporary Pentecostals share this trait (Anderson, 2013:11-18; Kärkkäinen, 2014:27).

Another critique is that the definitions of Pentecostalism offered by these scholars suggest the absence of a contextual conception of the Pentecostal phenomenon. As noted earlier, Pentecostalism in practice is multifaceted and manifests a contextualised expression of the Christian faith. So, commonalities exist in its global sense but there are also significant differences in its contextual sense. For instance, from the researcher's observation, the contents of prophecy in Pentecostal Christianity in Africa differ from Europe. In Africa, prophecy is mostly about who is going to die or make money the next day. In Europe, on the other hand, it is mostly about legal documentation and marriage. This is not surprising because African society fears death and understands it as a calamity. Visible financial poverty in many parts of the continent makes a prophecy of riches within the shortest possible time appealing. This aspect of Pentecostalism may

¹⁹ Indeed, the non-rigid nature of Pentecostalism goes beyond liturgy and its general worship life. It permeates the appearance of its leading functionaries during worship services. Whereas some appear in clerical dress others have the liberty to appear in African garments or a suit and tie. The liberating power of the Holy Spirit is felt in different areas of life within Pentecostalism. Thus, Pentecostalism exhibits flexibility, spontaneity, and strength. As a field of study, it is interdisciplinary in nature. The evolving nature of the phenomenon makes it thought-provoking for academic investigation. The views these scholars expressed present different thematic interests for researchers. These may include: the place of the Holy Spirit in the *missio Dei*, contemporary church, and salvation; the impact of Pentecostalism on society, culture, and the general life of practitioners, and Pentecostal spirituality and the globalisation of the Pentecostal faith in the post apostolic era.

²⁰ Azusa street is regarded by many as the birthplace of post apostolic Pentecostalism following the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon William Seymour and his fellow worshippers.

not survive where the government's social safety net can provide for people in times of crisis and even regularly.

These factors pose a definition problem. Bergunder (2006:186) asserts that it is practically impossible to suggest a single working definition for Pentecostalism. Währisch-Oblau (2009:38) agrees, stating that: "With more research into the globalized nature of Pentecostalism, the question becomes more urgent as to how this extremely multi-faceted movement can still be represented as a single global phenomenon, even if it has neither a common dogmatic basis nor a universal institutional framework". She buttresses her view by referring to a similar sentiment by Harvey Cox (1994:143) who suggested that the multifaceted nature of the Pentecostal phenomenon can be likened to Jazz. It is different everywhere yet recognisable everywhere as Jazz (Währisch-Oblau, 2009:38).

Währisch-Oblau (2009) further argues that whilst scholars use the diachronic and synchronic means of defining the Pentecostal phenomenon, verification is difficult when applying the diachronic to emerging African independent Neo-Pentecostal groups. Currently, there are founders of African Pentecostal denominations whose only basis for operating as a Pentecostal denomination is an encounter with the Holy Spirit during a private prayer session. They have no traceable link or history with the original initiators of the post-Apostolic Pentecostal movement in Azusa Street. This is understandable because, as noted by Ma et al., (eds.), (2014:2) Pentecostalism emerges from a "dynamic experience rather than theological discovery".

Thus, in the view of the researcher, context should be viewed as a paradigm to arrive at a definition for the phenomenon in addition to existing scholarly criteria. Although a global phenomenon, a contextual conception of the phenomenon adds another dimension to its academic investigation. A contextual conception must reflect primarily the unique connection between Pentecostalism, on the one hand, and African religious cultural practices and orientation, on the other. This is because there is already a close affinity between the two experiences.²¹ This is however to be done without

²¹ Pentecostalism in the African church space seems to flourish owing to its ability to feed on elements already in existence within the African and African culture to create its contextual identity. The belief in the power of supernatural spirits both good and bad resonates well with the African religious orientation. Pentecostalism thus

losing the phenomenon's transnational identity. After all, as Anderson (2013:5) notes: "Global Pentecostalism is more diverse than any other Christian expression precisely because its different forms are rooted in local contexts".

The result of a contextual definition of the Pentecostal phenomenon is to have a definition from every region or continent. According to Ma et al., (eds.), (2014:3) this argument prompts the idea of looking at the phenomenon as "Pentecostalsisms". Whereas on the surface this may suggest fragmentation, it presents a better representation of the phenomenon in different contexts. Each context feels adequately recognised. It also helps to answer questions which relate to the realities of practitioners in a particular context hitherto overlooked (Anderson, 2016:1-21).

The need for a contextual definition of the Pentecostal phenomenon is therefore important, as generally the definition of a phenomenon or a group creates a new self-understanding and identity. This identity to a greater extent influences how issues are responded to internally and externally. The consciousness arising out of a contextual definition of the Pentecostal phenomenon has the propensity to affect the phenomenon's approach toward social issues in society. Self-definition of a group, according to Bosch (2011:23-24), gives birth to a new identity that overrides individual members' particular backgrounds and experiences. Out of this new self-definition flows the consciousness to respond to both internal and external matters.²²

The argument for a contextual conception of the Pentecostal phenomenon is therefore key as it has the potential to shape the actions of practitioners. Thus, a correct contextual understanding (*orthodoxy*) of the phenomenon will lead to the right action (*orthopraxis*). Therefore, the notion of

becomes more meaningful to the life of the African. This presupposes that it was not only the style of worship that the movement capitalised upon to entrench itself in Africa but also the primal imaginations governing the worshipper such as belief in spirits, prosperity, communalism, and humanism among others (Anim, 2009:32).

²² Self-identity influences behaviour. Setiloane sums up the African's belief in communalism and humanism, simply in the following words: "motho ke motho ka batho" to wit, "a person is a person through others" (Setiloane, 1978:13). Interdependence and the willingness to define existence in the collective sense is something African culture promotes. Kumalo challenges the African to cherish and practice this identity when he queried some South Africans' xenophobic attacks on their fellow Africans. He questions how Africans who claim to own in them and in their culture the noble character of humanness, ubuntu, could fail to demonstrate the culture which they claim to embrace and show meanness to their fellow Africans (Charbonnier, Cilliers, Mader, Wepener and Weyel (eds.), 2018:157-162).

African Pentecostals are expected to manifest these African virtues which are also fundamental to the Christian faith. Communalism and respect for the dignity of the human person is certainly in concert with the biblical teachings on brotherliness and good neighbourliness.

a contextual conception leads to a contextual response to the challenges within a particular context (Harold, 2019:2). A contextual African conception of the term Pentecostalism according to the researcher would thus be:

“A missionary oriented and transformative movement within Christianity believed to be founded, nurtured, and governed by the Holy Spirit. It considers the culture and unique circumstances of a people to deliver foremost a personal spiritual experience of transformation. It is characterised by a sense of independence in worship evidenced through the open expression of emotions, speaking in tongues (glossolalia), the pronouncement of prophetic messages, practice of exorcism, professing of absolute faith in the Bible, salvation, miracles, and material prosperity. It offers security against vices such as premature death, sickness and spiritual attacks by evil forces and their agents through the blood of Jesus Christ. This set of beliefs and practices is shared with the world mainly using the mass media”.

This view of Pentecostalism reduces the diachronic basis for defining the tradition. It acknowledges the mission mindedness of the movement and its transformational impact both on the individual and society. This is facilitated through the use of the mass media. Pentecostals attribute their success story to the power of the Holy Spirit who gives gifts to all believers. They adore and seek after these spiritual gifts. The recognition of the Holy Spirit as the Architect of the Pentecostal phenomenon is therefore basic to its theology. Through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit, specific gifts such as speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*), prophecy, healing and exorcism are shared among the believing community. These are understood as an integral part of an African Pentecostal’s identity (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2010).

The emphasis on personal spiritual experience which then becomes the basis for Christian witness is one theme Pentecostals espouse. The fear of death and of possible attacks from evil forces is prevalent within African society. Any object of worship incapable of providing protection against these forces does not appeal to Africans. The importance of the cross is catered for in the researcher’s attempted conception of the Pentecostal phenomenon through reference to salvation and the blood of Jesus Christ.

Besides the lack of recognition for mission and context in the definition of the Pentecostal phenomenon, Scholars like Stott and Hans Urs von Balthasar suggest there is an absence of the cross from Pentecostal theological discourse and see it as a serious oversight. The cross here symbolises suffering and persecution. Their argument is that any Christian theology which does not have the cross as its central theme is not Christian (Stott, 2006; von Balthasar, 2000). Asamoah-Gyadu (2013:105-120) in like manner posits that within Pentecostal theology, engagement with the cross is one-sided. There is an emphasis on the material blessings of the cross, but the shame and suffering attached to it is relegated. His position reminds Pentecostals that without the cross, Pentecost, which is glorious, would not have happened. Therefore, to emphasise Pentecost and neglect the cross is a grave oversight.

Whilst the researcher does not dispute the importance of the cross to Christianity, his view is that less emphasis of the cross is different from absence of the cross. Pentecostals' emphasis on salvation in Christ Jesus as a central theological theme does not suggest the absence of the cross in Pentecostal theology. In his definition of the phenomenon, Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:12) mentions salvation as an important element to Pentecostals and salvation through Jesus Christ is synonymous with the cross and suffering although not explicitly stated. The emphasis on material blessings of the cross is therefore not equal to the absence of the cross. So, if salvation is fundamental to Pentecostals, then that in itself suggests their recognition of the cross and suffering.

The First Protestant Reformed Churches (PRC-Michigan), in offering its perspective on the Pentecostal phenomenon, suggested they belong to a minority group that holds a critical view of the Pentecostal movement. To them, the movement's practices, principles, and doctrines are all defective when tested against Scripture, the historic Christian faith of protestants, and the Reformed tradition.²³ This position is rather brutal about the Pentecostal phenomenon as it is still evolving. Nevertheless, it shows the alternative views of others about the phenomenon and its practices.

²³ This is a quote from a lecture delivered by Charles J. Terpstra (2001) on the topic: 'Pentecostalism's View of the Christian Life'. Viewed 31 January 2021, from www.prca.org/pamphlets/pamphlet_91b.html.

Similarly, Harold (2019) in his article: ‘An Evangelical Understanding of The Missio Dei as Inclusion of Social Justice: A Critical Theological Reflection’ published in the *Pharos Journal of Theology*, notes that in Pentecostal theology, mission is conceived of as proclamation of the gospel to the unsaved and prayer. Not much attention and compassion is given to “social projects and political action” (Harold, 2019:2). This position is shared by scholars like Ireland (ed.), (2017), Währisch-Oblau (2009), and Amissah (2020). Bevans and Schroeder also suggest the same. To them, Pentecostals’ sense of social action is limited to the welfare of members (Bevans and Schroeder, 2011:328-330).

Scholars like Warrington (2015), Asamoah-Gyadu (2010), and Ma et al., (eds.), (2014), on the other hand, suggest that although historically social engagements have not been a major priority of Pentecostals, there is a shift in the above position in recent times. The researcher is of the view that contextual research is needed to clarify these two opposing views.

In spite of these criticisms, the Pentecostal phenomenon has shown its growth and maturity by constantly evolving and aligning its theology and practices to contemporary challenges (Warrington, 2015:1-34). A case in point is the promotion of the concept of ‘Progressive Pentecostalism’ which seeks to create a balance between evangelism and social action within Pentecostalism (Miller and Yamamori, 2007:2).

The question is: “To what extent do these criticisms affect Pentecostals’ responses to the plight of people on the margins?” Since there is a correlation between what people are taught and their actions, as exemplified in Acts 11:27-30, and 2 Corinthians 8:3 (Ireland (ed.), 2017:15-16), the earlier accusation of the absence of suffering and persecution in Pentecostal theology as claimed by Stott (2006) and von Balthasar (2000); if it is the case, it may impact Pentecostalism’s compassionate response to social challenges. Asamoah-Gyadu’s position that incorporates both the cross and Pentecost as central themes for Christianity is the most Christian. This is because, without the cross, Christianity loses its bearing on salvation. In the same vein, Christianity loses its power without the Holy Spirit. Protestants’ lack of adequate emphasis on pneumatic experience and Pentecostals’ overemphasis of the same, does not fully represent the essence of Christianity.

Both elements ought to receive equal attention within Christian theological discourse (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2013:105-120; Kärkkäinen, 2004:152-153).

2.2 PENTECOSTALISM AS A MOVEMENT FOR TRANSFORMATION

Whilst some scholars maintain the notion that the Pentecostal movement shows little concern for social issues, others suggest that the movement has shifted its focus to encapsulate social action (see section 2.1). This section briefly reviews the history of Pentecostalism as a movement for transformation and how that speaks to the need for transformation in contemporary society. The transformational agenda of Pentecostalism manifests in the religious space, individual lives and within the social, economic and political space.

2.2.1 Religious transformation

Cox (1995) and other Western thinkers, who at a point assumed that the explosion of science and technology in the 21st century was going to end religious influence, changed their position and Cox suggested that Pentecostalism is reshaping Christian spirituality and that secularity, not spirituality, may be heading for extinction. The reshaping of Christian spirituality speaks to Pentecostals' transformation of the religious landscape. Cox's observation is a testimony to the transformative power of Pentecostalism the world over (Cox, 1995:xv; Ma et al., (eds.), 2014:1).²⁴

The history of Pentecostalism within the African religious space suggests religious transformation. According to Ma et al., (eds.), (2014), the history of Pentecostalism points to the transformative power of the Pentecostal strand within the religious landscape in Africa. This idea of transformation has characterised the activities of Pentecostals since the phenomenon became global (Ma et al., (eds.), 2014:1-2, Ireland (ed.), 2017:15-16). Scholars like Anderson allude to the

²⁴ Thus, modernity is unable to deflate entirely the influence of religion. What it has done is to catalyse its evolution. With the strength and agility Pentecostalism has shown so far, there is hope that if any strand of Christianity can help to transform our society in terms of the religious landscape, individual lives, politics and economics, it must be Pentecostals. This will, however, require a radical shift in the way Pentecostals conceive of mission. The concept of progressive Pentecostalism and the importance of compassion as an integral part of mission will need special emphasis.

transformational impact of Pentecostalism on Christianity worldwide. This is particularly profound in Africa, Asia, and South America (Anderson, 2013:1-3, 171; Ma et al., (eds.), 2014:1).

Fyfe and Walls (1996:3) seem to corroborate the view that Pentecostals possess transformative influence. According to them, although a new Christian tradition, Pentecostalism is strikingly becoming the standard Christianity of the present age. Anderson (2013: xvi), Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:1), and Jenkins (2007:1) share a similar position when, in assessing the world situation, they noted the apparent shift in the “demographic centre of gravity of Christianity” from the Global North to the Global South with special reference to Africa. This idea of the shift in Christianity’s centre of gravity, according to Ma et al., (eds.), (2014:388), owes its source to scholars like David B. Barrett, Lamin O. Sanneh, John Mbiti, Andrew Walls, and Kwame Bediako.

Reflecting on the trend of the shift in the centre of gravity in the history of Christianity, Bediako (2011) makes the point that no permanent centre of gravity exists because what is adjudged the centre today is a potential periphery tomorrow, and vice versa.²⁵ The impressive image of APCs on the African continent can be linked to its ability to recognise the importance of identity to Christian mission. Anim (2009:32) credits the Pentecostal movement’s ability to tap into the primal imagination (traditional concepts and way of thinking) of the local people as a remarkable contribution to its success in religious transformation on the African continent.

Anderson (2013) suggests that William Wade Harris could be credited for the incredible revival he brought to the continent.²⁶ He was the instrument God used to spread this new wave of Christianity on the African continent. Together with two other women, he used songs, fervent preaching, healing, and exorcism to define a new order of Christianity in Africa. When his

²⁵ Kwame Bediako. (2011). ‘The Emergence of World Christianity and the Remaking of Theology’, in William R. Burrows, Mark R. Gornik and Janice A. Mclean (eds.), *Understanding World Christianity: The Vision and Works of Andrew F. Walls*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books. John S. Mbiti. (1974). ‘Theological Importance and the Universality of the Church’, *Lutheran World* 21(3), 251-260.

²⁶ He had had some contact with missionaries from Azusa Street in Liberia notably Lucy Farrow in 1907. While serving a jail term in his home country, it is said angel Gabriel visited and commissioned him as a prophet. Through that encounter he also received the Holy Spirit baptism accompanied by tongues speaking. Upon his release he abandoned his Methodist faith and adopted a Pentecostal one preaching from Liberia to Ivory Coast (Cote d’Ivoire) and finally to the Gold Coast (Ghana) between 1913 and 1914. According to Anderson (2014:13) The post-apostolic Pentecostal flame had been lit prior to Azusa. He refers to the Welsh Revival (1904-5), and the revivals in North-East and Central India (1905-7).

followers could not accept some of the doctrinal positions of the mainline churches, they decided to establish their own churches. These churches were known as the Harrist churches in the Ivory Coast, and in Ghana, the Twelve Apostles, but later they have generally come to be known as the AICs (Anderson, 2013:77-84; Alexander, 2011). Through this movement the sense of independence in Christian worship originated. This led to the formation and acceptance of Classical Pentecostalism and the birth of Neo-Pentecostalism in Africa in later years.²⁷

Bediako (1995:69) notes that although the AICs manifested Pentecostal tendencies, their traditional orientation and use of African musical instruments such as the calabash rattles instead of tambourines sets them apart. They identified more with African culture than did the later Pentecostal denominations. The recognition of culture and identity as a factor for the success of Christian mission is here emphasised by Bediako. The AICs' ability to situate the Christian faith within African culture provided the Africans with an opportunity to encounter the Christian God in worship. This occurred through items and concepts already familiar to them. Through these unique African sensibilities, AICs easily struck a chord with the Africans. Although Classical Pentecostals also have some non-African trappings like the history of their origins, their charismatic counterparts have largely retained the African identity which AICs portrayed in their historical origins and worship life.²⁸

In the researcher's view, if the AICs indigenised the Christian faith and worship style, then the ethos of these African churches particularly the APCs, ought to recognise the place of identity in their mission enterprise. Here, their identity as a compassionate community arising out of their Christian faith, African orientation, and experience as migrants becomes key. The recognition of this factor could translate practically into offering appropriate response(s) to transform the conditions of the marginalised in society. Since the AICs have lost much steam at least in the last

²⁷ The Pentecostal style of worship found in the AICs was infectious, therapeutic, and African in orientation. This inadvertently exerted considerable pressure on historic mission denominations. They undertook liturgical reforms in order to stay relevant and attractive (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2013). The reforms historic mission denominations undertook were intended to indigenise the worship service, align it with contemporary trends, and attract young people who mostly prefer the Pentecostal ecstatic style of worship. In other cases, the liturgical reforms created space for the Pentecostal wave and were not necessarily to indigenise the worship style (Anderson, 2013).

²⁸ From Bediako's observation, it could be suggested that what the AICs achieved amounted to a 'decolonisation' of the African Christian experience. It introduced and practiced a kind of Christianity that considered elements within the African religious orientation and culture as noted by Anim (2009:32).

few decades, it is the Classical Pentecostals and Neo-Pentecostals (generally referred to in this research as ‘Pentecostals’) who feature in contemporary conversation.

The argument that African Pentecostals possess the capacity to effect significant transformation in the religious sense is not universally supported. Währisch-Oblau (2009) acknowledges that through migrant congregations the spread of Pentecostalism has assumed a global trend. Her view nevertheless suggests that APCs cannot impact already established majority Christianity and society. This is because Germany’s Christian landscape has four main groups, namely: the Catholic Church with an estimated membership of 25.6 million; the mainline Protestant Evangelical Church with a membership of around 25.4 million; the Orthodox Churches with 1.4 million members; and the Protestant free churches boasting about 500,000 members. The Pentecostal churches all together may account for a figure less than the Protestant free churches (Währisch-Oblau, 2009:8-9). Although many years have passed, these statistics suggest that APCs may not make any significant impact on the religious landscape in Germany.

Recounting the history of the church in Europe, Währisch-Oblau (2009) suggests that for centuries, European Christianity has forged a strong bond with national and ethnic identities. To this end, European territories identify with particular Christian traditions. For example, northern Europe is predominantly Protestant, England has the Church of England, and Poland the Catholic Church. Germany and Switzerland identify with the Lutheran and Reformed Protestant churches. Währisch-Oblau’s (2009) position is rooted in the historical events in the European church space many years after the 1517 Reformation. She recounts: “The emergence of the Moravian, Methodist, Baptist, and other ‘free’ evangelical churches did not change this picture much, as they remained small minorities and also organised themselves along ethnic and national lines as well” (Währisch-Oblau, 2009:5-9).

Whereas Währisch-Oblau’s (2009) assumption that the emergence of the contemporary Christian groups like the APCs will not significantly transform the religious space of Germany and Europe is understandable, the following factors should prompt a revision of her position: firstly, given the number of people arriving in Europe from Africa and other parts of the globe as a result of migration, the issue of population dynamics becomes crucial. Most Africans who arrive in Europe

join APCs. The impact of APCs therefore could be profound in comparison with the Moravian, Methodist, Baptist, and other free evangelical churches. In 2019, Germany's population stood at about 83.02 million, 21.2 million of whom have a migrant background. This represents roughly 26% of the population and shows a 2.1% increase from the previous year. Although out of 21.2 million a minimum of 5% are people of African descent, it is still a significant amount of people to affect the tapestry of Germany's religious, social, and economic life in a decade or two.²⁹

Assuming this trend as well as the current global trend of migration to Europe (particularly from Africa) also continues, in a decade or two the population dynamics will tilt more in favour of migrant groups. Already, the birth rate among native Germans is known to be low. According to Brücker (2019), the projections are that by 2040, about 35% to 40% of the country's population will have a migrant background or be migrants themselves. This suggests that one in every three people will have a migrant background. This forecast reinforces the claim that APCs stand a better chance of impacting Germany than history suggests.

Secondly, it is inferred from Währisch-Oblau's (2009) position that European Christianity has forged a strong bond with national and ethnic identities. One could also argue that APCs have a close bond with African culture and worldview. It stands to reason that APCs being a migrant church will naturally attract the majority of both those who migrate to Germany and others who are born to African migrants. Issues of inter-marriage between Africans and other nationals leading to population increase through childbirth can also be considered.

Thirdly, Pentecostals, in general, believe in the move of the Holy Spirit in a profound manner. This belief means that the impossible is possible. As a result, a definite limit cannot be placed on the growth and transformational impact of Pentecostalism. As noted by Anderson (2013:1), Pentecostalism "is fundamentally an 'ends of the earth', missionary, polycentric, transnational religion". Thus, through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit, the APCs' quest for reverse mission which is the situation of non-Western churches or individuals returning to societies that initially

²⁹ Germany: Population hits record high. Viewed 31 July 2020, from <https://www.dw.com>.

brought them the gospel with the same gospel is a possibility (Sande and Samushonga, 2020:18; Kim, 2011b:148; Burgess, 2011:429-449).

2.2.2 Personal transformation

According to Lindhardt (2018), the transformational impact of Pentecostalism on the individual should not be discounted. This is because men who converted to Pentecostalism abstained from vices such as gambling, alcohol abuse and womanising. They became more responsible toward their families and gained a new identity. The ascetic lifestyle Pentecostalism instigates found expression in their daily lives. Homes and marriages become more stable. As a result, some savings are made for the family's use. This is on monies that hitherto were spent on the vices listed. It also means that members can set aside some money to start small scale businesses and support the church (Lindhardt, 2018:4-6).³⁰

Ma et al., (eds.), (2014:390-391) note that Pentecostalism continues to influence the lives of many through emphasis on experiential encounter with the Holy Spirit and soteriology. Since the person of Jesus Christ is given a central space in Pentecostal theology, individual members are encouraged to live as Christ did.

The idea of sound morality based on Christian conversion, therefore, has a relationship with Christian identity. A transformed person acquires a new identity (2 Corinthians 5:17). This personal transformation has implications for social transformation. Whilst this is true, recent stories of immorality and acts of corruption levelled against prominent Pentecostal figures questions the authenticity of individual transformation argued here by these scholars (Anderson, 2016:11).³¹

³⁰ According to Max Weber, Pentecostalism is the newest form of the bridge that exists between wealth creation and the Protestant work ethic. This observation affirms the Pentecostal phenomenon's impact on individuals. Information was sourced from Erin O'Connell's interview with Donald Miller, April 12, 2006, titled: The New Face of Global Christianity: The Emergence of 'Progressive Pentecostalism', in Pew Research Center: Religion & Public Life, Los Angeles, California. Viewed 12 September 2020, from <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2006/04/12/the-new-face-of-global-christianity-the-emergence-of-progressive-pentecostalism/>.

³¹ The famous Korean Pentecostal leader Cho and his son were found guilty of causing financial loss to their organisation. GhanaWeb, (2018). 'Revealed: Mensa Otabil, shareholders took about GHC 450m from Capital Bank', November 13. Viewed 14 January 2021 from [www. mobile.ghanaweb.com](http://www.mobile.ghanaweb.com). This corruption story against a famous Charismatic pastor occurred in Ghana but the case is in the court. Another prominent Pentecostal leader Prophet

2.2.3 Social, political and economic transformation

Scholars like Harold (2019:2), Amissah (2020:153-156, 163-168), and Währisch-Oblau (2009:30) have suggested that social issues do not naturally form part of the Pentecostal ethos. Whilst not completely disputing that historically social action had not been a major priority of Pentecostals, Warrington, Lindhardt, Asamoah-Gyadu, and Ma et al., for example, suggest a shift in the above position.

Warrington (2015) in his article, ‘Social Transformation in the Missions of Pentecostals: A Priority or a Bonus?’ explores Pentecostal attitudes to and engagement with social issues both in the past and in contemporary times. He discusses Jesus’ role and that of the Early Church leaders regarding social transformation and offers some suggestions going into the future. He notes that fundamentally, Pentecostals are heavily centred on spiritual conversions rather than social and economic transformation. Their activities are limited to preaching rather than social action. In contemporary times, however, many Pentecostal churches have become more involved in social activities to bring transformation to their communities. He mentions the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God in Brazil as a Pentecostal church which participates in national politics and has a political party (Warrington, 2015:1-34).

The change in attitude of Pentecostals toward social concerns as noted by Warrington in the researcher’s view, represents hope for the transformation of both the spiritual and physical dimensions of life since Pentecostal Christianity is currently the face of global Christianity. Without denying Warrington’s observation of a shift in Pentecostals’ focus towards social concerns in contemporary times, more empirical research is needed to authenticate and strengthen this argument particularly among African Pentecostals.

Lindhardt (2018) in his work, ‘Presence and Impact of Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in Africa’ observes that whilst the impact of Pentecostalism on individuals is undisputable, the phenomenon’s impact on politics is in dispute. He concedes however that, given the numerical growth of Pentecostals on the continent, the ability of the phenomenon to influence members on

Bushiri from Malawi has several corruption and money laundering charges levelled against him. <https://www.voanews.com>africa>.

how to engage with the social world makes the political arena an unavoidable social space. For example, this influence manifests in the involvement of prophets through prophetic utterances on the economy and general elections of many African nations. So intense is the situation that prophetic messages predicting the outcome of national elections and economic fortunes of the state are a central part of today's African politics (Lindhardt, 2018:8, 24).³²

In like manner, Asamoah-Gyadu (2010) notes the relationship between Pentecostalism and politics in contemporary times. Pentecostalism and politics have lately become companions. This is because in the past Pentecostals considered the world's political and economic systems as tainted. The movement, therefore, did not show a keen interest in mainstream national politics. It rather focused on creating alternative institutions. The focus was to grow a new breed of leaders with the hope that they will in future take up national positions and provide quality moral leadership. These leaders are expected to transform the spaces they occupy. The intent is to "take territories and raise champions" for the transformation of society (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2010:1-6).

He hails the democratisation of spiritual gifts among Pentecostals and notes that Pentecostalism in Africa through the prophetic ministry has succeeded in establishing some significant contact with the social, economic, political, and spiritual dimensions of the people. The prophetic ministry offers a response, regardless of how effective or otherwise it may be, to the spiritual emptiness of contemporary society. The proliferation of prophets on the continent and their involvement in politics is sometimes evaluated as a fulfilment of Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28-29). The wide expression of spiritual gifts, particularly the prophetic on the continent, appears tangible. No issue in contemporary African society emerges on which a prophet will not speak (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2010:6-24).

Whereas Asamoah-Gyadu (2010) hails the democratisation of spiritual gifts or charisma within Pentecostalism, other scholars like Quayesi-Amakye (2015:162-173) posits that the democratisation of the charisma appears to be the most prominent reason for the many

³² This has created relevance for prophets on the continent. The scope of their clientele includes the educated, uneducated, rich, poor, young, old, male, and female. This close affinity between politics and religious faith is a testimony of the place of the latter within the African society. Hence, the observation by John Mbiti that the African is notoriously religious (Mbiti 1969:124-125).

authoritative prophetic utterances in the society. The researcher identifies the latter position as a chief reason for the chaos in the interface between Christianity and politics in several countries in Africa.

Ma et al., (eds.), (2014:390), note the economic impact of the Pentecostal movement. They assert that Pentecostalism has recently focused heavily on empowering its members economically through sermons and teachings on prosperity. The drive for upward social mobility is anchored in the ‘prosperity gospel’ and practical seminars for poverty eradication. This new dimension is a paradigm shift for Pentecostal Christianity and has given the church a voice in economic discourse on the continent.

In the researcher’s view, the Pentecostal phenomenon has rather transformed itself in the face of social, economic, and political dimensions of life rather than these dimensions being transformed by Pentecostalism. This is because, as noted in the previous section, the involvement of Pentecostals in politics and economics has not changed the scale of corruption known in many African territories. The most significant transformation Pentecostalism has achieved within the African context is rather the psychological shift of its members from poverty to prosperity. This is achieved through emphasis on the material blessings of the cross, positive confession, and faithfulness in giving. Hitherto, as noted by Asamoah-Gyadu (2015:163), Christianity in Africa “was associated with a lifestyle characterized by modesty, sacrifice and service. Currently, a visible shift towards prosperity is the case”.

The ‘prosperity gospel’ and seminars on economic education as noted by these scholars in my view have changed the minds of many to accept that prosperity is possible through miracles, strategic thinking, and honest work. This mental switch breeds hope and confidence not only in members but in many who hear their sermons and testimonies. Although some scholars have expressed reservations about the overemphasis on the prosperity doctrine, its psychological importance cannot be underestimated particularly among the poor continents of the world (Ma et al., (eds.), 2014:390-391).

Anderson (2016:19) in his article, 'Contextualization in Pentecostalism: A Multicultural Perspective', notes that whilst Pentecostals have awakened to social action, there is a justifiable criticism against them in that their message of success, prosperity and power is overly emphasised at the expense of a true message of the theology of the cross. Similarly, scholars like Stott (2006), von Balthasar (2000), and Asamoah-Gyadu (2015), as noted earlier in section 2.1, affirm the non-negotiable centrality of the cross to Christianity. Asamoah-Gyadu (2015) suggests that Pentecostalism neglects the total message of the cross in favour of the prosperity message. He states: "These are not truths with which any evangelical mind would disagree and yet within contemporary Pentecostal theological discourse, direct engagement with the truth of the cross often tends to be one-sided by going for its material blessings and often disregarding its shame, something that Jesus never did - Heb. 12:1-2" (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2015:167-176; 2013:105).

His point is that Pentecostals present a one-sided message of the cross and it is about material blessings. In the view of the researcher, one cannot disagree that the cross is important to the Christian faith. It does however appear that Christian theology did not highlight the material blessings associated with the cross enough until Pentecostalism emerged. Can it be suggested therefore on the basis of assurance for material blessings in the Bible such as Philippians 4:19, 3 John 2:2, Luke 6:38, and Deuteronomy 28:1-14, that those traditions that focused on aspects of the cross other than the material benefits also presented a one-sided gospel? Again, does this observation refer to only Neo-Pentecostals or all strands of the Pentecostal tradition? In any case, the prosperity gospel instils hope among its practitioners. Although too emotive for a poverty ravaged continent, such a message is vital. Perhaps a conscious effort to apply a required balance between sacrifice and material prosperity makes Pentecostalism more transformational.

2.3 MISSION & MIGRATION

Bevans argues that migration and mission have been interwoven and interdependent since the inception of the church. He recounts how missionaries like Priscilla and Aquila being expelled from Rome moved to Corinth and presided over the church that met in their house for worship (Acts 18:1-3; Bevans, 2013:157-158). Thus, the history of Pentecostalism from Azusa to the ends of the world and its transformational agenda as discussed by Anderson (2013) and Alexander

(2011) in section 2.2.1 (Anderson, 2013:77-84, Alexander, 2011) points to the relationship between mission and migration. Mission as expressed in the *missio Dei* is God's divine plan to restore fallen humanity and the created order through love and compassion (Taylor, 2020: 54; WCC, 2012:273). The church participates in this mission through missions i.e., the different activities of the church to fulfil God's mission. So, Christian mission goes beyond the physical activities of the church. However, in its physical sense, it entails the idea of the church or God's people crossing cultural boundaries to share God's love. In this section, the subject matter of mission and migration is brought into dialogue with biblical ideas and scholarly reflections.

Padilla and Phan (eds.), (2013) in their work 'Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology' explain that the term 'migration' derived from the Latin '*migrare*', which connotes the idea of any type of movement that involves crossing territorial boundaries. This movement may be temporal or permanent, voluntary or forced, local or international. It may involve individuals or groups of people (Padilla and Phan (eds.), 2013:2-3). Similarly, Gautam (2006) looks at migration in terms of how populations move over time, which involves a change of a person's location (usual residence) between clearly designated geographical units. In both definitions, movement and crossing boundaries appear an important feature. Migration understood as the movement of people from one place to the other characterises the work of missionaries.

Hanciles (2021:1-6) along with other scholars in assessing the global spread of Christianity through the lens of migration suggests that migration has been a key element in the expansion of the Christian faith across cultural frontiers. Walls (2017:50-61) argues that the Great European Migration had a significant effect in the religious space. To him, until the Great European Migration started, the term 'Christendom' was equated with Europe. Similarly, Bevans (2013:157-162) notes that the relationship between Christian mission and migration has existed since the beginning of the church.

Thus, Christianity's attainment of a global status traces its source strongly to the physical act of God's people crossing boundaries. Hanciles (2008:155-156) points out that as a consequence of God's people crossing boundaries, Christianity has become more global or culturally diverse.

Whilst the observations of these scholars are apt, God's call on his people to engage in mission beyond their immediate environment and the urgency of the Holy Spirit in the spread of Christianity globally (Acts 1:8) should not become subservient to the factor of migration in assessing the global spread of the Christian faith (Anderson, 2016:1-21).

Discussions in section 2.2.1 established that from its inception Pentecostalism demonstrated a global missionary orientation. The phenomenon introduced itself as inherently missionary and such is the nature of other revivalist movements. Their sense of missionary awareness is fundamentally based on the idea of transformation and the belief that the second coming of Jesus Christ is at hand. Through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, Pentecostals feel a sense of duty to engage in mission. The missionary focus of Pentecostals is to transform the religious landscape of the world and encourage the individual to radically turn his/her back on the past whilst embracing a new way of life in Jesus Christ (Anderson, 2013:11-18; Anderson, 2014:12; Kärkkäinen, 2004:27).

Thus, ardent Pentecostals following in the footsteps of the Apostles cross boundaries to spread the gospel (Acts 8:4, 11:19, 15:36-28:35, 2 Corinthians 10:14-16). Hanciles (2008:140, 167) argues that historically, evidence exists that the period of Christian expansion coincided with the period of great migration. This, to him, underscores the point that Christianity is "the most migratory of religions" (Hanciles, 2008: 6).

Anderson (2013:171-200) points out that eight years after the Azusa Street revival, at least in over 40 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and some Pacific and Caribbean islands one could find Pentecostals spreading the Pentecostal faith. Early Pentecostal missionaries like Alfred G. Garr, Lillian Garr, Annie McIntosh, and Maria Gardiner among others crossed boundaries to India, Sri Lanka, China, and other parts of Asia to carry out mission (Anderson, 2013:62-77).

It was a similar pattern with the history of Pentecostalism in Africa. Lucy Farrow, as mentioned earlier in section 2.2.1, and other Pentecostal missionaries arrived in Liberia to spread their Pentecostal experience (Anderson, 2014:13). Anderson (2014:13) however, attributes the early missionary success and standardisation of their global missionary activities to the importance of

printed periodicals. Anim (2009:32), on the other hand, attributes the success of Pentecostalism in Africa to the Movement's ability to tap into the primal imagination of the local people.

The accounts of Hanciles, Anderson, and Anim thus far suggest that migration, printed periodicals, and the use of the primal imaginations of the people all contributed to the mission success of the early Pentecostals. Thus, whereas on the global stage the place of the printed periodical was a major driving force, locally, other factors such as those Anim noted, were the driving force. Since the Pentecostal phenomenon is not uniform in how it manifests itself, factors which promote the phenomenon also differ in diverse contexts. To evaluate the mission success or otherwise of the Pentecostal phenomenon, dynamics in a context ought to be the benchmark.

According to Hanciles (2008), migration is not only a tool for mission but also a tool for changing both the religious and cultural landscape of a given context. He notes the inextricable bond between mission and migration in the Christian experience and further suggests that theology's attempt to establish a distinction between church and mission has resulted in the lack of recognition of the bond between mission and migration. To him, the spate of migration from the Global South to the Global North heralds a new dawn of the missionary era both for pastoral practice and theology (Hanciles, 2008:1).

Walls (2017), on his part, points out that the movement of people from the Global South to the Global North which he terms the "Great Reverse Migration", has incorporated Africa into the cultural and religious landscape of the West. To him, "Not only is Africa now part of the Western society, African Christianity is part of it too" (Walls, 2017:51).

From these accounts, migration facilitates the expansion of both culture and Christian mission. While mission utilises migration to spread the gospel, migrants at some point in their struggle depend upon Christian mission for strength to handle immigration and integration challenges (Cruz, 2013:103-104; Hanciles, 2008). Thus, the migration phenomenon can be interrogated not only through the lenses of politics and social science, but also through theology and missiology. The challenge as noted by Montgomery (2012:1) is about the depth of a theology of migration and religious response to social issues.

Hanciles (2021:21-23) discusses four types of human migration from the Bible's perspective, namely: "home-community migration, colonization, whole-community migration and cross-community migration". He notes that the patriarchs like Abraham in the Old Testament and their descendants in the New Testaments experienced migration as part of the call to participate in God's mission. Their relationship with God and who they became were heavily intertwined with the experience of migration (Hanciles, 2021:88).

From Manning's (2005:105) perspective, the cross-community migration which could be said to be a prototype of contemporary international human migration produced four categories of migrants namely: "settlers, sojourners, itinerants and invaders". Unlike Manning, Hanciles (2021:89-90) talk about three categories of migrants namely: "stranger" or "alien", "foreigner" and "sojourner". Of these categories of migrants, African refugees and asylum seekers with their changing motives, just like any other migrants, could be described as settlers, foreigners, or sojourners. This is because whilst some of them have plans of returning to their homelands, others do not. This is a pattern commonly found among Africans who arrived in Europe many decades ago.

The relationship between mission and migration, as noted so far, points to the theological significance of migration. Some scholars argue that the starting point of a theology of migration should be in the story of Abraham. This is because of the prominence of the subject of migration in the Abrahamic religions (Padilla and Phan, 2014). Walls for instance suggests that the first book of the Hebrew Bible (Genesis) is a book with recurring incidents of migration. It sets the tone for a series of migration stories, thereby leaving its readers in no doubt that migration is indeed a constant phenomenon in human life (Walls, 2017:51-61; Sanchez, Dzubinski and Parke, 2021:20).

Walls (2017:51-61) classifies migration in the biblical narratives into Adamic and Abrahamic models, namely: a migration that represents punishment, and one that represents protection and compassion respectively (Ireland (ed.), 2017:25). But the experience of migration, displacement, and forceful uprootedness of God's people in Hanciles' (2008) view provides an avenue to seek answers and a better understanding of their relationship with Him. Therefore, regardless of the type of migration, there is a potential spiritual benefit to God's people who migrate. This

observation gives credence to the assertion by Smith (1978:1155-1185) that migration itself “is a theologizing experience”. Thus, migration creates theological and missiological reflection which in the end shapes the practice of mission.

But one can suggest that the story of God’s interactions with the first couple even before Abraham suggests the theme of migration (Genesis 3:8). His visit to the Garden of Eden could be judged as a response to the spiritual crisis Adam and Eve found themselves in. God chose not to relate to this crisis from a distance (Keck et al. (eds.), 2015:51). So, the church must move closer to society and experience at first hand the challenges it faces. It is unlikely to appreciate the plight of the needy when there is a distance.

Groody (2009) highlights the importance of migration in the Judaeo-Christian Scriptures. He asserts that the theme of migration featured prominently in the discourse of the Judaeo-Christian Scriptures (Groody, 2009:638-667). Other scholars like Stenschke (2016) and Hanciles (2008) also share similar views. Stenschke (2016:2) notes that God’s call upon his people resulted in them migrating and sometimes living as refugees in foreign lands. This position in Hanciles’ view typifies, for example, the life of Abraham, hitherto known as Abram, who migrated as a result of a divine command to participate in the *missio Dei* (Genesis 12:1f). God chose him as the father of many nations. It is worth noting that even before Abraham responded to the call of God to migrate to an unknown destination, Terah, his father, migrated with his family from Ur in present-day Southern Iraq, to Haran, currently known as Turkey (Genesis 11:27-32). All these migratory experiences prepared Abraham for mission work (Hanciles, 2008:142-144). Without these migratory experiences, Abraham may have missed the opportunity to hear God’s voice and offer Israel its religious foundation (Walls, 2002).

Hanciles (2008) acknowledges that the interrelatedness between mission and migration featured in the worship life of early Israelites. Their confession of being descendants of “a wandering Aramean” (Deuteronomy 26:5) shows the centrality of the theme of migration to mission. Devoid of the theme of migration and mobility, the biblical narrative and the message it seeks to transmit loses its meaning. The “wandering Aramean” and his family faced the challenges of migrants such

as unfavourable integration laws, oppression, identity crisis, and discrimination (Hanciles, 2008:135-155).

He continues that the story of migration, slavery, and liberation became so central to the descendants of the “wandering Aramean” that it featured prominently in their annual liturgy of remembrance and thanksgiving. This liturgical ritual embodies the painful memory of their experiences as migrants. As refugees, asylum seekers, strangers, and migrants, they suffered harsh realities comparable to the experiences of contemporary migrants. By referring to themselves as descendants of the “wandering Aramean”, they remind themselves of their duty to show kindness toward the vulnerable in society. The occasion also reminds them of God’s liberation which is an experience to which contemporary refugees and asylum seekers look forward (Hanciles, 2008:135-155; Rivera-Pagán, 2013:32; Ireland (ed.), 2017:27-28).³³

In Cruz’s (2013) view, the contemporary church’s liturgy relative to the subject of migration, focuses not on the past but on the present and future, unlike the Jews as noted by Hanciles. Migration brings mission into contact with issues of culture, identity, inclusion, discrimination, healing, reconciliation, racism, and justice. This is mainly due to the issue of inculturation i.e., the dynamic interaction between the Christian faith and culture. Cruz (2013) talks about liturgical inculturation and inculturation through popular piety. He acknowledges the challenges of inculturation or contextualisation to the church as a result of migration. And it is to such issues that mission’s response reflects God who owns mission when it is offered in compassion. The presence of migrants, whilst it enriches the church, challenges how the church carries out mission and even organises itself internally (Cruz, 2013:95-100; Sanchez et al., 2021:15).

The point here is that liturgical inculturation or contextualisation has become relevant in churches with migrants. This is however not the case in exclusively migrant congregations organised along national and ethnic lines. For migrant congregations focused on reverse mission, liturgical inculturation is important since the cultures of other fellow migrants cannot be ignored if the church is to succeed as a community of God’s people. This suggests that the issue of migration

³³ For a people who once lived as strangers and sojourners in foreign lands, it was appropriate that their painful experiences made them thoughtful about the vulnerable. Again, as God’s people, the expression of love and compassion are ways of representing God who is the fountain of love, compassion, and justice. It is in the light of this, that the responses of APCs to the plight of African refugees in the research context requires investigation.

must be properly placed in ecclesiology, theology, and missiology. It must go beyond liturgical inculturation and popular piety. For this to happen, there should be enough Bible-based reflections on how to interact with strangers and refugees. The reality of migration should be brought to the centre of the church's mission plan. This helps to address both mission challenges and the social stress of migrants.

Rivera-Pagán (2013) notes that crossing borders voluntarily or forced, in a group or as an individual, comes with anxiety and emotional stress. They endured and continue to endure discrimination in the face of protective international laws and treaties. Immigration and labour laws are periodically reviewed ostensibly to restrict human migration. In some extreme cases, walls are erected to prevent other nationals from crossing over. Laws are made to deprive those classified as illegal migrants of any access to essential social services such as health, education, a driver's license, and legal services. Assistance to them is criminalised. Both refugees and migrants classified as illegal sometimes suffer xenophobic attacks. They are blamed for nearly every mishap in society (Rivera-Pagán, 2013:32-37; Settler, 2018: 99-105).

These stricter measures aimed at restraining migration run contrary to the contemporary idea of the fusion of cultures to achieve globalisation. It is in the face of these disintegration measures that the voice of Christian mission needs to be heard since mission targets the total redemption of the human being and creation. In this regard, Rivera-Pagán (2013) advocates for xenophilia toward refugees and migrants in general. Xenophilia is here understood as the expression of love and compassion toward people whose story is that of pain, rejection, deprivation, and discrimination. He suggests xenophilia as a divine command (Rivera-Pagán, 2013:37-45; Louw, 2016:336-354; Bajekal, 2015:73).

Whilst the researcher agrees with Rivera-Pagán that xenophilia is a divine command promoted in the Torah, the vulnerable in contemporary society may find it difficult to be treated as such owing to the increasing secularism. In a theocratic society such as pertained in the Torah, it was much easier to enforce divine sanctions although some examples of mistreatment occurred (Leviticus 25; Nehemiah 13). This is, however, not to suggest that a secular society is incapable of extending

xenophilia toward the vulnerable. It just may not seem a priority in comparison to a theocratic society. The interest of the state rather seems to be the main driving force.

But the life of refugees both in the past and in contemporary times share a common bond. Their emotional, economic, and social circumstances do not differ much despite the difference in time. Thus, just as examples of migration and mission were cited from the Old Testament narratives, in the New Testament also, as noted by Hanciles (2021:124-127), the dominant concept of migration characterises the birth (incarnation – John 1:1-14; Philippians 2:5-8), life, and ministry of Jesus Christ.

The Bible suggests that the life of infant Jesus was preserved through migration as recorded in Matthew's Gospel (Matthew 2:13-15). Although Jesus' migration was at the instance of danger, the protection he enjoyed through migration in my view aligns his migration with Walls' (2002) idea of an Abrahamic model of migration. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Loescher, Long and Sigona (eds.), (2016: 451) argue that in his flight from Herod's persecution "since it involved flight across a border, anachronistically, we could say that Jesus met the contemporary international Convention's definition of a refugee". This argument is supported by some scholars because Jesus' experience as a child refugee in Egypt mirrors the conditions of contemporary refugees who are children. It also highlights the 'redemptive' element embedded in human migration (Hanciles, 2021:124-127; Shore, 2016:1-7).

Jesus and his parents ran away from a well-founded fear which is a basic criterion for categorising a person as a refugee (UNOHCHR, 1951). Jesus crossed provincial borders, and in so doing, lent himself to the category of vulnerability which is also central to the determination of who qualifies as a refugee (Hanciles, 2008:148-149). Although he also suffered alienation from his land of birth which represents his source of identity, at least his life was preserved through his flight to Egypt. Unfortunately, the biblical narrative does not provide further insights about Jesus' life as a refugee in Egypt to allow for an in-depth comparative study. Swamy (2017:339), however, suggests that "while in the Bible we see many examples, such as the Israelites' migration, Jesus' experience as refugee and injunctions to show compassion toward strangers (Matthew 25:31-46), which are helpful for theological reflection, fundamental Christian beliefs such as Incarnation, Christology,

Trinity, Holy Spirit, Ecclesiology and Sacraments have a lot of theological potential for a theology of migration". This position is tenable because each of these involves the element of movement across boundaries. They together emphasise the importance of migration to mission and vice versa.³⁴

Reading Jesus' experience as a refugee from the perspective of the contemporary refugee, Jesus is seen as a 'senior brother' who being a former refugee understands what refugees go through. The question then is: "What would Jesus Christ have done or said about the contemporary refugee crisis?" Since he is not physically present on earth, the phraseology of the question changes to: "How has the church responded to the refugee crisis?" This is a theological paradigm worth packaging for effective missiology among refugees and migrants.

Wainwright (2014: 4) in his article 'Crossing over; taking refuge: A contrapuntal reading' suggests similarities between Jesus and his companions crossing over the Sea of Galilee as recorded in Matthew 8:23 with contemporary migrants who choose to cross over via the sea. Whereas one agrees with his observations of the similarities which the storm that erupted against them bears with what most contemporary migrants face, some compelling disparities are also worth noting. Firstly, the motivation for crossing over differs.³⁵ Secondly, the crossing over of Jesus and his companions offended no legal framework at the time.³⁶ Thirdly, although we are not told of the exact number of persons who crossed over with Jesus in the boat, it could be that it was not overloaded.³⁷ This particular story carries meaning for those who face dangers in migrating.

³⁴ The whole idea of Christians looking upon themselves as pilgrims on earth perfectly cements the relationship between mission and migration. Through this idea of Christians as pilgrims, they fully participate in their respective nations as lawful citizens but at the same time bear in mind of their transient existence. This notion guides the Christian's moral, ethical, and spiritual choices here on earth. It also provides contemporary migrant refugees with resources to depend upon. These resources help them to deepen their understanding of the challenges they face. They can become more spiritual as they reflect on the idea of Christians as pilgrims on earth (Hanciles, 2008).

³⁵ Jesus and his companions did not cross over under any threat. They willingly chose to cross over in pursuit of 'lost souls' rather than from a private desire to make wealth or escape from danger. Their migration, therefore, had a direct consequence for mission.

³⁶ They legally crossed over to do mission. Many migrants today resort to crossing over through unapproved routes thereby incurring the wrath of immigration officials.

³⁷ Normally, fewer numbers of persons entering a new territory would not raise as much concern as when the numbers are large. Stretching the argument further, it could be suggested that in some cases, the sheer large number of persons a single boat carries accounts for the incidents of accidents on the sea.

Padilla and Phan (eds.), (2013:1-2) suggest that while secular organisations have shown more awareness in elaborating the impact of migration and its associated demographic shift on society, politics, economics, and other spheres of life, the church does not seem to fully appreciate the dynamics. Both the church as an institution and its leaders have not been proactive in recognising the impact of migration on Christianity. They claim that the church has also not fully understood its complex nature to offer an appropriate response to contemporary migration challenges.

This observation in my view does not imply that the church has not responded to migration challenges at all but that the level of awareness needs to go a step higher to match its historical origins. This is because the theme of migration is central to religious faith and the church at different times has attempted to provide a response (Baggio, 2010).

Bevans (2013) in his work, 'Migration and Mission' makes an important observation. He reflects on the relationship between migration and mission in the following ways: a) the practice of mission among migrants; b) migrants as the subject of mission; and c) how the experience of migration offers new understanding and paradigms of mission itself to the church. These considerations when properly understood and placed at the centre of Christian mission should elicit a practical response from the church. Such a response ought to fulfil the holistic intentions of Christian mission. Thus, the proclamation of the gospel and social action is meant to help the poor like refugees. A positive response to migration challenges, for example, is possible only when awareness is created. This is achieved when issues of migration are incorporated in the theological and missiological discourse.³⁸

2.4 MIGRATION AND MINORITY IDENTITY GROUPS: A MISSIOLOGICAL REFLECTION

³⁸ With issues of migration still foremost in the world today, the lived experiences of minority groups in the Hebrew Bible offer insights. This can help shape academic discourse on minority groups emerging out of both internal and international human migrations. These insights ought to lead into a practical change of how minority issues are handled in contemporary times.

Hanciles (2008) notes that the contemporary massive movement of people from the Global South to the Global North has contributed to the creation of new cultural and religious communities. Thus, migration in the general sense breeds new identity groups which form minority communities. This section surveys the missiological reflection on the relationship between migration and minority identity groups.

According to Ott (2013:195-212), for any exercise to qualify as a missiological reflection, it should consider three disciplines: theology, mission history, and social sciences. Payne (2013), on the other hand, settles on the importance of the Bible as a fundamental resource for any missiological reflection to provide a solid theological base. He summarises his position as follows: “We do not begin to think about our missionary task by asking, ‘What works?’ or ‘How do we....?’ Rather, we begin with a biblical and theological foundation. It is out of this bedrock that our missiology flows” (Payne, 2013: xvi). Goheen (2014) on his part categorically suggests that missiology is grounded in the Bible.

Whilst Ott’s (2013) position is understandable because missiology engages with issues pertaining to boundary-crossing, missiological reflection ought to be multidimensional or interdisciplinary in nature. However, since mission begins with God, the place of the Bible as articulated by Payne and Goheen remains in my view fundamental. So, whilst all the considerations are essential, that of the Bible is fundamental. Priority should be given to the Bible when engaging in missiology. On the strength of the positions articulated by Payne and Goheen, this section proceeds to review the missiological reflection on migration and minorities by scholars with emphasis on biblical stories.

Padilla and Phan (eds.), (2013:1-10) notes that human beings continue to move from one place to another owing to pressing and complex factors which range from political instability, economic disruption, and religious persecution to sociological challenges. The constant movement of people across the globe creates new groupings in the destination environment. These groups are usually deprived and find themselves in a minority which faces the challenge even as legal residents of accepting the reality of their minority status. Sometimes they are deprived of their right as equal citizens.

It is difficult to settle on an internationally accepted definition for the term ‘minorities’. This is due to the different conditions under which they appear. Whereas some are easily identifiable and organised, others are scattered. The United Nations Minorities Declaration (1992:1-4) in its article 1, however, renders minorities as “based on national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity, and provides that States should protect their existence”. This definition suggests that the existence of minorities is a fact and that provision for their continual existence must be made by the state.³⁹

Wirth (1945:347) says: “A minority group is any group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination”. Wirth’s definition indicates that for a group to be considered a minority, there must be a measure of discrimination against them owing to their physical or cultural background. The members so discriminated against must regard themselves as having to suffer such discrimination as a result of who they are and where they come from. They are more often than not treated as second class human beings. Conspicuously missing from both the UN’s and Wirth’s definitions is the recognition of persons as minorities based on factors such as level of education, economic power, disability, and sexual orientation.

This observation is made bearing in mind that the classification of a group as a minority may often consider more than just one of the categories mentioned. The two definitions also raise the question of individual human rights versus group rights. Whereas in most parts of the world individual human rights are recognised, the same cannot be said of group rights. Discrimination meted out to minority groups have both individual and group consequences. It impacts their state of mind, health, family life, spirituality, and desire to socialise. Again, the definitions point to the reality of numbers not being an important factor in classifying a group as a minority because a group may have the numbers and still not be dominant.

³⁹ UN. (2010). *Minority Rights: International Standards and Guidance for Implementation*. (HR/PUB/10/3) 1_/E/CN.4/Sub.2/384/Rev.1, para. 568. Viewed 9 August 2022, from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/publications/special-issue-publications/minority-rights-international-standards-and-guidance>

Although the term ‘minority’ applies to a group of disadvantaged persons and individuals in non-dominant positions, in this research it also applies to individuals who belong to a minority group but find themselves in a better socio-economic condition compared to the rest of the group. They shall be referred to as ‘the privileged minority’. The other minority group members whose conditions are terrible are designated ‘a vulnerable minority group’.

Minority groups in some cases suffer discrimination and have less access to meaningful sources of livelihood. Access to quality education, food, shelter, clothing, and medical care is a challenge. The lack of provision for these basic human needs makes them naturally vulnerable and, in most cases, less assertive. The deprivation of these basic human amenities, the innate quest of humans to survive at all costs, and the challenge to adjust to new cultures could account for the incidents of volatile behaviours associated with minority groups such as refugees. All these hardships are reduced when a privileged kinsman offers a compassionate response (Hanciles, 2021:30-32).

Hadjiev (2018) in his article: ‘I Have Become a Stranger in a Foreign Land: Reading the Exodus Narrative as the Villain’, suggests that the life of privileged and vulnerable minority groups in the Hebrew Bible provides a blueprint to put contemporary challenges into proper perspective. Through their migratory experiences, a reflection on contemporary international human migration and refugee crisis could be made. The exchange of knowledge and other forms of support, especially from the privileged minority group to the vulnerable minority group, in his view, is critical to the latter’s survival and integration. An in-depth perspective to discussions around this matter could be deduced from the example of the Hebrews in Egypt (Hadjiev, 2018:520-527; Exodus 1:1-13:16).

Thus, valuable insights emerge when the life of the Hebrews in Egypt is reflected upon. Critical in this narrative is the revelation of how the response of privileged minorities aids the integration of vulnerable minorities who are their kith and kin. Hanciles (2021) notes that Joseph as a privileged minority assisted his brothers who were in a vulnerable state although they had sold him into slavery. Joseph’s interpretation was that the vulnerability and suffering which comes with

migration are useful tools in God's hands, although to Hanciles this does not validate human suffering (Genesis 45:7-8, 50:20; Hanciles, 2021:91-92).

From the researcher's perspective, three issues come to the fore when reflecting upon Joseph's story as discussed by Hanciles: firstly, the attitude of authorities towards migrants and minority groups. This is not in all cases oppressive. Up until Mrs Potiphar accused Joseph of attempted rape, he received the best treatment from Potiphar. Furthermore, Pharaoh's attitude toward Joseph affirms the same. He willingly tapped into the knowledge and skill of this migrant for the good of his nation. When a migrant or minority group can positively contribute to the socio-economic growth of the destination community, they should be allowed to do so without constraints.

Secondly, minority groups better integrate when their talents and competencies are recognised. This creates opportunities for them to gain meaningful employment. Joseph was fortunate that a former colleague in prison mentioned him to Pharaoh (Genesis 41:9). This part of the Joseph narrative highlights the importance of a relationship between established or privileged minority groups and their vulnerable counterparts. His privileged former colleague helped him.

Thirdly, vulnerable minorities integrate better and faster when aided by their own who are in a privileged position. Persons with whom vulnerable minorities share a common identity serve as a reliable context for integration. It highlights the importance of identity to the integration of minorities. Being a minority in a privileged position, Joseph invited his family, shared his experiences with them and facilitated their integration. And as Hanciles (2021:99-102) noted, although a vulnerable minority group, access to basic human needs for survival was not a challenge because of Joseph. It was not until after his death that these Hebrews suffered oppression and later were led out of Egypt through God's compassion (Ireland (ed.), 2017:25; Exodus 14).

The question worth considering at this point is: "How would God's plan to raise a nation called Israel have materialised had Joseph not found himself earlier in Egypt?" As a minority in Egypt, he carried God's mission of building a nation.

Cuèllar (2018) looks at Moses' life as a prototype of a privileged minority group which contrasts the experiences of the rest of the Hebrews who lived in Egypt. He claims that Moses' birth narrative is highlighted in comparison with his survival capacity as a migrant. Nevertheless, his life as a migrant throws light on the theme of migration and the survival capacity of migrant minority groups whether they be privileged or vulnerable (Cuèllar, 2018:501).

Hadjiev (2018) notes another theme associated with Moses' narrative other than migration and survival. To him, whilst Moses' example gives hope to the possibility of integration in contemporary times, it also raises the delicate issue of an identity crisis. Although he thought of himself as a Hebrew and acted it out, he was also referred to as the son of Pharaoh's daughter (Hebrews 11:24; Exodus 2:10). Hadjiev (2018: 523) captures Moses' situation in the following words: "Moses is Israel in Egyptian garb, a Hebrew marked by life in Egypt. In him Israel and Egypt are brought together as closely as they can possibly be". The researcher has a contrary opinion to Hadjiev's point in the sense that being referred to as the son of Pharaoh's daughter is different from Moses referring to himself as such. So, whilst the issue of identity crisis can be associated with migrants, since Moses himself did not express such a notion, the example is not apt.

Selby (2008) on his part states that Moses, a privileged minority, became an instrument for justice and liberation for the Hebrew race. This narrative provides a blueprint for established minority groups to share experiences with their vulnerable counterparts to ease their integration challenges. The freedom of these Hebrews and their eventual departure from Egypt to the Promised Land serves as a paradigm for contemporary minority groups struggling for liberation and justice (Selby, 2008).

The story of the Hebrews in Egypt, as discussed by these scholars, reflects the relationship between privileged and vulnerable minority groups. The questions worth asking are: firstly, what would be the plight of these vulnerable minority groups if they did not receive any compassionate response from their privileged kinsmen? A constructive analysis of this question and a fitting response should point to solutions. These solutions must be examined in handling contemporary international human migration and refugee challenges.

Secondly, what accounted for the positive influence of the privileged minorities over the vulnerable minorities? In answering this question, three factors should be considered: religious faith, culture, and trust. All three also point to the importance of shared identity. To understand and be understood in a foreign land creates security among minority groups. Trust is built and suspicion dispelled. The examples of Joseph and his brothers, and Moses and the Hebrews, are insightful. According to Hanciles (2021), they provide a model to reflect further on contemporary international human migration and refugee challenges.

Sometimes, injustice, oppression and mistrust occur among members of the minority group owing to the allegiance to their particular identity. For example, Hanciles explains that in relation to Judaism at the time, Christianity was in the minority. In this minority group were the native Jewish Christians who spoke Hebrew and the Greek-speaking Christians. Because of Jesus' ancestry and the composition of the apostolic band, the Hebrew speakers stood in a privileged position. The Greek speakers felt the Hebrew speakers discriminated against their widows (Acts 6:1-2). It was a case of a privileged minority group failing to deal justly with a vulnerable minority group (Hanciles, 2021:128-137).

Bosch (2011:23-24) suggests that underneath this accusation is the confusion of the group's understanding of their self-identity or definition concerning their specific backgrounds as Greeks or Hebrews. The Twelve convened a meeting to resolve this injustice against the vulnerable minority group. The resolution reached gives tacit support to the concept of compassionate mission. The importance of migration to Christian mission continued through Paul's ministry and the global expansion of Christianity. As an itinerant church worker, he became accustomed to the challenges and privileges associated with migration (Hanciles, 2021:128-137).

From the discussions so far in this section, we find that the challenges faced by refugees and asylum seekers come from different directions. Sometimes, they are discriminated against by natives of the destination country. At other times, their kinsmen who find themselves in a privileged position discriminate against them. Similarly, a positive response to their plight can also come to them from within or without the minority group.

2.5 RESPONSES TO THE REFUGEE AND MIGRATION CRISES

To discuss responses to a humanitarian challenge such as the refugee crisis, this section considers political, academic, and religious responses. The responses discussed are only selected for this research. They are not exhaustive in terms of responses to the refugee crisis. Attention is paid to the place of compassion in the response offered, and its implication for mission.

2.5.1 Selected political and academic responses

In the report ‘Out of the Shadows: Shining a Light on Irregular Migration’, Runde and colleagues (2019) present the political responses thus far to the challenges of contemporary migration. The report looks at the Puebla Process for North and Central America (1996), the Jordan Compact, the Colombo Process (2003), and the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (2008), which were meant for Asia, and a Marshall Plan to cater for Africa (2017) which recently came up during Germany’s presidency of the Group of Twenty (G20). All these political responses have yielded some results but have not fully mitigated the challenge because in some cases the proffered solution took a top-down approach. The report suggests that the United States of America (USA) should show leadership in this crisis. Some measures proposed include to convene a coalition of partners who are equally committed to providing a solution to the crisis, increase foreign aid, expand the operations of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), make vulnerable groups a priority, and improve the collection and use of data (Runde et al., 2019:47-55).

Mention is made in this paper of the efforts by the IOM and the United Nations (UN) to offer protection to refugees and irregular migrants through the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (2018) and Global Compact on Refugees (2018). Whilst these are commendable efforts, populist and anti-migrant political groups oppose the idea of receiving and integrating migrants in their countries. This situation creates tension between governments who lean favourably towards the idea of receiving refugees and sections of their local population. This report suggests that no one country has the structures needed to deal adequately with the phenomenon. A concerted mechanism designed by the international community is required.

While political responses are important, they beg the question of the place of the church in the search for answers. These political and economic responses by the international community and political establishment have perhaps not considered religious faith as a context to dealing with the phenomenon.

In contributing to discussions on contemporary international human migration in Europe, Währisch-Oblau (2009), whilst with the UEM, did extensive research on migrant churches in Germany and Europe. The work captured responses of established churches to conditions of emerging migrant churches with special emphasis on Pentecostal/Charismatic churches and their leaders. The UEM was also involved with migrant churches to gain knowledge and a better understanding of how they operate. Its focus was not to determine how migrant churches catered for the needs of their kith and kin as this research seeks to do, but to understand the operations of these churches, help them streamline their activities and obtain legal status. According to Währisch-Oblau (2009), the mentality of these churches is not that of victims but a determination to do mission. Her work remains a useful reference for any study that focuses on migrant churches.

Kim (2019) conducted his PhD research on ‘Korean Missionaries’ Critical Christocentric-Trinitarian Approach to *Missio Dei* in their Reverse Missionary Endeavours in England’. He explored the experiences of Korean missionaries’ engagement with a section of English society. He revealed that Korean missionaries were challenging, reviewing, and rethinking their inherited missionary mindset through their engagement with their missionary target. Their missionary activities in English society fit into the Pentecostal mindset of engaging in a global mission. Although this research focuses on the responses of the APCs to the plight of their kith and kin who are refugees and asylum seekers, both APCs in Düsseldorf and Korean missionaries in England appear to share a similar mindset of being God’s people sent to their respective contexts to engage in mission.

Furthermore, Adedibu (2016) focused on how churches in London related to Europe’s migration and refugee crisis. He acknowledged that the volatile economic, political, social, and religious situation in the Middle East, North Africa, and other parts of Africa, have contributed to migration to Europe and America. This notwithstanding, migration in our current context is multi-directional. He explored the non-response of African Pentecostals in public discourse utilising the

interpretative framework of Luke 10:29: “But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’. This follows his observation of responses from the traditional churches like the Church of England, as well as Catholic and Methodist churches. He asked the question: “Who is my neighbour?”

To reiterate, the focus of the current study is APCs’ response to the humanitarian crisis. It is simply looking at ‘response’ because it considers non-response as a response. The understanding of the use of the word ‘response’ in this research simply implies the position APCs took in the face of the refugee crisis. This position is interpreted through their attitudes, actions, and policies toward people with whom they share a similar identity. A social action policy of the church must take care of both living and non-living members of creation: humans, animals, plants, rivers, land, and mineral resources, among others.⁴⁰

2.5.2 Selected religious responses

At the height of the refugee crisis in 2015, the response generated in Germany’s next-door neighbour Poland is worth mentioning. As recounted by Narkowicz (2018), in Poland, the state, church and civil society became divided over the question of whether Muslim refugees should be welcomed. Even the church was divided over this matter. Whereas a section of the Christian community upheld hospitality as a Christian tradition (Letter signed by several Polish churches in June 2016), others outrightly rejected the idea of entertaining refugees with a different religious background. The issue of religious identity was of concern in the entire discourse (Narkowicz, 2018:357-373).

In the USA and France, the Catholic Bishops Conference strongly affirms the urgency of immigration issues and commits to providing services to immigrants and refugees. They have found immigration a strategic site. Here, the Roman Catholic Church “has reasserted its prophetic voice in society, in particular calling for more humane treatment of undocumented immigrants and

⁴⁰ Situations like economic inequality which takes its source from the historic-structural approach, pandemic, war, famine, persecution, and natural disasters necessitate false human migration. Categories of migrants produced out of these conditions require a compassionate response from institutions such as the church. This is not to suggest that for example, migrants who migrated as a result of social networks but find themselves in difficult circumstances are excluded from a response from the church (Hanciles, 2008:183-186).

greater intercultural dialogue”, thus emphasising the importance of compassion (Mooney, 2006:1455-1468). In Miami, for example, they did advocacy on behalf of Haitians. The government was engaged to secure legal documentation for Haitians in the USA (Mooney, 2013:102; 2006:1455-1468, Stotzky, 2004).

Three questions emerge out of the Catholic Church’s position in Poland, the USA and France:

- 1) How does the Bible inform each of these positions?
- 2) How does religious faith interact with the conditions of the marginalised in society?
- 3) What is the relationship between privileged and vulnerable minority groups?

In Düsseldorf, organisations such as “Ökumenische Flüchtlingshilfe” (Ecumenical Refugee Aid) and the “Diakonie” voluntary organisations offered a response. The “Diakonie” which serves as the service wing of the Christian community, responded positively to the refugee situation by living out the *passio Dei* of the *missio Dei*. Their scope of operation is divided into three, namely: youth and family, health and social affairs, and life in old age. The “Diakonie” recognises the need for the Christian community to engage in compassionate social ministry. Since such an exercise should be coordinated, they are there to train and assign volunteers to help the disadvantaged in society. These volunteers are insured against accidents and liabilities in the course of duty. A police clearance certificate is obtained before the first assignment. They organised language lessons and rendered other social services for the refugees, without the intention of winning them over to the Christian faith but only to express the love of Christ.⁴¹

Some questions come to mind about the ministry of the “Diakonie” in relation to God’s mission. For instance, if the work of the “Diakonie” as explained constitutes participation in God’s mission i.e., the *missio Dei*, is that comprehensive? This is because inherent in the *missio Dei* is the divine

⁴¹ On their website, an advertisement is placed specifying services they offer and the category of persons who qualify for these services. For example, under Youth Migration Service, they ask young migrants between the ages of 12 and 27 years old who are new in Germany to come and speak with them for assistance. There are tailored assistance programmes for adults under their migration advice for adults, refugee counselling, respect, and courage programmes. These programmes are designed to help integrate the refugees into German society. Online information about the work and programmes of the Diakonie in Germany can be assessed from the following websites: <https://www.diakonie-duesseldorf.de/diakonie/ehrenamt/engagement-fuer-gefluechtete/>; <https://www.diakonie-duesseldorf.de/arbeits-soziales/migranten-gefluechtete/>

agenda to reclaim and restore God’s creation. This restoration is holistic in nature. Since the ministry of the “*Diakonie*” among the refugees does not include the proclamation of the gospel, how does the spiritual restoration take place? The subsequent questions are: Does meeting people’s material needs lead to conversion? Does proclamation of the gospel alone lead to conversion? What is the place of volunteerism in Christian mission? Taylor and Ireland offer useful perspectives in an attempt to answer the questions raised. They suggest that neither proclamation of the gospel alone nor diaconal service automatically leads to conversion. A combination of both activities which holistically expresses compassionate mission holds greater promise of delivering conversion (Taylor, 2020: 63; Ireland (ed.), 2017:9). This view does not negate the responsibility on the part of the prospective convert to yield ultimately to either the proclamation of the gospel or diaconal service rendered.⁴²

The UMC, made up of both native German and migrant congregations, also responded to the refugee crisis. Like the “*Diakonie*” and other voluntary groups, the UMC donated clothes, toys for the kids to play with and sanitary products. Church members with apartments to spare released them to some refugees for a period. They organised children’s programmes, language classes, and fellowship groups. Bishop Rosemarie Wenner in rallying support for the refugees made a passionate statement: “Let us meet people and not problems”.⁴³

This call was laden with compassion and precision. It changes the dynamics of the discussion by putting the importance and well-being of the human person at the centre of the crisis. By this, the church is compelled to respond to the plight of the vulnerable, firstly, because of our common humanity, and secondly, the Christian identity. Beyond the initial voluntary compassionate

⁴² Relating the ministry of the “*Diakonie*” to the APCs, the question is this: Does the ministry of the ‘*Diakonie*’ have a place in Pentecostalism?” The legitimacy of this question lies in the notion of Pentecostalism being identified with the theme of transformation. If the issue of conversion is not a focus item on the agenda of the “*Diakonie*”, how different are they from the regular non-governmental organisations (NGOs)? This is not to discredit the work of the “*Diakonie*”. However, the legitimacy of the question reaffirms the importance of holistic mission. Non-governmental Agencies like Stay-Düsseldorf and Caritas also offered a very similar response to that of the “*Diakonie*”. Generally, these organisations serve as an interface between the refugees and the migration integration office of the state. The services rendered by these NGOs come with no religious motives of conversion (www.stay-duesseldorf.de).

⁴³ Joe Iovino. (2015). *German bishop on migrants: ‘Meet people, not problems’*. The People of the United Methodist Church. Viewed 12 September 2019, from <http://www.umc.org/how-we-serve/german-bishop-on-migrants-meet-people-not-problems>.

responses by these recognised religious groups, costs incurred by those who are still involved in offering services to the refugees are reimbursed by the state.

These social action steps the UMC undertook derive strength and guidance from a comprehensive social ministry policy. Article 160ff in the UMC social ministry policy document (2017), states the importance of the church engaging in a holistic mission. Under social ministry which the policy document terms as social principles, the clear intent is shown toward fighting injustice and abuse of all kinds. The preface to the UMC's 'social principles' states:

“Although not to be regarded as canon law, the social principles are an effort of prayer and thought proclaimed by the General Conference to respond to the existential questions of the people in the present world from a solid biblical and theological basis as shown by the traditions of the Methodist churches. They are a call to conscientious life practice and are intended to enlighten and convince in a good prophetic spirit. The Social Principles are a call to all members of the Evangelical Methodist Church to conduct a thoughtful dialogue about faith and action accompanied by prayer”.⁴⁴

Thus, the UMC aims at responding to existential challenges in human society with the Bible and sound theology as its reference point. Based on its biblical understanding and theology, the UMC assumes that all creation belongs to God and the church has a responsibility to care for God's creation. Following in the footsteps of their forebears who fought against the slave trade, smuggling and cruel treatment of prisoners, the UMC's social principles aim at providing a response to how natural resources such as water, air, soil, mineral resources, and plants are cared for.⁴⁵

Article 161 of the UMC social principles which deals with the human community of life, states that: “The community offers people the opportunity to find the fullness of their humanity. It is,

⁴⁴ Verfassung, Lehre und Ordnung der Evangelisch-methodistischen Kirche, Ausgabe 2017, Stand: März 2018, pp. 66ff. This policy document is originally written in German. The sections quoted in this research have been translated.

⁴⁵ The social principles also touch on how members of the UMC are to respond to the use of energy resources. They call on all persons to make energy saving a priority and offer support to efforts at reducing carbon dioxide emissions. The UMC advocates for the protection of wildlife and responsibility toward global climate. For the poor in society like refugees and low-income earners, the UMC advocates for the provision of quality and affordable food which is a basic human necessity. It condemns any policy that seeks to marginalise sections of the population.

therefore, our responsibility to develop, strengthen and examine new forms of communion that serve the full development of each individual”.

In furtherance to this, it captured issues of commitment, identity, marriage, family, sexuality, abortion, adoption, bullying, rights of religious minorities, children’s rights, women’s rights, men’s rights, immigrants’ rights, and other human-centred social issues.⁴⁶ The UMC’s social action policy document is evidence that the response the church offered to the refugees as earlier discussed emerged out of a well-thought-out social policy.

The Presbyterian church in Düsseldorf, which is also made up of African migrants and some African refugees, was not able to offer any assistance to the refugees during the open border policy period. Internal challenges at the time did not allow leadership to reflect on what assistance to offer the refugees who arrived. Provision was however made in the congregation’s welfare scheme to cater for any request for assistance that came before the leadership. This response, although understandable, runs contrary to the church’s social action policy which suggests that humans can be the true image of God only when they have abundant life in Jesus Christ (Presbyterian Relief Services and Development [PRS&D], 2002:126).

The policy goes further to define abundant life as constituting spiritual soundness, mental soundness, and physical well-being. In other words, the church is committed to ensuring that the total well-being of the individual is achieved. Chapter nine of the policy states: “Any factor, be it religious, social, economic, political or technical which dims God’s image is against the will of God. As agents called to bear witness to the transforming and life-giving power of the risen Christ, therefore, we are commanded to engage in actions which will bring wholeness to humankind” (PRS&D, 2002:126).⁴⁷ The stated aim of the PRS&D eloquently expresses the Presbyterian

⁴⁶ Under immigrant rights, the UMC affirms all people, regardless of their background, and urges both the church and society to recognise the unique achievements of all persons. These provisions in the UMC social principles underscore its understanding of the preciousness of the human person. It further demonstrates a deep understanding of the responsibility placed on the church to be an agent for social justice. The UMC’s affirmation also underscores the possible contribution of migrants and immigrants to the German society by encouraging the recognition of their gifts and expertise.

⁴⁷ Through its relief services and development organisation, compassionate help is supposed to be offered to displaced persons. The aim of this organisation as provided for in the policy, states: “The aim of the organisation is to exemplify God’s love for all people by facilitating the creation of peaceful, healthy and wealthy community that promote development. PRS&D seeks to empower the poor and vulnerable mostly the youth and women to undertake viable

church's appreciation of holistic mission. It also demonstrates the intent for compassion in carrying out Christian mission in the research field.⁴⁸

The Roman Catholic Church in Düsseldorf made up of African migrants, however, did not offer a direct response to the plight of the refugees during the period under research. According to a verbal narration by a leading member of the parish, the church has no registered refugee in its membership. At the diocesan level, however, it works through Caritas International to address challenges facing refugees in general.⁴⁹ Also, the Roman Catholic Church, Protestants, and other Free Churches at the ecumenical level utilise the church asylum policy in its social action endeavours. Through this policy, a response in the form of protection is offered to refugees and asylum seekers. This is not a permanent form of protection against 'unjust' deportation but a temporary one offered to refugees and asylum seekers who do not possess legal residence status and face danger or death if forced to return to their home countries (Ökumenische Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Asyl in der Kirche, 2022⁵⁰; Trines, 2019).

According to Hämäläinen (2019) in his article: 'The significance of refugees and asylum seekers to the European Pentecostal church', in the Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association, following the arrival of millions of refugees in Europe, the Pentecostal European Fellowship (PEF) set out to find out how Pentecostal churches were receiving refugees in Europe. The article mentions that the PEF issued a three-pointed statement to express their concern for the refugee situation in Europe:

income generating activities to raise their income levels and improve the overall spiritual and economic wellbeing of all people in society" (p. 154).

⁴⁸ From the quotes from the social action policy of the Presbyterian church, there is no doubt that the Presbyterian church understands the responsibility placed upon its shoulders to participate in the *missio Dei*. Fidelity to the call to participate in God's mission would mean speaking up for the marginalised, providing necessities of life for the poor, and assisting the vulnerable in society such as refugees. The church's social action policy extends commitment to areas such as agriculture, food security, integrity in commerce and infrastructure. It also advocates for a comprehensive health care delivery.

⁴⁹ What the local Catholic congregation did was to liaise with a leader of the church who through an association called 'Ghana – German Parent Association' offers help to both African and non-African refugees who come to their secretariat. They connect refugees to appropriate civil authorities for assistance, offer counselling sessions and arrange for the safe return of those who want to go back to their native countries.

⁵⁰ Ökumenische Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Asyl in der Kirche. (2022). *Herzlich Willkommen*. Viewed 5 August 2022, from www.kirchenasyl.de

“1) PEF encourages its members to show Christian love towards the refugees according to the example of the Good Samaritan. 2) PEF calls for prayer concerning this difficult situation. We need the discernment of the Holy Spirit in order to understand what is behind this movement we are now facing. 3) PEF encourages governments and authorities to show empathy toward those who have been in danger in their countries, believing their nations will be blessed in helping those in need, while showing wisdom and justice in the whole process”.

In this article, Hämäläinen (2019:117-118) questions the practical value of this PEF statement to the refugee situation. Although he mentions donations to some refugees in Greece and Northern Macedonia, he bemoans the absence of a research to show the response of Pentecostals to the refugee crisis in Europe.

The International Church Convent (ICC), which is a body made up of 130 migrant churches within the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan area, responded favourably. They organised church services for the refugees and put their experiences as migrants at the disposal of current refugees. The response of both the ICC and PEF are in conversation with the focus of this research. The difference here is that the focus of this research is to look in more specific terms at the response of APCs who not only share with African refugees the experience of migration and perhaps the Christian faith, but also similar cultural identity (Charbonnier et al., (eds.), 2018:139-142; Währisch-Oblau, 2009:12-13).

So far, no documentary evidence exists in the research context and its surroundings as noted by Hämäläinen (2019), to show Pentecostals’ response to the refugee crisis. It is this knowledge gap which this research seeks to fill.

2.6 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

According to the UNHCR, in 2015, more than one million refugees migrated to Europe. To date, little empirical research about the relationship between African refugees and compassionate communities such as African oriented churches exist given the fluid migration of Africans to

Europe (UNHCR, 2021; Sanchez et al., 2021:3). Compassion expresses a core characteristic of God and what is expected of God's people as evident in the concept of the *missio Dei*. This research adopts the virtue of *compassion* as a conceptual framework to define what it means to be God's people. The researcher's understanding of the virtue of compassion is informed by biblical ideas such as love, mercy, righteousness, peace and justice. These are essential for Christian mission as they create a bond of dignity among humans (Ireland (ed.), 2017:19-28; Allen, 2020; Louw, 2016:336-354). Compassionate mission thus refers to the church's participation in the *missio Dei* in a manner that brings measurable transformation to the total life of the poor and not just talk about the plight of the poor (Wuthnow, 2011).

Collins, Cooney and Garlington (2011:9-10) point out that compassion is proactive in recognising the needs and pains of those on the margins and getting involved in their lives in a sustained manner. Compassion thus, involves participation in the suffering, brokenness, and vulnerability of others in the long-term. In God's divine plan to rescue his creation, for example, as demonstrated by the doctrine of the incarnation i.e., God becoming human exemplifies the act of compassion by participating in the suffering and brokenness of the created order. The virtue of compassion is not to be misconstrued as charity or benevolence as these are in most cases not long-term but as a new paradigm of participating in the suffering of others stemming from a sound biblical and theological basis (Collins et al., 2011:9; Harold, 2019:3-4; Furlong, 2017:283; Louw, 2016:336-354).

2.6.1 The concept of compassion and the missio Dei

This research conceives that the mission of the church is incomplete without the virtue of compassion. The recognition of compassion as a means of sharing and reducing the suffering of the marginalised has become a key issue in both social science and missiology (Harold, 2019:3-4; Collins et al., 2011:1-20). This position seeks to underscore the importance of compassion for social policy and engagement and mission praxis. The virtue of compassion in mission as a conceptual framework seeks to situate compassion as a fundamental element within APCs' religious response to the plight of the vulnerable. This is because the virtue of compassion in mission and social action in particular, as important as it is, appears not to have been given the needed attention. The identity of APCs as churches, i.e., as a compassionate community and the

history of their background as former refugees makes the call for compassion in its approach to mission fundamental (Allen, 2020:52; Warrington, 2015:1-34).

God's mission i.e., *missio Dei*, extends compassion to God's creation. According to Bosch (2006), God in the Old Testament revealed himself as a compassionate being to Israel in diverse ways. Bosch attributes Israel's election solely to the compassionate nature of God. This divine attribute of God is shared with the members of the Trinity and sets him apart from the gods of other nations. God therefore expects his children to show compassion to others. Having received compassion from God even when humanity did not deserve it (Romans 5:8), the nations, and in particular Christians, are enjoined to demonstrate compassion toward the needy (Luke 6:36; Matthew 25:31-46) as a sign of their relationship with God and understanding of their place in the *missio Dei*. APCs are able to apply this biblical understanding through effective biblical hermeneutics which is grounded in the notion that the proper interpretation of biblical texts produces a certain level of understanding which in turn shapes the practices and beliefs of practitioners. The church is to do good to all manner of persons (Ireland (ed.), 2017:36-37; Morita, 2019:1).

It is fair to suggest that a significant number of the Christian community recognise the need to be compassionate by fully participating in the *missio Dei* through the concept of 'holistic mission' or 'integral mission' as the biblical model of mission for the church. This is evident in the 1966 Wheaton, Illinois World Mission of the Church Congress, the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin in the same year, the Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern held in 1973, and finally, the International Congress on World Evangelism which took place in Lausanne in 1974 which deliberated on the relationship between evangelism and social action (Ireland (ed.), 2017:14-18; Tennent, 2010).

The Wheaton Declaration, for example, made a profound observation that evangelicals are guilty of isolating themselves from the world and therefore fail to respond to the many concerns facing humanity. Some of these human concerns are war, racism, poverty, population explosion, hunger, family disintegration, pandemic, and social revolution.

2.6.2 Pentecostalism and compassion

The Pentecostal movement is noted for its emphasis on salvation in Christ and the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2005:12). Myers (2015:116) observes that like their Evangelical counterparts, Pentecostals are generally accused of not focusing much on social action as a priority area in contrast to Catholic-based communities. Similarly, Burdick, Garrard-Burnett and Stoll (eds.), (1993:20) hold that in most instances Pentecostalism is portrayed as "an inherently conservative force that preaches and teaches submission to authority. It erodes collective identity and emphasises the individual. It undercuts justification for social action".

Whilst this accusation has been discussed already in section 2.2.3, the fact is that Pentecostals have the potential to make more significant impact on existential social challenges through compassionate responses than can currently be credited to them. Tennent (2010) posits that although Evangelicals, Pentecostals, and Independent Christians are labelled as mostly being concerned with evangelising and others only committed to social action and justice, this cannot be accurate. To him, the difference lies in emphasis and definition of what it means to do evangelism for a particular group is thus not a case of neglect or disrespect of either evangelism or social action (Tennent, 2010; Kärkkäinen, 2014:30).

Although Tennent's explanation offers some insight into the discourse, it prompts the question of whether a church or Christian tradition should emphasise one aspect of mission over the other, or if both must receive equal attention. Thus, revisiting the 1982 Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility (Ireland (ed.), 2017:14), the choice to prioritise one over the other questions the fidelity of the concept of holistic mission. It also erodes the importance of compassion in mission. Perhaps, the choice of emphasis depends on the context where prevailing circumstances in each context influence the mission focus to a greater extent.

Miller (2009:278-280) explains that Pentecostalism as a movement was birthed among the poor and therefore best connects with the needs and aspirations of the disadvantaged. Myers (2015) also describes them as a group that has distinguished itself by combining the Pentecostal vibrant style of worship, assertive approach to evangelism, and grassroots efforts to ensure the provision of education, health services, and other relief and development ministries. In fact, Mostert (2014)

categorically states that social action has always been a part of Pentecostals' DNA, but the socio-cultural context within which Pentecostalism found itself in the West a century ago altered the phenomenon's theology leading to "bifurcation" of the contents of mission. He contrasts his observation with Pentecostalism in the Global South where the socio-economic challenges informed its praxis accordingly (Mostert, 2014:167). These scholars suggest that Pentecostals are not guilty of having neglected social action.

These two opposing views raise several questions. Firstly, do all the strands of Pentecostalism have the same mission emphasis? Secondly, what is the role of APCs in the public space? Thirdly, where do APCs currently stand in the argument of religious response to contemporary migration challenges? It is fair to suggest that the enthusiasm which characterised the outbreak of the Pentecostal phenomenon just after the Azusa Street revival would not have room for a conscious social ministry. Over time, however, a fine balance between evangelism and social action ought to be the norm for many strands within the Pentecostal tradition.

Scholars like Miller and Yamamori (2007:2) argue in favour of 'Progressive Pentecostalism' which in my view falls in line with the demands of holistic mission. Progressive Pentecostalism strives to strike a fine balance between evangelism and social action. It is suggested that Progressive Pentecostalism delivers a better and effective development work than international NGOs given the same context.

Upon close examination, the concept of 'Progressive Pentecostalism' however, raises two issues: 1) it appears inherently to accept the criticism that Pentecostalism is often 'other world' centred but is now attempting to find the right balance. 2) It also appears not to deny the importance of the church engaging in social action. The question then is: "How does the Pentecostals' concept of 'Progressive Pentecostalism' fare in the face of ongoing global migration and the refugee crisis?" This question is important because of the criticism by some scholars that social action is not naturally seen as an integral part of the APCs' ethos (Harold, 2019:2; Amisshah, 2020:153-156, 163-168).

Progressive Pentecostalism, just like Christian mission can be holistic and progressive yet not compassionate. A holistic mission could carry the notion of satisfying both evangelism and social action without much recourse to how it is done. It is only when holistic mission is developed and delivered with compassion that the nature of God who owns the *missio Dei* is reflected adequately. The virtue of compassion in mission is therefore key to the calling of the church. The church engaged in a compassionate mission may share in the suffering of the marginalised, although scholars like Ireland (ed.), (2017) and Porter (2006) suggest that there are dangers in the compassionate person trying to share the suffering of the people on the margins. To Ireland (ed.), (2017:10), this can lead to dependency. To Porter (2006:101), “[S]uch appropriation almost always leads to misunderstanding, and romantic, masochistic, or mystifying identifications”.

2.6.3 The interpretative framework of Matthew 25: 31-46 and compassion

God’s mission is holistic and compassionate in nature. The researcher’s understanding of compassionate mission is developed out of the broad idea of God’s mission which is holistic and informed by the interpretative framework of Matthew 25:31-46 and other social justice passages in the Bible. Compassionate mission as a concept framing this research is holistic mission underlined with compassion. Compassion as exemplified in the selected biblical text is highlighted as a fundamental element to the Christian’s response to social issues regardless of the dangers associated with it. This conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 1 further below. The diagram depicts the concept of ‘compassionate mission’ based on Matthew 25:31-46.

This parable is the last of four parables told by Jesus consecutively between Matthew 24 and 25. A careful examination of the biblical text reveals that on the judgement day, believers will not be rewarded for their fidelity to the Law or observance of rituals. They will be rewarded only by putting into practice Christ’s commandments that say: ‘love God’ and ‘love your neighbour as yourself’ (P. N. Anderson, 2013; Carey, 2014).

According to Brown (2016:1-8), the parable relies on parallelism and by that creates a contrast between those on Christ’s right and those on his left, the sheep and the goats. Brown explains that the “all nations” in verse 32, refers to all humankind. Others submit that “all nations” refers to the Gentiles in the church (Carey, 2014). Following the universal interpretation position as noted in

section 1.0 of Chapter 1, the “least of these brothers and sisters” refers to the needy in general (Lutz, 2005:267-274; Brown, 2016:1-16). If “all nations” refers to all humankind and they shall be judged, then the parallel of sheep and goats, the two separate mentions of the “least of these” as noted in verses 40 and 45, ought to carry universal application. Such a position is consistent with Jesus’ own teaching in Matthew 5:46-48, “If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect”.

Contrary to the universal interpretation position assumed by this research, scholars who argue for the classical and exclusive interpretation positions are of the view that the least brothers and sisters who are the target of Christian compassion are the disciples, Christian missionaries, and believers who lived during the time this parable was told. For example, it is suggested that “the least brothers” refers to Jesus’ disciples and Christians in general (Ireland (ed.), 2017:20; Cortès-Fuentes, 2003:107). Donahue (1988:3-4) postulates that “the least brothers” in fact points to the suffering believers or members of the ecclesial community.

But Morris (1992) points out that reading the passage in its original context to deny the poor of Christian benevolence is not right. He contends, “Such an attitude is foreign to the teachings of Jesus. Everyone in need is to be the object of Christian benevolence” (Morris, 1992: 639; Ireland (ed.), 2017:20). In P. N. Anderson’s (2013:1-2) view, “limiting them to the Christian fold misses the point entirely. It includes all persons, regardless of their religious or social status, as God’s children and siblings of the Son”.

If the target of biblical compassion is restricted to a group of people who lived in history, then the element of compassion which Jesus sought to project in the parable is jeopardised. Again, if the target was a group of people who suffered no social injustice and deprivation, then the question could be asked: “How concerned is the Christian faith towards the plight of the disadvantaged in society?” The brothers and sisters on whose behalf the parable seeks to campaign in the context of this research refers to the African refugees and asylum seekers on whose case the African Pentecostal denominations are expected to act. It is this category of persons, who Rivera-Pagán

(2013:42-45) rightly noted, represents the “sacramental presence” of Jesus Christ (Ireland (ed.), 2017:19-20).

In the parable, Jesus is encountered in the vulnerable and judgement is pronounced on those who failed to show compassion. Compassion, here, is understood not just as an expression of emotions but concrete actions aimed at mitigating the suffering of the poor and marginalised (Hanciles, 2021:123-127; Ireland (ed.), 2017:15-16).

The target of compassion in the parable was the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, and imprisoned. These conditions are typical of the life of the average refugee in contemporary times, and as demonstrated in the diagram below, a compassionate response targeted at meeting the physical, emotional, economic and spiritual needs of refugees is essential. The challenge with the interpretation of this parable is the subtle inference that an individual’s salvation is predicated on compassionate acts toward the marginalised except to suggest that compassionate acts are only a logical outcome of authentic faith in Jesus Christ (P. N. Anderson, 2013:2-3).

The following practical sub-themes of the broader theme of *compassion* flow out of the parable: *physical compassion*, *economic compassion*, *emotional compassion*, and *spiritual compassion* (PEES). These come together to constitute ‘compassionate mission’ as depicted in the diagram below (Figure 1). Thus, God’s mission which is holistic is expressed to the world through proclamation of God’s word and compassionate acts and these cover areas of human need such as the physical, economic, emotional and spiritual.



Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework: A Model for Compassionate Mission

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter reviewed various literature on the topic and established the following major issues: firstly, a contextualised conception or reflection of Pentecostalism is necessary for an effective response since the phenomenon is not homogenous.

Secondly, migration is a tool for mission and therefore the need for a theology of migration is necessary.

Thirdly, a compassionate relationship enhances mission and integration of vulnerable minorities. Fourthly, religious faith and identity are important contexts for a compassionate response to humanitarian crises. Whilst documentary evidence exists on the compassionate response of the majority of non-African religious churches, no record exists of the APCs' response to the plight of refugees and asylum seekers in the research area. It is this knowledge gap that the current research study seeks to fill.

The next chapter presents raw data collected through semi-structured online interviews and an examination of written church documents.

CHAPTER 3

RAW DATA PRESENTATION & FINDINGS

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter reflected on current literature on the topic under study. This chapter presents key portions of the raw data and the themes that were generated from the collected data. The purpose of this chapter is to give a voice to the research participants. Data collection was carried out in two broad phases. Phase One covered the semi-structured online interviews with the selected APC leaders and African refugees/asylum seekers, while Phase Two covered the examination of relevant written church documents that discuss the APCs' social ministry. Evidence of the raw data that were collected is thus discussed to affirm the trustworthiness of the study (Starcher et al., 2018:63).

Although the focus of the research was to interview APC leaders and African refugees, it was discovered that asylum seekers could not be left out owing to their similar circumstances. Seeking asylum was the starting point of attaining refugee status (Hinger, 2020:3). Both refugees and asylum seekers in the selected APCs who qualified and met the inclusion criteria, and who were willing to be interviewed, participated in the online semi-structured interview.

3.1 DATA PRESENTATION

Four APC leaders and 20 African refugees/asylum seekers participated in the research. The data collection exercise in both Phase One and Phase Two produced the following data for analysis and interpretation in the subsequent chapters:

3.1.1 Phase One

This phase, which consisted of online semi-structured interviews, was divided into two parts. A section was organised for the APC leaders (section one) and another for the African refugees/asylum seekers (section two) who are members of the selected APCs. The online

interview section with the leaders of the selected APCs focused on the response of the APCs in Düsseldorf to the plight of African refugees. The online interview section for the African refugees/asylum seekers focused on obtaining information about their condition and how the APCs have responded. It was important to give space to their voices to obtain credible insight into their condition. The online semi-structured interviews, in either case, commenced with a 2–4 minute introduction explaining the purpose of the interview, and the rights of the participants (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Starcher et al., 2018:55-58).

After the introduction, the interview with the APC leaders commenced with the question of how long they have lived in Düsseldorf. The next question was whether they previously resided in another German city but lived in Düsseldorf during the government's open border policy in 2015. These questions were important for the time frame of the research. If they lived through the period of the crisis in the city, their narration would be more useful to the credibility of the research. The researcher then asked about their experience at the personal level when the refugees arrived in their numbers, followed by their denomination's response to the arrival of the refugees. Their responses to this latter question illuminated their understanding of good neighbourliness, hospitality, compassion, and mission (Adedibu, 2016).

The next set of questions focused on obtaining detailed information about the responses of the APCs to the refugee crisis. A question was asked to tease out the basis for whatever response was offered. For example, if there was a positive response, was it because of their Christian faith, experience as former migrants, or the fact that they are their African brothers and sisters? If no response was offered, reasons for that were interrogated. Their views were sought on the importance of prayer as a response to the refugee crisis. Owing to their African background and the collaborative relationship between many African governments and the church, their views were sought regarding how civil authorities are handling the refugee crisis and the supporting role APCs can play. This set of questions was coded RQS 1 corresponding to RQ 1.1 (i.e., Sub-Research Question 1).

The final set of questions for the APC leaders centred on their ability to relate the refugee crisis to social ministry stories in the Bible. The purpose was to find out their interpretation of the refugee

crisis and whether mission targeted programmes of the church reflected the social ministry stories in the Bible. They were also asked to reflect on and share their interpretation of their migration and the refugee crisis in relation to mission. This was to find out whether they see their migration as part of God's plan for them to engage in mission or otherwise. The researcher asked for recommendations to help the church express compassion in its mission work. This set of questions was coded as RQS 2 corresponding to RQ 1.2 (i.e., Sub-Research Question 2).

For the African refugees, the set of questions coded as RQS 1 corresponding to RQ 1.1 focused on gathering data relating to the background of the participants. It included the length of their association with their denomination, its regional composition, and the number of years they have lived in Düsseldorf. The following question was to find out how their time in the city and the accompanying experiences affected their outlook on life and issues. The next set of questions focused on conditions in the camps and the general life of a refugee. They were asked to describe their current accommodation and general living conditions. A question to gauge their satisfaction level with life in the camps encouraged them to suggest improvements to better their lot (MacGregor, 2018:1-7). Questions were also asked about the impact of response(s) received from institutions including the APCs on their lives. Like the leaders of the APCs, they were also asked about the importance of prayer as a form of response to their condition.

The final section, coded as RQS 3 corresponding to RQ 1.3 (i.e., Sub-Research Question 3), contained questions intended to allow the African refugees to share their survival stories. This was important for the researcher to make a distinction between what the victims say and what others say about how they survive. These survival stories are also important as a body of knowledge to shape future responses of the church to their plight. A question was also asked to offer them the opportunity to reflect on their survival tactics in the light of their calling as Christians since the stories of God's people surviving as refugees or migrants intersect with their condition. Cuèllar states that: "One way in which the stories of contemporary economic migrants and fleeing refugees intersect with the biblical text has to do with the human will to survive" (Cuèllar, 2018:501).

Conversely, these survival tactics reflected on the effectiveness or otherwise of APCs' compassionate mission activities. They shared their possible contributions to the destination

community when given the opportunity. Here, the idea was to highlight the talents and competencies of African refugees.

3.1.1.1 Section One of Phase One – responses of the APC leaders

RQ 1.1. WHAT IS THE SITUATION OF AFRICAN REFUGEES IN DÜSSELDORF AND HOW HAVE APCs RESPONDED?

The participants are either ordained pastors or lay leaders of the selected APCs with years of experience in church leadership and ministry. Two of the APC leaders that were interviewed have experience as former refugees and therefore have insider knowledge. The other two arrived in the research field as regular migrants. Their responses covered what they did at the beginning of the refugee crisis through to the initial lockdown period of the Covid-19 outbreak. Their response to the conditions of African refugees and asylum seekers has implications for the latter's overall well-being and the church's mission in the research area.

According to their narration, the refugee situation in 2015 was dire in the sense that their numbers were very high. Accommodating them required innovation from civil authorities. Some churches and individuals also helped at the initial stages of the refugees' arrival (see section 2.5.2 of Chapter 2; Taylor, 2020:63).

The participants were concerned about the crisis but conceded that because the African number was small it took a while for them to think of what response to offer. Initially, the whole situation looked a bit distant. Later, they became much more aware of the situation as some of the African refugees started visiting the African oriented churches.

During the crisis, P1 narrates:

“Our congregation for example set up a volunteers’ group. This group collected clothes from church members and donated them to the camps. Our focus was not to cater for only African refugees but refugees in general. We help them with the language and also accompany them to the hospital and other appointments”.

P1 spoke about a refugee who had experienced bad surgery and whom members of this volunteer group had to take back to hospital:

“There was a case of a refugee who suffered a bad surgery and our volunteers’ group had to take her back to the hospital and explain her condition better to the surgeons for a second surgery to be performed. Apparently, the language barrier contributed to this unfortunate situation. We also organised counselling sessions for some of them to help them overcome their emotional challenges”.

Furthermore, P1 also mentions that the church’s response to the refugee crisis was informed by both Scripture and the ideology of its founder. He notes: *“Our church’s response to the refugee crisis was informed by a couple of things but basically, I will say Scripture and the ideology of our founder”.* However, he adds:

“Inadequate space on the church’s premises and difficulty in accessing the refugee camps are some of the challenges that constrained our response. Since the refugee crisis became controlled, the church has not done much except casual interaction with refugees who became members of the church. The African refugees in our church continue to receive language support, pastoral counselling, and some financial incentive”.

P2 recounts that his church did not go to the refugees to offer support. But those who found their way to the church were offered some support by the church and individual members. This included pocket money, accommodation, and general counselling. The friends they make in church help them to read their letters. To him, three reasons account for the APCs’ inability to offer a structured response to the plight of African refugees:

Firstly, *“Many of the APCs are not registered with the civil authority and therefore are hesitant operating in a more publicised way. The church is currently registered and therefore duly recognised by the city authorities. The intention of the unregistered churches is not to operate illegally but they want to grow to a certain level of strength before formalising their activities”.*

Secondly, the church has limited resources at its disposal and some African refugees are insincere. According to him, if the APCs were to fully open their doors to all the African refugees the church would not survive financially. He further explains: *“Because of the initial challenges African refugees generally face, when they get to know of African church, they quickly come over asking for help.”*

He continued saying:

“Some African refugees approached the church and individual members for help and after receiving it they disappeared. This has affected the attention paid to African refugees currently in the church. The perception is that they are ungrateful and mostly join the church for selfish reasons. This perception deprives genuine needy refugees the opportunity to be helped”.

The third point raised by P2 is that:

“The refugees mentioned in the Bible and whose kind the church must support are different from those we currently have in the churches. Refugees in the Bible were so much in need on a foreign land such that food and shelter was enough. Current African refugees except a few migrated for economic prosperity. For such a people, the help the church offers are inadequate. Their aim is to land a big financial opportunity that will transform their economic destiny. Therefore, the pocket money and transportation from the church is not received with much appreciation”.

According to him, the ambitions of current refugees far outweigh the help the church can offer. That is not to say that the church should not help but sometimes the expectations of current refugees are too high. Nevertheless, because they are Christians, they will continue to help refugees who genuinely need assistance.

P3 explains further:

“Our response was to attend to requests that came before leadership. Although there are some refugees and asylum seekers, the common national identity and informal close relationships take care of the normal needs of refugees without the church formally having to intervene. We did not approach the camps to help during the crisis. The initiative came from the African refugees. Some of them found their way to the church and they were welcomed. When a refugee has a request and it is brought before the leadership of the church, it is accorded the needed attention. The request usually comes in the form of financial support, emotional therapy, and language assistance”.

Moreover, P4 comments:

“When the refugees arrived in 2015, I was working with a company that distributed consumables to the refugee camps in Düsseldorf, Oberhausen, and Essen. The refugees at the time showed physical exhaustion and desperation. I was part of a group that provided shelter and food for some of them”.

Like the other selected APCs, i.e., P2 and P3, P4’s churches did not approach the refugee camps to interact with African refugees and asylum seekers. However, those who found their way to the church were offered some help. This includes helping them to land a job. Those who needed accommodation were offered the opportunity to live with church members who had space. The church also provided them with a network of contacts for assistance.

P4 expressed the following:

“Number one, the call is to help those who are in need. So, we saw the need that arose at that time and then provided the help. Not necessarily that some of us have been refugees or some of us have been in that situation. Yes, some of us have been in that situation and have gone through that situation but me personally I have not gone through that situation but as the Bible says we should mourn with those who mourn and rejoice with those who rejoice. And as a Christian and a Bible believer you do

not need to have gone through that situation. That is our calling. Our calling is to lift other people up so we saw the need out there and reacted to their needs”.

Thus, the church does not extend help to African refugees because of their shared cultural/ethnic identity or experience as migrants but because they are Christians, and the Bible commands them to help the needy and stranger.

P4 further articulated some challenges:

“Lack of volunteerism on the part of church members, difficulty in gathering donated items, and non-registration of some African refugees with the camps are challenges the church faces in trying to help refugees”.

Thus, these factors militate against the desire of his church to reach out to and help African refugees who are not members of his church. Regarding the government’s handling of the refugee crisis, P4 states:

“It is two ways. It is political and not tackling the spiritual aspect. It is political because they go there and create the problem like Iran, Africa and Asia. They take what belongs to the people and at the end of the day the people will have to come here. Whatever they give, they will take it back. When you look at the Asian countries, they go there to take the crude oil and give a little bit to the refugees. When we come to Africa, they take the raw materials and process it and give a little bit to the refugees saying that we are helping the refugees. So, it is political. The government is wise and strategic in what they are doing. They transport solar from Africa and at the end of the day when the people come here, they give you a little ‘azu’ like a refugee. Meanwhile they have taken what you even supposed to depend on and they are giving you something small. The government is very strategic about this when it comes to refugees”.

On this same issue, P1, P2 and P3 suggest that the government's handling of the crisis is satisfactory.

"The government has done well because to take care of all these people is not a joke"
(P1).

"For me, I think the government is doing well. To provide health insurance cards for them to be able to get healthcare is commendable. Providing food, accommodation and also help[ing to] solve the problems in the refugees' homeland is wonderful"
(P2).

"I think what the government can do is what it is doing. In a foreign land, you cannot get all you want" (P3).

All the APC leaders interviewed, whilst recognising the enormity of the challenge that confronted the government between 2015 and 2018, highlighted the importance of prayer as a critical response to the refugee crisis. To them, every situation has both spiritual and physical dimensions.

"We prayed for them so that just and favourable laws are made by the government to help them get better conditions. So, we prayed for the refugees and the government. We still pray for them just as we pray for success in our ministry. In fact, when they go for their interview and have to wait for a decision it is not easy. They call a lot requesting for prayer support" (P1).

"I think it is very important but after prayer it is left with God to act. When refugees come to join the church, nobody is able to tell what revelation they had during the night that caused them to come to church. Physically we cannot measure but spiritually it is invaluable. At the height of the crisis, a lot of prayer was offered on behalf of the refugees in general not only African refugees. It was an important exercise without which things may not have turned out the way it has currently" (P2).

“We prayed for them a lot and still do. We believe prayer can move mountains and therefore prayer is important to help them get legal documents and fruitful stay. During our time things were much difficult than today and we know prayer contributed to the improvement we see currently” (P3).

“That is one of our priorities. It is a call and something that we do all the time. When we cannot reach them with materials or materially, we still support them with prayer. So, as for prayer, it is our first priority and [the] first thing on the list that we should pray for [is] people in need” (P4).⁵¹

During the outbreak of Covid-19 and the initial lockdown, all the leaders from the selected APCs affirm that African refugees and other vulnerable church members received assistance in the form of food, water, toiletries, and money. This was one-time assistance offered between March and July 2020. The same was not repeated during the second lockdown between November 2020 and March 2021. The reason is that during the second lockdown the impact was not as severe as the first. Also, church life and finances have been disrupted since the first lockdown. As such, congregations do not have enough money to continue this charity exercise.

Some APCs have not been able to organise in-person church services since March 2020. Within these constraints, however, those with permanent places of worship opened limited food closets on their premises for use by African refugees and people who have little or no income. The

⁵¹ A particular period that underscores the importance of prayer as a response according to them is the waiting period. This is the period between when an application for resident permit is made and when the decision is served. They recounted the many calls and requests for prayer during this period. Subsequently, they received evidence of answers to these prayers from testimonies shared by some refugees. As hopeless as their situations were, God intervened. This kind of prayer is referred to as intercessory prayer. Prayer, according to the APC leaders, was not only crucial for the well-being of the refugees but also for success in mission. They deem it a vital part of the church’s missionary work. It is their firm belief that for African refugees and asylum seekers who found their way to church and subsequently became members did so as a result of their prayers. Thus, where they cannot physically touch, their prayers can. It is both a weapon and a sign of dependence on God they suggested.

They also highlighted inspirational sermons preached to African refugees and asylum seekers during church services as an important response to the crisis. Stories of refugees in the Bible, including Jesus’ flight to Egypt as recorded in Matthew Chapter 2, resonated well with current African refugees and asylum seekers. These sermons also touched on issues such as brotherliness, hospitality, and justice. To them, to evaluate the APCs’ response to the refugee crisis only in terms of physical help offered does not tell the whole story. The agency of God activated through their prayer was fundamental to them.

responses offered to the question of what the selected APCs have been doing for African refugees and the needy during Covid-19 lockdown are as follows:

“Yes, we still do support them. Language support, financial help, pieces of advice, etc.” (P1).

“We do not go to the camps to help but announced during our online services that anyone who has any need should submit his or her name for help. Even those who are not members of the church were encouraged to come for help. Food stuffs were purchased and stored in the church for distribution to the needy. Many refugees came for this help. The number of needy people coming for help has reduced after the first lockdown” (P2).

“We still do support them but it is as and when a request comes before us” (P3).

“Yeah, in that we gathered foodstuffs and made announcement that people can bring food-stuffs and items and distributed to people who could not go anywhere or get help from the government so the church gathered things for them” (P4).

RQ 1.2. HOW DO APC LEADERS SEE THEMSELVES, INTERPRET THEIR MIGRATION AS WELL AS THE REFUGEE CRISIS IN RELATION TO MISSION?

Under this section, the responses from the APC leaders are presented as follows:

“The presence of the refugees, homeless people and the needy in general serve as an opportunity for the church to spread Christian love and compassion. We are very much aware that if we help them, instead of them becoming a danger to the society, they will rather contribute positively to the society and the church. This church’s

social action plan is informed by both Scripture and the ideology of the founder”⁵²
(P1).

P2 corroborated the above view by referring to James 2: 15-16, and then to a Scripture in Romans:

“Suppose you see a brother or sister who needs food or clothing, and you say, Well, good-bye and God bless you; stay warm and eat well’ but then you do not give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?”

“Romans 12:15 also encourages us to feel for people. Rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep. The Bible says feel for one another. Some are real refugees, others are not. Some help the church, others do not”.

P3 added: *“These brothers and sisters of ours are here because that is God’s will for their lives. As such we must give them the support we can”*. He then further quotes Job 31:32 to support his point: *“But no stranger had to spend the night in the street, for my door was always open to the traveller”*.

Likewise, P4 also referred to Romans 12:15, *“When others are happy, be happy with them. If they are sad, share their sorrow”*. He then added: *“The arrival of the refugees represented a crisis, but it was an opportunity to serve mankind”*. He, however, held a similar view to that of P2 that the refugees found in the Bible are different from those in Düsseldorf. In this regard, P4 states:

⁵² He suggests that social action has two benefits for the church. Firstly, it means the church has obeyed the scriptural injunction to be compassionate. Secondly, crime and social vices are reduced when the church engages in social action. Compassionate responses to the plight of refugees and the needy in general fulfil the thoughts of compassionate mission. As such, the presence of the refugees serves as an opportunity to spread Christian love and compassion without necessarily aiming to convert them.

*“These people [referring to African refugees] have migrated willingly to seek for greener pastures. Only few are exception. Such people do not appreciate the little help the church affords. They have their own ambitious agenda”.*⁵³

P2 shared this story to make a plea for all to support African refugees:

“Today, a refugee was ejected, and I had to go and help pack his belongings. He has no place to go. He went to lodge at a garage and now he has been ejected again. Such people need tangible help rather than preaching to them. So, I encourage all to support refugees however little”.

They all suggested that the movement of these refugees from their countries of origin irrespective of the reason(s) for migrating, may be God’s way of bringing them over to bless them and their families. Their migration also helps the African churches to get new members and labourers for the mission. Thus, affirming the notion that every Christian migrant is a potential missionary (Hanciles, 2008:6).⁵⁴

On how they interpret their migration in relation to mission, the responses gathered point to the fact that P1 was posted to the research context for mission purposes. P1 responded:

“I believe God brought me here for a purpose. There were many others better than me but God chose for me to be here. For me to be selected out of several colleagues for mission work abroad meant God’s hand is in it”.

P2 upon arrival in Germany, joined an existing Christian church and rose through the ranks to the leadership position. P2 responded:

⁵³ He acknowledged notwithstanding that those who request for help must be helped by the church since the Bible encourages Christians to be one another’s keeper. He also mentioned the need to befriend African refugees and help them integrate.

⁵⁴ Thus, they see the migration of refugees to Europe as God’s way of bringing the world together and giving African Christians the opportunity to share the gospel with them just as the Europeans did centuries ago through their missionaries. African refugees who are Christians to them are missionaries sent to Europe by God and not any church.

“I came here to seek greener pastures but even that I know God’s hand was in it and that is why I find myself involved in mission work. God works in ways we cannot see. All I can say is that it has been God”.

P3 and P4 migrated for economic reasons but whilst in Düsseldorf received the divine call to engage in the Christian mission. Together with some like-minded friends, they began a small prayer group which has today blossomed into churches.

P3 responded:

“Like many of our people I came here through God’s grace to work and better my life but God called me into ministry. I will say God knew what He was doing”.

P4 judges his migration as a divine arrangement.⁵⁵ He says:

“Yeah, I can say that it is divinely orchestrated because even before I migrated to Europe, I was on my way to go to the Trinity College [Seminary] to become a Reverend Minister. Whilst I was preparing the opportunity to travel came my way. Since I arrived here, I have not forfeited my mission. If I were in Africa, I would have gone further, but in Europe, Christianity is different. But we are pushing on, and through us, God will change Europe’s mentality about Christianity. ... So , my migration to Europe is God’s divine appointment to shape certain things in this area for Christianity in this part of the world to stand firm. We need to attack the principalities that are here in Europe so that they will not downgrade Christianity. Else, let us say in 50 years we will not have Christianity in Europe again. We want to do mission work so that Christianity will continue to exist in Europe so that our children will not lose their faith”.

⁵⁵ The reason is that whilst in his home region, he was preparing himself for ministry before the opportunity presented itself for him to travel to Germany. His father who he had lost contact with for many years suddenly gave him a call and arranged for his migration to Germany. Since he arrived in Germany, he has joined forces with other Pentecostals to engage in missionary activities across Europe.

He expresses the need for urgent missionary work in Europe so that Christianity remains a force to reckon with. This to him is important even for the sake of children of African descent.⁵⁶

Some of the Bible passages quoted as having a bearing on the refugee situation and the response expected from the church are as follows: P1 and P4 – Matthew 25:31-46. P2 and P4 – Luke 3:11 and Romans 12:15. P3 – Luke 10:29-37. P1 and P4 noted that the contents of Matthew 25:31-46 have direct relationship with the refugee situation in Düsseldorf.

“Like those who needed help in the parable, African refugees are basically a needy group of people and, as a church, we owe them a response, and that is what in my view we did” (P1).

“Of course, it is in connection because like I said in the beginning these are people who are desolate; these are people who do not know where to turn to because their place of living has now become a thorn in their flesh. It has become a war zone where there is no peace. People are dying, people are being killed and every now and then their houses are being bombarded....” (P4).

To fulfil the thoughts of social justice passages in the Bible such as quoted above, all of them agree that the current situation must change. African refugees should not be the ones to search for APCs. The initiative should come from the APCs under normal circumstances. APCs should be proactive to identify the needy and respond to their needs even if they were not members of their congregations.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ In effect, all of them attribute their migration to a divine plan to expand God’s kingdom in Europe. Thus, their migration bear attributes of a divine purpose be it Adamic or Abrahamic types of migration discussed in section 2.3 of Chapter 2. This claim is anchored in the circumstances leading to their departure from home, the experiences prior to their arrival and how things have turned out since they arrived. The combination of these factors has forged a strong conviction in them that indeed their migration was divinely orchestrated.

Through their various accounts on how God works behind the scenes for his children, they subtly bemoaned the impatience on the part of some African refugees and asylum seekers. Despite their Christian faith, many of them indulge in survival tactics that are understandable because of their situation but fraught with ethical challenges. APC leaders do however not publicly express these concerns.

⁵⁷ P1, P2, P3, and P4 suggested that APCs ought to engage the civil authorities, strike a partnership with them so that they can engage in productive social action without any hindrances. P4 in addition suggested that just as the church receives tithes, thanksgiving, and offerings the same must be shared with the refugees.

“Just as the German Roman Catholic Church enjoy a close relationship with state authorities in matters such as refugees and integration, Evangelisch churches should also be accorded similar recognition. This will encourage us to relate better with the refugees and get to know their needs better for appropriate response. Currently, we have difficulties accessing the refugee camps. You have to go through a lot of bureaucratic requirements” (P1).

“This question is difficult but if the church can formalise its relationship with the state and get access to the camps for both evangelism and social work it will be good. Again, if APCs can make a proposal to the state in this direction, I think the state will be happy about it” (P2).

“I think we need to engage authorities, share ideas, and see how we could also help. For instance, we can help with the language and general orientation for our people who arrive here” (P3).

“The church can partner with the government in the way that we will let them know the situation on the ground. That we bring them back to God’s plan and to God’s agenda. That it is God’s will that every man will live in peace and live well. So, while we are seeking the wellbeing of people, we will not loot them and then take everything that belongs to them and leave them just like that when hunger strike[s] then we go. So, the church now has to sit down with the government and tell them, please can we have a better solution or a better approach to all these that we do not take what belongs to them. We leave what belongs to them for them so that they can also survive on what they have. And as they come here also, that we give them a better place to live in so that when they have to go back, they can go and start afresh. They can go and start with something as well. We need to go into terms with the government whilst we sit on the tables and lay down actual human right[s] that we have to go by it” (P4).

3.1.1.2 Section Two of Phase One – Responses by African refugees and asylum seekers

RQ 1.1. WHAT IS THE SITUATION OF THE AFRICAN REFUGEES IN DÜSSELDORF AND HOW HAVE THE APCs RESPONDED TO THEIR PLIGHT?

The participants are African refugees and asylum seekers who are members of the selected APCs. Although refugees and asylum seekers, their stories suggest that whilst some of them migrated as a result of wars, conflicts, persecutions and extreme deprivations, others migrated of their own volition in search of greener pastures due to harsh economic circumstances in their home countries. The challenges they face in the research area generally cover areas such as language barrier, basic legal orientation for successful screening, emotional therapy, financial/ lack of economic opportunities, prayer support, inadequate accommodation, public receptibility and feeding (Mooney, 2013:100-110; 2006:1455-1468; Cruz, 2013:112-113). These challenges lie at the heart of their existence as human beings living on foreign soil. Their responses are as follows:

“Hmmm, for example, you bear pain and emotional torture for long. I am here alone; I still have issues with job; I no speak German well so must be patient and keep praying and waiting till things become ok.... I share room with some people but we are managing. Like I said before, not like you dey your own home or country. If you want complain, you go feel do that every day but that no go help” (R1 spoke pidgin English).

“Look, being a refugee is submission. You do not eat what you want and you do not sleep where you want. You only thank God for what come your way to sustain you. Sometimes you go to places and because you are a refugee, they look at you with suspicion. It has not been easy but have learnt life will not give you what you deserve but what you fight for, so I am fighting on. One day I know everything will be alright” (R3).

“We were many at the camp so privacy was less. In my room, we were three ladies from different countries so engaging in a conversation was a problem” (R8).

“HMMMMM, here the security is tight. At the side where the females are, we sleep two in a room but some of the males are more than two in their rooms. We are given food but it is difficult because you are not used to their food here. What I take with ease is bread and then potatoes. The rest I struggle to eat. We are many and from different places so communication is sometimes difficult. Camp life is basically like boarding school life” (R10).

“It is not easy Papa and especially when you come and give birth here but through it all... hahaha I do not even know how to start. There is so much pressure and fear. Especially, when you are at the stage where you do not have legal documents. Me for instance anytime I saw the police car I got heart palpitation[s]. I will go through this till I landed at the camp. At the camp the first six months is not easy Papa” (R11).

“Life at the camp is someway. When you apply for asylum, they gather all of you to a camp and later transferred to another place but for me I never got transferred. In some camps you are given food like a boarding school and given some money to buy some few items. In some cases, you are given ‘gutschein’ [coupon] or you are given a chit to buy things at the shop, but it cannot buy alcohol and cigarette” (R15).

“It is a place of fear and panic but sometimes as men we try to make ourselves happy. Imagine leaving your family behind and finding yourself living with complete strangers. We are four in my room, and we all come from different African countries. The food we eat is strange. The weather during winter as you know is so cold. The heaters are not so good. It is not easy, but we are trusting in God” (R18).

“Both are not easy. When I lived with my friend, I needed to work to support the bills. When you are not happy about something you cannot say it because if she gets angry and calls the police you are going home. Here in the camp, the place is congested, and we come from different places, so it is not easy. When you see the police, you do not know if they are coming for you or not. Regularly, the police come here and take

people back to their home countries. Last week a guy hurt himself trying to run away”
(R20).

This notwithstanding, R1, R4, R9, R13, and R20 demonstrated enormous faith in God’s ability to change their situation for the better by referring to a common cliché: *“What God cannot do does not exist”*.

Responses to the help APCs offered to their plight covers different areas.⁵⁸ Some of the responses gathered from the refugees and asylum seekers are as follows:

“Like I said, the African churches here no dey together so depending on the church you attend, you go feel get some help or you do not get anything. My church if you do not get money and you tell the pastor they find you something that can take you going for some days. If you get letters and you want somebody read and reply them for you, you feel get someone do that for you. Sometimes individuals too give you some help” (R1 spoke pidgin English).

“Apart from going to church and interacting there I do not see any relationship. But I can remember that when we arrived, some young people from my church brought us gifts and usually helped some of our people” (R2).

“And I remember, one time I was going to the hospital so I told a brother in the church, and he accompanied me. Another time too he replied my letter for me. Now I can reply most of my letters” (R2).

“When you are going to church for instance you carry along your letters for someone to help you. In the same way when you have an appointment at Ausländerbehörde

⁵⁸ For example, financial, job information, legal tips and language support. For instance, in some APCs, they do silver collection on every second Sunday of the month to support asylum seekers and refugees who are members of the church. Again, transport is made available to pick them up from the camp to church on Sundays.

[foreign affairs office] or the hospital, a friend in church who understands the language can go with you” (R4).

“Yeah, in my church, they used to help with T & T [transportation cost] and like the church I was attending, they used to pick people for church or help you get a lawyer, but I did not use all those things because I already had a lawyer” (R5).

“In my church, there are a number of refugees so every second Sunday of the month we take a general welfare offering to support us. We are helped with some money to buy bus ticket[s] to come to church because of the distance from the church to the camp. Also, because of the coronavirus, the church helps those who have lost their jobs” (R8).

“The church per se does not open its doors that everybody should come with their problems but when you approach leadership and you are fortunate you will get some help in the form of money, accommodation and job opportunities. They pray for us and teach us the Bible. That gives you a lot of encouragement. It is normal for us to get friends at church to read your letters for you. Because here everyone is busy looking for money, friends at church do not visit. It is all [a] Sunday affair” (R9).

These forms of assistance were offered in other APCs as well. For example, it was mentioned that the Mountain of Fire Miracle Ministries offers cleaning jobs to refugees in the church and even supports a non-African asylum seeker who came to them. Assistance such as reading and replying to letters for refugees due to their insufficient knowledge of German is done by individual church members. Indications were that APCs offered these different forms of help to African refugees and asylum seekers mainly because of their Christian faith. For example, an asylum seeker from India joined one APC and got employed as a cleaner. Her asylum application was unsuccessful and she got repatriated. Due to her diligence and commitment to the church, every month the church contributes money and sends it to her. This story was narrated by R5.

“Hmmm, like there was an Indian lady in my church. I think they were coming from Spain. Her papers for here were not ok so going on, going on, she was a very good worker in the church so somebody told us that if the church can go and say that she is working in the church they can give her stay so the Pastor went to ask about it but because the lady was not living in Düsseldorf Stadt but Duisburg, they had to send her home. Three years now, so the church contribute monthly and send it to her” (R5).

Some refugees and asylum seekers bemoaned the reluctance of APCs to act proactively on their condition. To them, APCs can be more compassionate towards their needs. The expectation was that APCs in the city would come together and at least speak up for them. In case public advocacy was too difficult, they could mobilise material support and donate to them at the camps. One of them recounted an instance where a particular APC failed to assist African refugees when it was approached.

“No! Except you have an individual in the church who takes interest in you but for a pastor to lead the congregation to help, that did not happen. A friend approached his Pastor for financial assistance and the Pastor’s response was that he should not have travelled in the first place as things are not also easy in Germany as it is in the friend’s home country” (R17).

R17 continues:

“They [APCs] did not do anything for us till I found a Cameroonian church. The pastor was a lecturer, so he gave me advice and sometimes little tips”.

Others also narrated how the APCs have failed over the years to organise a programme to share experiences with them so that during screening interviews they will know what to say and what to avoid. To quote them:

“No. They never came but there was one African who had started a church near the camp. He is married to a white woman. They held services close to the camp so the people from Alata [Nigeria] went there often. His church was close to the camp, but he did not come to the camp” (R11).

“They did not care about the poor. When I came things were very tough for me. I was on my own and the churches I attended did not help” (R20).

Another issue raised was the lack of confidentiality in the congregations. When a refugee is assisted, others outside the church get to know about it or generally leak out information. This situation has deterred some refugees from bringing their requests to the attention of leadership for help. African refugees interviewed who expressed misgivings about the APCs’ response to their plight were however optimistic that things can get better in the churches.⁵⁹

“Most of the time I feel lonely. I do not like doing friends, friends, so I normally keep to myself” (R10).

“You see, you can be a friend to somebody but when a disagreement occurs, they want to call the police to arrest you and take you home. They have documents and you do not have. I have decided to keep to myself. I am only praying my application gets approved” (R19).

RQ 1.3. HOW HAVE AFRICAN REFUGEES SURVIVED AND HOW DO THEIR SURVIVAL TACTICS REFLECT ON THE MISSION WORK OF APCS IN THE RESEARCH CONTEXT?

African refugees list the government, NGOs, and the church as places where they can get help. To them, the church served as a family, a place of socialisation and integration. After a stressful week, they look forward to going to church on Sunday to meet friends and their kinsmen. The singing of

⁵⁹ Not all African refugees and asylum seekers within the APCs were satisfied at the laid-back attitude of the APCs toward their needs. The responses from these African refugees indicate that the APCs usually do not on their own approach African refugees to either preach to or support them. What happens is that a refugee identifies an APC, attends church services, and then requests for help usually through a contact person in the church. Mention was made of the “Diakonie”, Caritas International, Pacesetters, Stay Düsseldorf, Johanniter and several native churches as some of the institutions who are proactive to the needs of refugees in general.

familiar songs and the opportunity to worship in a way suited to their religious orientation meant a lot to them. However, they are mostly directed to government agencies and NGOs around for help upon arrival. APCs are not immediately mentioned to them. They rely on the monthly feeding grant paid to them by the government and the benevolence of NGOs.⁶⁰

Informally, African refugees get pieces of advice from their kinsmen in the city. They share with them stories or tactics that can help their asylum application. Five of them stood out during the interview section:

The first is getting pregnant or married. If a woman became pregnant by a man who has legal documents, it increased the probability of her asylum application becoming successful. Even if the man does not have legal documents, the woman's application is considered on humanitarian grounds.⁶¹ The upgraded survival tactic is for one to get married to a spouse who has German citizenship. By marriage, the other partner stands the chance of qualifying for a residence permit.

The second is the declaration that one is a member of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning (LGBTQ+) community and faces intense persecution in the homeland. The essence of this survival tactic is that the world is aware of the intense opposition many African states offer to the idea of legalising LGBTQ+ in their countries. Verifying such private and individual cases poses a challenge to authorities. It is therefore a cogent survival tactic used by African refugees who in fact may not belong to the LGBTQ+ community. Africans whose homelands have experienced no wars or natural disasters used this tactic. This is because issues of wars and natural disasters are well-publicised events that are quickly referred to whenever a country's name is mentioned.

⁶⁰ Specific mention was made of NGOs such as Caritas, "Diakonie", Pacesetters and Stay Düsseldorf as organisations who help refugees. These organisations provide language support, legal services, cultural orientation, and social integration programmes. They intimated that these NGOs link them to German families. They visit and spend weekends with them. Other times, they take them around the city to see important places like the shops, train station, hospitals, migration, and integration offices.

⁶¹Deutsche Welle (German Wave) publication on 29th April, 2019 in *InfoMigrants*.
<https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/16563/refugees-in-germany-legal-entry—without-asylum>

The third is the use of identity for economic advantage. In their decision to shop, visit the hairdresser's or barber's salon, they deliberately choose the shops managed by either their countryman/woman or an African. This is because in such places, they can bargain well and receive sympathy. To them, every cent or euro saved is important for their survival.

The fourth is withdrawal from social activities and interactions. According to them, some African refugees and asylum seekers choose to keep to themselves. They refrain from fraternising even among their kith and kin to save themselves from sharing their painful stories. Looking at their previous life and uncertain future, they choose to withdraw from socialising. Such people do this even in the church. Right after church, they quickly leave for either their private apartment or the refugee camp.

Another reason for employing the withdrawal tactic is the lack of trust among Africans. In some instances, people have called the police to report others over arguments or disagreements. The victims ended up being repatriated. The withdrawal tactic is therefore a means of saving oneself.

The fifth is the use of creative stories. Some of them referred to Genesis 20:1-2, where Abraham for fear of being killed told King Abimelech that Sarah was his sister, as an example in the Bible that depicts migrants' creative survival tactics. Although those interviewed acknowledge that these survival tactics are fraught with deep spiritual and ethical challenges, they feel compelled by the urge to survive to do what is against their faith and tradition.

Some of the responses offered under this section as survival tactics employed by African refugees and asylum seekers are as follows:

“Everyone has his own mind. Some people will find a nice lie because the authorities if you tell them the truth they do not appreciate. Others marry or get pregnant so they can get legal stay. Many things do happen” (R2).

“That one you will get a lot of advice from people. Sometimes it works, other times it does not. For example, there was a Nigerian lady who got pregnant thinking that will save her, but it did not” (R3).

“As for that one Papa, we lie a lot. At times the interview is difficult but no matter how it is, before we did not know. We try to tell them something that will appeal to their emotions so that they can consider us but not knowing they have a law that once you are a Ghanaian no matter what you say they will not accept it. They say that there is no problem in Ghana that is why those of us who are women go there with pregnancy. If the child’s father has legal residence, we are permitted to live here. At first, we did not know so I was very scared. First when you come, they will let you do a blood test to see whether you have any sickness. From there you go for an interview. I was so scared, did not know what to say” (R11).

“Please, anything like telling them about the war situation in your country and therefore you managed to escape. Since you arrived you do not know anyone and have also lost your travelling documents. Again, as women maybe you have marital challenges to the extent that your husband has threatened to eliminate you and so you decided to escape. These are the two that readily comes to mind” (R14).

“It is hustling. You are provided with a place to sleep and food to eat. The rest is survival of the fittest. Because there is lack of information. When we are misinformed to get pregnant in order to get documents we will follow. I had a Togolese roommate nicknamed Amadu Togo who whilst we were struggling to work, he went to school and later became gainfully employed. He did not marry here but today has documents and has been able to bring his wife here. Those of us who looked for money to buy land bought and those who could build, built. Giving birth has destroyed many Africans. The church needs to build up knowledge and help” (R15).

“Ok. Sometimes you say you are a gay or homosexual. Sometimes you go to the night club look for a German boy or girl. So, your case will teach you” (R16).

“Hahahahaha. You can say you are a gay and your country hate gay people, or your family want to kill you because you refused to worship the family god. The stories are many” (R18).

“Oh, everybody knows that it is not good to tell a lie but sometimes that is the only option available. If you do not, they will take you home. I think in the Bible, Abraham even told a lie in a foreign country” (R19).

They believed however that given the opportunity they could contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic life of the destination community. Some of the responses gathered on this issue are as follows:

“I was a teacher in my home country so when I get the opportunity to upgrade myself in the language I will like to teach” (R4).

“Yes, yes, yes. For me, education is very, very important, so I errmm, actually trying to learn a lot like about law so I can also help all the asylum seekers, and errmm because I also heard about there was this lawyer who especially working with Africans and helping them with their struggle, so I also want to do something like that” (R7).

“I want to become a nurse so when I get the opportunity I will go to school” (R9).

“Currently, I drive a taxi, so I contribute by helping those who need my services. I also pay tax” (R13).

“We have been able to set up an office to help others after correcting our mistakes. We sell tickets, provide relevant information and help people to do their passports legally. Unfortunately, we do not go out so people come following a recommendation. Sometimes before they come their minds have been corrupted” (R15).

“I am a plumber so I will do that here” (R16).

“Oh, for instance I am a tiler, but how to get contract to do is a problem. Currently, I am doing some menial jobs to make ends meet. If I get contracts to do, I can also pay my taxes to help the economy” (R17).

On the importance of prayer as a means of support, all of them agreed to it as a great resource. Some of their responses are as follows:

“It is good. We cannot succeed without prayer. Some of my friends had bad cases at the interview but through prayer they have been permitted to stay” (R4).

“Yes, because sometimes some refugees give testimony in church. For instance, those who were on the verge of being repatriated but through prayer got a favourable decision give testimony” (R8).

“Very, very important. It is very important Papa. We need it and it works” (R11).

“As for prayer it is the weapon for every Christian so even though human being can help you, you cannot despise prayer. It is God who help us in many ways so where human efforts cannot touch, God’s grace can. Prayer is therefore very important to us” (R14).

3.1.2 Phase Two

This phase of the data collection focused on searching through written church documents such as minutes of official meetings, welfare policy, social action policy, and conferences to obtain information on APCs’ compassionate responses to social challenges (Merriam and Tisdell; 2016; Starcher et al., 2018:58). This phase was important for finding out their commitment to social action and the basis for the response of these churches at the policy level. It was also to examine their understanding of compassionate mission in the research field.

The first selected church has operated in Düsseldorf since 1998. Of its membership of around 100, about 90 regularly attend church services. It has nationals mainly from Zimbabwe, Guinea, Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya. Recently, it has started attracting nationals from Iran and Germany to underline its international stature. It does not see itself as exclusively African Pentecostal but somewhere in between African Pentecostal and a truly international church. It is currently dominated by Africans and led by two pastors who are also Africans. English is spoken during church service. However, to accommodate the non-English speakers some German is spoken where necessary. This church produced two documents. One is a welfare scheme and the other a policy document on its volunteers' group.

The second selected church began in 1993 and currently has about 170 members. It organises two services on Sundays. The international service has nationals from across the African continent. The second service is purely made up of Ghanaians. As a result, the first service is conducted in English and German. The second service is conducted in Twi. Average church attendance for both services stands at 110. Attempts at obtaining a social action policy from this church proved futile. However, a welfare scheme and some useful verbal information were obtained.

The third selected church was established in Düsseldorf in 1991 and has a membership of around 100. Unlike the first selected church, this church has only Ghanaian nationals. Whilst this congregation could be said to be mono-national in its national identity, it is in no way mono-cultural. This is because within this mono-national identity lie different cultures. Intra-marriages and the presence of children from such backgrounds further diversify the cultural tapestry of this congregation. English and Twi languages are spoken during church services. Average church attendance stands at 70. This church also produced a welfare scheme and indicated that it has no written social action policy.

The fourth selected church has a membership of around 15. It has nationals from Togo, Ghana, and Nigeria. Sunday services are conducted in English. This APC in Düsseldorf was recently carved out of the mega-group of churches that has its headquarters in an adjoining city to Düsseldorf. It is therefore, less than five years old in the research area. The distinct feature of this

church in comparison with the other three discussed is the style of government. Whereas the others currently have a constituted board of leaders who take decisions, this church in its current state has only the Pastor as the prominent decision-maker. Nevertheless, it has some refugees in the congregation and is not alien to the demands of this research. It did not produce any social action policy but offered information about their welfare scheme.

3.1.2.1 Written church documents

To understand the awareness and participation of the selected APCs regarding social ministry, relevant written documents that inform their mission practice in the area of social action were sought after as indicated in section 3.1. 2 (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Starcher et al., 2018:58).

Unfortunately, few of their activities are documented. The researcher was able to obtain evidence of a welfare scheme operational within the congregations and a document from P1's church on their volunteers' group. The welfare scheme aims to express godly love and provide a financial incentive for qualified church members. A collective summary of the welfare schemes of the selected APCs is presented in this section. It covers the following areas:

(i) *Farewell*: At some point in their lives some church members including refugees and asylum seekers return to their native countries, move to another European country, or relocate to another city within Germany. The reasons for such movement vary from person to person. Members who have served and worshipped with the congregation between 1 and 3 years, when they are relocating shall be paid a minimum amount of two hundred euros (200€). Those who have spent 3 to 5 years, shall be entitled to a minimum of five hundred euros (500€). For 6 years and beyond a minimum amount of one thousand euros (1000€) shall be paid.

(ii) *End of service*: Due to the hectic economic life of migrants, it is sometimes difficult to convince members to take up responsible task in the church. To encourage and appreciate those who offer themselves and their expertise to serve the church the welfare scheme recognises their efforts. For such appointed leaders, church secretaries and stewards an amount ranging from two hundred euros (200€) to one thousand euros (1000€) shall be paid as their end of service package.⁶²

⁶² This category of persons is not reassigned to another portfolio after serving in a leadership portfolio. What happens then is that a person so appointed serves in this office for many years.

(iii) *Childbirth*: Following the African identity of communal living, childbirth is seen as a community event. In these African churches, therefore, church members who give birth are supported. The amount of money given to beneficiaries depends on factors such as the number of births and the membership of the parents. If it is the first birth and only one of the parents is a member of the church, a minimum amount of two hundred euros (200€) is paid. If it is the first birth and both parents are members of the church, a minimum amount of four hundred euros (400€) is paid. For subsequent births, a minimum amount of one-hundred-euros (100€) is paid to a parent who is a member of the church and two-hundred-euros (200€) is the minimum when both parents are members of the church.⁶³

(iv) *Marriage*: When a member of the church gets married, a minimum of two hundred euros (200€) is paid. When both parties to the marriage are members of the church, three-hundred-euros (300€) is the minimum that is paid. This benefit is paid for marriages properly contracted in the customary sense and blessed by the Pastor.⁶⁴

(v) *Bereavement*: The immediate family of a church member who dies is paid a minimum amount of one thousand euros (1000€). In addition, two crates of soft drinks and two boxes of bottled water are also donated to the family. The death of a member's parent or child attracts a minimum amount of three hundred euros (300€). In addition, one crate of soft drinks and a box of bottled water is donated to support the bereaved family.

(vi) *Natural disaster and accident*: Depending on the case, a maximum amount of three hundred euros (300€) is paid to the affected individual.⁶⁵

⁶³ Usually, if a parent or the parents belong to an organisation within the church, they will also present gifts to the child.

⁶⁴ Sometimes, after the customary rites, the couple proceed to the law court or registrar of marriage to register the union. In either case, the couple are presented with what is due them.

⁶⁵ Events in this category are determined on their merit. The reason is that individual church members are encouraged to register with an insurance company and insure their property.

(vii) *End of year appreciation*: At the end of each year, a gift for church workers is decided upon by the welfare committee. Church workers appreciated include the Pastor, Sunday School teachers, driver(s), choirmaster, instrumentalists, church secretaries, stewards, and cleaners.

(viii) *Support for the sick and incapacitated*: members who fall sick and, as a result are unable to work, are paid a quarterly minimum amount of one hundred euros (100€) for 1 year. If such persons belong to an organisation in the church, the organisation has to support the affected member spiritually and physically.

(ix) *Support for special cases*: This covers cases of refugees and strangers who need urgent assistance. It also covers members who need assistance to pay their rent and other special cases. Donation in this circumstance is not bound by any regulation. In such situations, the welfare committee decides on the matter so presented.

(x) *Funfair*: During summer and at the end of each year save for the Covid-19 outbreak, games and parties are organised for church members and their associates. In some cases, this programme is organised in conjunction with other sister African churches. This gathering is meant to foster friendship and establish contacts among members of the African community.

In P1 and P2's churches, the welfare scheme is funded by a percentage of proceeds from the monthly tithe. In P3's church, it is funded by a fixed monthly contribution and in P4's church, it is funded by contributions from church members upon request.

The other document obtained from P1's church spells out how its volunteers' group was formed, membership rules, purpose, and scope of operation. It states:

"The association pursues directly and exclusively charitable purposes within the meaning of the tax code. The purpose of the association is to follow Christ. Our goal is to bring the Gospel closer to all peoples, to help people in need, achieve unity among one another and do beneficial work for the body of Christ. It seeks to spread Christian education, to help people in poverty and need and provide support in social

*weakness through the word of God. The association is selfless; it does not primarily pursue its own economic purposes”.*⁶⁶

The researcher’s source within P2’s church indicated that they have a social action policy put together in a document. Efforts at both the local and head office levels to obtain a copy proved futile. Further probing suggested that many of the social intervention programmes prosecuted by this church were in Africa rather than in Düsseldorf. They support infrastructural projects, disaster prevention campaigns and donate essential equipment to institutions. Since 2018, the church launched a five-year social action programme known as “Vision 2023” which focuses on poverty reduction, social justice, and ministry to the disabled (Amissah, 2020). Within the research area, however, no comprehensive effort was made to prosecute any social action programme during the period of the refugee crisis except the assistance offered to refugees upon a request.

The church’s mission statement found on a flyer however suggests that the church is committed to planting and nurturing healthy churches globally. These churches are expected to be responsible (physically and spiritually) and self-sustaining. They seek to promote virtues such as commitment, and good character. Such persons are required to impact their communities for Christ. According to this mission statement, the church’s mission focus is to win more members and establish healthy congregations. The social action bit that can be gleaned from the mission statement is the development of men, women and children of character. These are then expected to impact their communities. Social action in this case is instinctive and uncoordinated. They are open to supporting individual church members, volunteers and organisations who feel called to work with refugees and persons living on the streets.

P3 and P4’s churches indicated that they do not have any written social action policy. Their social engagement guidance is directly drawn from the biblical text. As and when the need arises, they show up and assist the needy.⁶⁷ Despite the absence of a written social action policy in these churches, they agree that social action forms an integral part of the church’s missiological task.

⁶⁶ The first selected APC in Düsseldorf, document on social ministry. Obtained electronically from the church’s office on January 23, 2021.

⁶⁷ Social action in their case is instinctive and unstructured. They are open to supporting individual church members, volunteers and organisations who feel called to work with refugees and persons living on the streets.

Like other areas of Pentecostal practice, they affirm that spontaneity characterises the social action programmes of their congregations in the research field.

3.2 FINDINGS AND EMERGED THEMES

From the raw data presented in both Phase One and Phase Two of the data collection process as demonstrated in this chapter, the following findings emerge:

- African refugees and asylum seekers have pressing needs such as language skills, basic legal orientation, emotional therapy/counselling, accommodation, financial and prayer support.
- Although APC leaders see themselves as missionaries sent by God to carry out mission in the research context, their response to the refugee crisis lacks proactivity and compassion.
- APCs' lack of proactivity stems from their priority in mission and negative past experiences with some African refugees and asylum seekers who received assistance in the hope that they were going to stay with the congregations, but disappeared.
- Despite their lack of proactivity in responding to the needs of the needy, the APCs remain agents for the integration of African refugees and asylum seekers in Düsseldorf.
- The use of identity as a tool for Christian mission, economic and social integration of African migrants in the research field was evident.
- There is lack of written social action policy within the APCs in Düsseldorf due to their oral orientation and calibre of personnel available to the congregations. The nature of the existing welfare scheme lacks compassion.
- African refugees and asylum seekers confessed to the use of creative survival tactics many of which are in conflict with their faith as Christians. Some of these survival tactics are marriage of convenience, pregnancy, LGBTQ+ identity, withdrawal, and creative stories.
- African refugees and asylum seekers demonstrated enormous faith in God to turn their situation around.
- Volunteerism is a paradigm for mission in the research context. This is due to the seeming difficulty on the part of the APCs in gaining access to refugee camps.

- Lack of public advocacy on the part of the APCs. Contrary to the expectations of many African refugees and asylum seekers, APCs did not engage in any form of public advocacy on their behalf.
- Weak relationship between the APCs and civil authorities. The APCs do not appear to have any formal channel of communication with state institutions or authorities.

The themes generated in this section were informed by the data that were collected. As already indicated in sub-section 1.7.3.2 of Chapter 1, data were provided by four leaders from the selected APCs, 20 African refugees/asylum seekers who are members of the selected APCs and an examination of written church documents.

The 13 themes that were generated from the data and presented in this chapter (for both Phase One and Phase Two) are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Themes of the study

Theme #	Theme description
Theme 1	Needs of African refugees and asylum seekers
Theme 2	APCs' understanding of mission
Theme 3	APCs' mission pattern and mindset
Theme 4	Volunteerism and mission
Theme 5	Survival tactics
Theme 6	Importance of the church
Theme 7	Identity and APCs' mission praxis
Theme 8	Welfare scheme versus social action policy
Theme 9	The church and social action
Theme 10	APCs and orality
Theme 11	Importance of personnel

Theme 12	Public advocacy
Theme 13	Church and state relationship

Some concluding remarks follow next to bring the chapter to a close.

3.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the data that were collected from the semi-structured online interviews with the selected APC leaders, and African refugees and asylum seekers which formed Phase One. It also presented data on written church documents of the selected APCs on their social ministry which formed Phase Two. Essential portions of the data collected from these two phases were presented in line with the research questions to project the voice of the research participants.

From the data collection, presentation and findings made, the researcher identified themes for analysis. The analysis and interpretation of the data collected in both Phases one (Chapter 4) and Phase Two (Chapter 5) take place in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION OF PHASE ONE

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This research focused on investigating the responses of APCs to the refugee crisis in Düsseldorf between 2015 and 2020. The data and themes generated in Phase One as presented in the previous chapter are analysed and discussed in this chapter. The analysis of the data is supported by relevant information to facilitate the reader's understanding of the situation. Through the data analysis, an effort is made to measure the place of compassion in the APCs' response to the plight of the vulnerable. The chapter also offers an interpretation of the collected data and concludes with several observations.

4.1 DATA ANALYSIS OF PHASE ONE

Following Braun and Clarke's (2013) steps of thematic analysis, this section discusses the data according to the themes that emerged from the data analysis.

4.1.1 RQ 1.1. What is the situation of African refugees in Düsseldorf and how have APCs responded to their plight?

The participants of this study were Christians from Africa, a continent known for its religious, communal, and humanistic culture. Although through migration the identity of migrants changes, some fundamental traits remain unaltered. This background imposes an obligation to assist one another.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Beyond these fundamental characteristics, APC leaders are in a privileged position whilst African refugees and asylum seekers are vulnerable. This is because older members of APCs have lived in Düsseldorf longer than their vulnerable counterparts. They have legal residence documents, are fluent in German and economically stable. Most of them live with their spouses and children. They are Christian leaders who have a mission to undertake. Socially, they are looked up to by many of their compatriots as role models. African refugees and asylum seekers, on the other hand, are vulnerable owing to the challenges confronting them. Some are in the process of regularising their stay, building a profile for employment, and overcoming integration barriers. The separation from their close relatives makes them emotionally volatile.

According to the collected data, refugees who have a family (spouse and children) are given separate accommodation from those who are single. The singles are paired in twos, threes, or fours, depending on the size of the room and the number of refugees assigned to the particular camp which they refer to as *Heim* (home). The situation of having to share a room with persons they do not know and who come from different cultural backgrounds generated a communication challenge.⁶⁹ This suggests that African refugees and asylum seekers have a challenge communicating with their colleagues from other continents who do not speak their language as well as with Germans who are their hosts (Währisch-Oblau, 2009).

From their narrations, the feeding system has been reformed over the period. Previously, meals were cooked for them. This system was revised so that in addition to the food, coupons were distributed to each refugee to buy some basic needs from designated shops. This arrangement did not allow the refugees to buy from other shops when a needed item was not found at the designated shops. The caveat on the coupon is that it cannot buy alcohol or cigarettes. The coupon system is currently converted into money that is paid to them monthly. In addition, some camps, however, still cook for them. This procedure has put each refugee in charge of his/her finances. Those who are frugal make some savings, however difficult, whilst the extravagant run out of money before the month ends.

The screening process appears to be the area where refugees expressed their frustrations the most. When they arrive, they are transported to a facility called the Anchor Centre. An Anchor Centre stands for arrival, decision, and return. The first of these were opened in 2015. Here they are received upon arrival and screened. When a decision is made on their asylum application, they are

⁶⁹ This challenge of striking a meaningful communication arose from the fact that they spoke different languages. It is important to mention that at this point they had not been offered the opportunity to study German. This language challenge has consequences for their economic life. The situation of the language barrier and economic opportunities was better until the outbreak of Covid-19. Due to language challenges and low educational background, many refugees and asylum seekers are mostly employed in the service sector of the economy. The most common kinds of jobs they hold include being a shop teller, and cleaners in restaurants, shops, hospitals, and old age homes. Later, some can move on into the transport sector as drivers and delivery men or women. Additionally, some are nurses and cooks in schools. The entrepreneurs amongst them set up Afro shops, and hairdresser and barbering salons. The Afro shops are very important to African refugees as they can buy foodstuffs and other ingredients to prepare local meals. The restrictions imposed on the service sector at the height of the coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak rendered many refugees jobless and economically handicapped. Considering the harsh conditions many of them suffered in their home countries, it was instructive that much dissatisfaction was expressed regarding their current situation. They however understood it to be a temporal phase of their struggle for security and economic liberation.

then transferred to the camps. This depends upon where a vacancy exists. Due to the urgency of the refugee situation in 2015/16, not all asylum seekers were screened at the Anchor Centres. Some had their screening conducted at the camps (MacGregor, 2018:1-7).⁷⁰

Whilst at the camp awaiting the final determination of their legal status, they are free to go to town and honour appointments. Regular checks are conducted to keep track of their movements. Previously, they were not allowed to travel beyond the city, but this restriction is currently relaxed. They were also not officially permitted to enter the job market to work and that is why their feeding is catered for by the authorities. They go through orientation courses to ease the integration process. Thus, refugees and asylum seekers only enjoy regulated freedom until their applications are determined.

When refugee status is granted, the individual is enrolled in a skill training programme called “*Ausbildung*”. This is to ensure that the individual becomes employable and not a burden to the state. This programme runs hand in hand with the language course. They are placed in a skill programme according to their preferred option. From this point onwards, the individual looks for a job and accommodation outside the camp to begin a new life. At each stage of waiting for a decision on an asylum application, whether at the Anchor Centre or camp, the individual sits on tenterhooks. Until they are done with their “*Ausbildung*”, the money paid to them for their upkeep is the same money they use as remittance to support their families back home. Economic freedom is therefore a critical issue refugees and asylum seekers face (Trines, 2019).⁷¹

From the data collected, African refugees and asylum seekers understand that they live in a context different from their original context. The difference is in terms of social, cultural, economic, political, and religious dimensions of life. The need for them to integrate to make a meaningful

⁷⁰ In Düsseldorf for example, tents were erected on parks to provide temporary accommodation for them until permanent structures were constructed. Those listed to be repatriated are kept in repatriation camps. When a favourable decision is made on an asylum application and the individual is transferred to a camp, further interviews are conducted. The period within which this process is completed depends on the circumstance of the individual.

⁷¹ In recent times, different states have adopted more progressive strategies to facilitate the integration of those refugees with secure residence status and those without it. These strategies include relaxation on prohibition of employment and increased access to private accommodation. Official integration policies now acknowledge the need to integrate refugees without a secure residence permit. The possibility now exists to work even with an insecure residence status. The effect of these changes on refugees may however differ from one state to the other.

living is foremost. This, however, requires support from different sources of which APCs are an important part owing to their unique place in the *missio Dei* as a compassionate community, with African orientation and experience as migrants. Indeed, APC leaders acknowledged the need to assist African refugees and asylum seekers. The data provided by APC leaders, African refugees, and asylum seekers are analysed thematically as follows:

4.1.1.1 Needs of African refugees and asylum seekers

The assistance African refugees and asylum seekers need, as shown in the data collected includes language skills, basic legal orientation, emotional therapy/counselling, accommodation, and financial and prayer support. These needs are fundamental to their survival as human beings and migrants in the research area. They fit into the conceptual framework developed for this research as discussed in section 2.6 of Chapter 2. Language support and legal orientation represent the call for physical compassion. Emotional therapy and counselling satisfy the demands of emotional compassion. Economic compassion finds expression in the financial assistance required by African refugees. Prayer for the needs of African refugees and asylum seekers expresses spiritual compassion (Harold, 2019:3-4; Trines, 2019).

(a) *Language Support* - The issue of language is so important that until one can gain some knowledge of it, opportunities for employment and integration become difficult to attain. Whilst going through the processes to obtain legal residence, letters are received and, appointments are to be honoured of which are expressed in German. Assistance to understand what is required of refugees at this stage becomes critical. To what extent can APCs construct a formal system to invite and support their kith and kin in this regard? As things stand now, assistance in this area is left with individual APC members to carry out informally. This is an important contribution toward their integration (Hämäläinen, 2019:122).

A structured language assistance mechanism in the church could attract many more African refugees and asylum seekers to join the church. Such a process will reduce the number of months that African refugees spend under the government-sponsored programme of integration for those whose applications are determined. By reducing the length of having to study and complete language courses, more time is afforded the individual to pursue economic goals or other

meaningful interests. In this way, the responsibility of church members having to find time to accompany a refugee to the migration/integration office or hospital appointment is reduced if not eliminated.

(b) *Basic legal orientation* – This is further assistance which African refugees and migrants in general require. German society, from the perspective of a foreigner, is disciplined and legalistic. Ignorance of the law does not do a foreigner any favours. Legal orientation is a simple exercise African refugees require of APCs who have lived in the system for many years as part of their social ministry focus to save them from falling foul of the law.

Also, a body of such legal knowledge will assist refugees in their screening interviews. Sometimes they find life difficult in this context because they are not even aware of their rights and the opportunities available to them. In this regard, the idea of basic legal orientation becomes imperative. Although some basic legal information is given as part of their integration courses, APCs can also contribute in terms of legal knowledge.

(c) *Emotional support* – This condition of refugees and asylum seekers is understandable. Their emotions swell up from the conditions they faced back home that necessitated their migration, the near-death experiences on their journey to Europe, especially for those who journeyed by sea, and the inhumane treatment to which they are sometimes subjected by security personnel, their fellow asylum seekers, and even privileged people from their home countries whom they have come to trust. Those who have left a spouse, children, or an elderly parent back home and cannot reach them, or extend financial support to them talk about these stories with a lot of emotion. Those who were affluent in their home countries but are now living in poverty recollect their past with emotion. Emotion is the reason for the withdrawal tactic of some African refugees and asylum seekers (MacGregor, 2018:1-7).

In the face of all these emotional conditions, APCs cannot remain just a body for spiritual tuition. Structured friendships and mentoring relationships ought to be developed in the church to complement counselling sessions which the pastors conduct. Pastoral counselling for refugees is important to get them on a strong footing. Such a step is likely to put in check the incidence of

profuse anger, scuffles, and other deviant behaviour usually synonymous with the underprivileged. This is because some of these unhealthy behaviours are a symptom of deeper emotional issues within the individual (Hanciles, 2021:30-32, 128-137).

Recognition of refugees and asylum seekers as persons with emotional bottlenecks underscores the importance of emotional compassion as shown in section 2.6 of Chapter 2. From the interviews, one gets the sense that despite all the expression of emotions, there was a sense of optimism that the future is going to be bright. This sense of hope arising from the examples of those who preceded them, from prayers offered and from faith in God appears to be a very important sustaining factor for African refugees and asylum seekers in Düsseldorf. The belief in the God-factor was very strong in their expressions. Many of them referred to this common cliché among the migrant community: “What God cannot do does not exist.” In this way, they emphasise their unwavering faith in God to turn things round in their favour just as he did for the Israelites in Egypt (Ireland (ed.), 2017:25).

(d) *Financial support* – This is one key issue flowing through the interview sessions with both the APC leaders, on the one hand, and the African refugees, on the other hand. Whilst living at the camps, the African refugees acknowledged that a monthly allowance is provided by the state but that is not enough. This is understandable because even as asylum seekers and refugees, the financial responsibility towards family and friends back home is enormous. The APCs, from unfortunate past experiences, are reluctant to open their doors fully for African refugees and asylum seekers to access financial assistance. As noted from the data, they assist as and when a request is brought before leadership, except in one APC where a monthly offering is taken to support the transport costs of refugees in the church.

Underneath this closed-fisted approach are two issues: first, APCs do not want to create a dependency syndrome. This is understandable considering that they do not have infinite resources and that the needs of these desperate compatriots will not disappear anytime soon (Ireland (ed.), 2017:28-31). Second is the issue of mistrust on the part of the APCs. This mistrust has consequences for both the mission efforts of the APCs and the economic state of the underprivileged in the church. In trying to exercise caution so as not to be taken advantage of by

unscrupulous persons, the church may inadvertently deny support to a genuine claimant who perhaps failed to articulate the assistance needed in clear terms or presented a less than convincing case.

This challenge may not just bedevil the relationship between APCs and African refugees in the church. It could be the bane drifting apart privileged African minority groups from vulnerable African minority groups. In this context, the responsibility lies with APCs to ensure that their commitment to assist the underprivileged financially is not abused. To refrain from assisting because of past bitter experiences is unbiblical, immoral, and unethical on the part of the church. Situations like this are a wake-up call for the church to reflect on who they are and what defines them as discussed in section 2.4 of Chapter 2 (Hadjiev, 2018:520-527; Bosch, 2011:23-24).

The difference in response to financial assistance for African refugees and asylum seekers by APCs is intriguing. Is it to be assumed that the congregation which organises a monthly contribution for the refugees in the church has not had any previous unfortunate experience with African refugees. If they have, like the others, what then motivates them to continue to open themselves to possible abuse? Here the importance of identity comes to the fore. The APCs' identity as a compassionate community, which was affirmed in the data that were collected, must be defining their response to social challenges. The consciousness of who they are does not permit them to change their identity because of who they are dealing with.⁷²

A reflective exercise to imagine what the contribution of African refugees and asylum seekers who left the church would have been if they had stayed can encourage APCs to overcome the element of mistrust and to continue to assist the needy, both as a duty and also in the hope that they would stay and contribute meaningfully to the *missio Dei*.

⁷² Another scenario that comes to mind in evaluating the attitude of the church in the context of discussions here is their familiarity with the different phases of a refugee's life. From a cursory guess, nearly 70% of APC members have gone through the process of seeking asylum in the past. Although this experience should have made them more proactive toward the plight of African refugees, this does not appear to be the case, and instead they are quite laid back. They went through it and therefore these current African refugees will also survive. This notwithstanding, all the APC leaders interviewed pointed to being the people of God entrusted with a mission as their foremost identity. This claim is however determined by what they do rather than what they confess.

(e) *Accommodation* – Inadequate accommodation was a common theme in the data collected. Whilst the government cannot be faulted considering the number of refugees and asylum seekers received into the country and the circumstances surrounding their arrival, the complaint about inadequate accommodation requires special attention (Hinger, 2020:2). This is because irritation arising out of this challenge could cause constant quarrels among inmates. This can destabilise the peace at the camps. It could also trigger a health hazard in the current era of pandemics.

(f) *Prayer* – Prayer in its core nature is good. Both African refugees/asylum seekers and APC leaders value prayer as an important spiritual intervention (see section 2.1 of Chapter 2). The importance of prayer for the refugees and asylum seekers justifies the concept of ‘spiritual compassion’ discussed in section 2.6 of Chapter 2. In Africa, most of the population depends on God or a deity through prayer for food, water, shelter, promotion, protection, and nearly every necessity of life. This religious orientation suggests that for occasions like going to see a lawyer, attending interviews for a residence permit and daily interactions with authorities, God must be involved. God is always at the forefront of the African’s consciousness as the unseen cause of events (Montgomery, 2012; Hämäläinen, 2019:117-118). It is against this background that the element of prayer becomes crucial in the life of African migrants.

Some refugees and asylum seekers have testimonies to share on how, through prayer, their lives were turned around. As a place of prayer then, the church represents a source of inspiration for many African refugees and asylum seekers. This is not to suggest that prayer cannot be said anywhere apart from the church. But its symbolism and connection to the faith of many African refugees and asylum seekers is massive.

APC leaders’ view of prayer in relation to Christian mission is important. Such a view takes Christian mission out of the realm of human control and supervision. Christian mission is rightly placed in its natural habitat when it is committed to prayer. For God is the source of Christian mission. Thus, the assistance APCs offer to refugees and asylum seekers is not only physical but spiritual too. The provision of both spiritual and physical assistance addresses the needs of refugees and asylum seekers holistically. It also fully fulfils the APCs’ responsibility in the *missio Dei* (Allen, 2020:52).

However, since prayer involves emotion, refugees and asylum seekers who are already emotional due to their difficult experiences, may abuse prayer. Abuse of prayer suggests a situation where personal physical effort is neglected with the excuse of prayer. The time and effort needed to upgrade oneself is used in prayer (Larbi, 2001:447; Warrington, 2015:19). Due to the possible abuse of prayer by disadvantaged persons such as refugees and asylum seekers, APCs will need to find a way of helping them to create a fine balance between reliance on prayer and the need to stay responsible. To stay responsible here means committing oneself to studying German, obtaining the right information, and choosing the right apprenticeship programme to boost their chances of integration.⁷³

Again, except for P1's church which took the initiative to form a volunteers' group to reach out to the refugees and place their social services at their disposal, the rest waited for the refugees to locate them or get invited to church by a member. It is then that a request for assistance is made to the church. Whatever their reasons are, the question that arises is: How does this approach reflect on the APCs' call to participate in the *missio Dei*? (Ireland (ed.), 2017:19-25; Harold, 2019:1-2).

This approach to Christian mission implies that apart from those refugees who take the initiative to come to the church, many others who do not take such a step do not get any assistance. The church thus deprives itself of the opportunity to share the gospel with them and identify itself as a compassionate community. This attitude also exposes the gap between the theory and the practice of mission. The theory of mission refers to their ability to relate the refugee crisis to social justice passages in the Bible. It also refers to the oral confession of the need to show compassion to the poor. This proposition, however, runs contrary to what is happening is the practice of mission.

⁷³ These details needed for integration may not come by prayer. APCs with their experience and stability in the research field may need to guide current African refugees and asylum seekers to strike a healthy balance between prayer and personal responsibility. In the event where after years of praying things do not go according to plan, they may blame God and lose faith in prayer when this is not done. To guide against a possible abuse of prayer is essential to the integration of African refugees and asylum seekers.

4.1.2 RQ 1.2. How do APC leaders see themselves, interpret their migration as well as the refugee crisis in relation to mission?

4.1.2.1 APCs' understanding of mission

The APCs' understanding of mission is crucial. It dictates their response to a situation such as a refugee crisis. APCs conceive of mission largely as the proclamation of the gospel and prayer in the power of the Holy Spirit or, as suggested by some scholars, they prioritise evangelism over social action (Kärkkäinen, 2004:30). This claim is supported by the argument made around the concept of 'Progressive Pentecostalism' in section 2.6 of Chapter 2, by the lack of proactivity in undertaking social ministry as revealed by the data collected, by Adedibu's (2016) work in London referred to in section 2.5 of Chapter 2 and by Währisch-Oblau's (2009) work.

The APCs' response to and understanding of mission are related (Bevans and Schroeder, 2011:328-330). APC leaders are not ambiguous about what they think of themselves concerning mission in the research context. They perceive themselves as God's people sent to do mission in Europe. This notion has no reference to how they arrived in Europe. Their understanding of mission is tied to their self-perception (Bosch, 2011:23-24).

Their self-perception as missionaries sent by God to carry out mission in the research field and beyond, relative to what they are actually doing, raises the question of their conception of mission and whether they are engaged in migrant mission or reverse mission (Adogame, 2010:68-70). This is because in the data mentioned in section 3.1.1.1 of Chapter 3, P4, in particular, made a profound statement in relation to this issue:

“Since I arrived here, I have not forfeited my mission. If I were in Africa, I would have gone further but in Europe Christianity is different. But we are pushing on and through us, God will change Europe's mentality about Christianity. So, my migration to Europe is God's divine appointment to shape certain things in this area for Christianity in this part of the world to stand firm. We need to attack the principalities that are here in Europe so that they will not downgrade Christianity. Else, let us say in 50 years we will not have Christianity in Europe again. We want to do mission

work so that Christianity will continue to exist in Europe so that our children will not lose their faith”.

This statement by P4, the argument raised in section 2.2.1, and Walls’ assertion in section 2.3 of Chapter 2 that due to migration from the south to the north, Africa has not only become part of Western society but its Christianity too, points to a certain conclusion (Walls, 2017:51). It suggests the possibility of reverse mission by African Christians in Europe. But using the example of the Apostolic Faith Mission International Ministries, Sande and Samushonga (2020) suggest that most of the mission praxis of African Pentecostals in the Global North cannot be described as a reverse mission. This is because their mission activities are focused on their own people (Sande & Samushonga, 2020:18-19). For APCs’ missionary activities to achieve the status of reverse mission, they will need to liberate their mission praxis from heavy concentration on cultural/ethnic and territorial emphasis. The issue of “de-Africanising” their liturgy to accommodate non-Africans becomes important in this regard.

This notwithstanding, their self-perception as missionaries sent by God to do mission in Europe points to two profound missiological conceptions. One, it points to the fact that in contemporary times, looking at the West for mission is tantamount to looking into the history of mission since they led in the spread of Christian mission centuries ago. Two, looking at the south represented by the APCs for mission means looking into the future of mission in the world (Yeh, 2016:6; Sanchez et al., 2021:2).

From the data, the composition of the APCs, their conception of mission as proclamation and prayer in the power of the Holy Spirit, and their response to the refugee crisis, suggests that currently their missionary activities can best be described as migrant mission. Nonetheless, in migrant mission, there are seeds of reverse mission. This is because, in the neighbourhood, natives on the streets or from their apartments see the movement of worshippers, and hear the drums, songs, and sermons of the APCs from their auditoriums. The argument here is that although migrant and reverse mission are distinct, they remain related.

Nevertheless, the APCs' underlying reason for their response suggests the importance of the Bible and Christian faith to APCs in the research context. By quoting some Bible verses to underscore their reason for assisting the poor, they demonstrate the centrality of the Bible in their operations. What appears not to have come out clearly from the APC leaders' application of the Bible passages they quoted is their ability to categorically look at the poor as representing the "sacramental presence" of Jesus Christ amongst them (Rivera-Pagán, 2013:42-45; Matthew 25:31-46). This is important because in the parable (Matthew 25:31-46), the nations were judged for failing to recognise the fact that whatever was done for the poor was done for Jesus Christ.

Such recognition tends to change completely how a refugee or asylum seeker is evaluated and responded to when they request support. Even when they have not requested assistance the usual suspicion held against them can be reduced if not eradicated. And this is the truth those who were judged for not supporting the 'poor, sick, stranger and prisoner' faced in the parable recorded in Matthew 25:31-46. Their lack of compassion and love became their undoing.

This aside, the APCs responded to the needs of African refugees and asylum seekers who approached them. The concerns raised by those interviewed were not to the effect that any of them personally had a request turned down. Their issues covered areas of assistance they think APCs should pay attention to. This situation highlights the issue of the expectations of refugees and asylum seekers. As was noted in the data collected, to APCs, sometimes the expectations of refugees and asylum seekers are a bit too high. APCs are therefore faced with the task of managing the expectation levels of refugees and asylum seekers. This then becomes part of the APCs' response to the plight of the underprivileged.

In responding to their plight, some financial cost is incurred. The cost incurred by the APCs was not remitted to the civil authority for refund as some state-recognised churches do. The APCs consider such gestures as their Christian duty. This notion was fuelled by biblical passages on giving to the poor and needy. It was also influenced by the communal living of Africans. It could also be that their 'illegal' status prevented them from taking such a step. Judging how responses were offered, i.e., upon a request from a refugee or asylum seeker, one is inclined to suggest that the APCs' understanding of mission is not comprehensive. It is heavily centred on the

proclamation of the gospel. This act of proclaiming the gospel outweighs the act of undertaking social ministry. The assistance offered to the needy and other social responsibilities they undertake appears to be an addendum to what the APCs deem as mission (Amissah, 2020: 153-156, 163-168; Harold, 2019:2).

Again, it does appear that after listening to the request of a refugee/asylum seeker and offering some assistance, no conscious effort exists to put this category of persons into a group for discipleship and counselling. Once in the church, they grow alongside the older members. Counselling is offered on an individual basis. The lack of a discipleship programme specifically designed for refugees and asylum seekers in the church has implications for their commitment to mission in the research area. At least we can infer from the New Testament account that those whom Jesus Christ discipled and their associates were the people who led the spread of the gospel after his resurrection (Acts 1-28). A holistic understanding of mission would require that special attention is paid to the growth of refugees and asylum seekers who are in the church.

From the data, therefore, the APCs' lack of proactivity in responding to the plight of African refugees and asylum seekers is evidence that their quest to pursue the concept of 'Progressive Pentecostalism' (see section 2.6 in Chapter 2) as a means of mitigating the imbalance inherent within Pentecostalism's approach to mission has not fully been embraced by APCs in the research context. The situation of leaning towards the proclamation of the gospel and individual members' religious experience of the Holy Spirit as representing mission is still prevalent among the APCs. This understanding of mission is in contrast with what pertains in other Christian groups such as the Methodists, Anglicans, and Roman Catholics, to mention a few. In these churches, the quest to correct social injustice is adequately part of their ethos and ecclesiology (see section 2.5 of Chapter 2, Amissah, 2020:153-156, 163-168; Harold, 2019:2).

The data analysed here confirms the observation that the Pentecostal movement is known for its emphasis on salvation in Christ and the place of the Holy Spirit in the life of the worshipper (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2005:12). It also lends support to the criticism that like their Evangelical counterparts, Pentecostals usually neglect social action as a priority area in contrast to Catholic - based communities (Myers, 2015:116; Burdick et al., (eds.), 1993:20).

4.1.2.2 APCs mission pattern and mindset

The APC leaders' self-conception of who they are and what constitutes mission shapes their pattern of mission. The leaders' responses showed their mission pattern and mindset. Although APC leaders have a strong conviction of being God's missionaries to transform Christianity in Europe, none of those interviewed alluded to a direct message or command from God to travel to Germany for mission. They arrived at such a conclusion upon reflection on the sequence of events in their life and ministry. This conviction shows the centrality of God in the African Christian's daily pursuits. It also highlights the mindset of the APCs in the research field regarding mission.

However, they appear to neglect refugee camps as a mission field. This was evident from the data collected. The proactivity to designate refugee camps as a mission field, and with permission from appropriate authorities, to share Christian love with them is currently not a priority. So far, the majority of the refugees of African extraction whom the APCs have attracted searched for them online or by themselves. Members of the church invited others. This signifies a weak relationship between the APCs as a privileged minority and the African refugees, a vulnerable minority. This weakness is a pattern that cuts across the operation of African churches in the research context. Informal relationships have so far become a major means by which African refugees are invited into the African churches.⁷⁴

One more issue associated with the mission pattern and mindset of APCs in the research field is the expectation that assistance offered to African refugees must result in the increase of church membership or conversion. This appears to be a defective assumption of what social ministry is intended for within the context of compassionate mission. The church's focus in engaging in social action must be to express God's love and affirm its identity as a people of God. The expectation for conversion must not be the foremost priority of the church when it engages in social ministry (Bosch, 2011:119).

⁷⁴ Although APCs engage in outdoor evangelism, they do not specifically target the refugee camps. They are occasionally found at the train station, Afro shops, bus stops, hairdresser's salons, barber's shops, and at vantage points sharing evangelism tracts. This method is effective as most people usually in that context are constantly on the move to catch the train or bus. Before they do this exercise, some official bureaucratic formalities are satisfied.

Five reasons account for the mission pattern of APCs deduced from the responses of their leaders interviewed:

The first is the non-registration of some African denominations as alluded to by P2. Since some of them are not yet registered with city authorities, engaging in any public overtures becomes difficult. This non-registration is a result of the illegal status of some of their members and key leaders. They currently do not have a legal resident permit or are in the process of acquiring one. Until then, going to authorities for registration will only mean exposing all these people for questioning and eventual repatriation to their home countries (Hinger, 2020:6-8).

The second is the non-registration of some Africans as refugees with the camps. Although 'refugees', they are not registered with the camps. They have managed to find accommodation elsewhere. Therefore, reaching out to them as a group becomes difficult as the law classifies them as illegal migrants rather than refugees (MacGregor, 2018:1-7; Hinger, 2020:1-27).

Thirdly, the efficient government social welfare system and the presence of functional NGOs like Caritas International, Stay Düsseldorf (Stay! Düsseldorfer Flüchtlingsinitiative), Pacesetters, Johanniter, and the "*Diakonie*", have weakened the urgency of APCs' social ministry toward refugees. Mission, in my opinion, is both universal and contextual. Therefore, prevailing circumstances in each context have a lot to do with how it is done. However, if the state can trust and encourage NGOs to work closely with refugees and to have unfettered access to the camps, why not APCs? The most probable reason would be the government's fear of religious groups proselyting the refugees. Whilst this situation ultimately reduces the incidence of religious conflict in the camps, it deprives the church of the quest to evangelise and relate better with the refugees and asylum seekers as a compassionate community.

Fourthly, the majority of APC pastors in the research area have other sources of income besides church work. Some are taxi drivers or businessmen so that they can supplement their income to support their families. This situation tends to divide their attention. Whilst recognising this fact, the situation could also be engineered as a means of doing mission when properly thought through.

Thus, they could become missionaries through their secular professions. Such a mission model allows them to reach out to African refugees, other nationals, and natives as well.⁷⁵

Since it is difficult to evangelise native Germans, APCs are left with the challenge of devising a means to reach out to African nationals scattered within the research area and in Europe. The other alternative is to revise their practices to suit the religious quest of non-African nationals. This reflection suggests that within the research context, an opportunity for the proclamation of the gospel and social action for APCs exists not only at the refugee camps but also within the inner city and at the deportation camps. Converts made at the deportation camps could relate with their branches back home or any credible church in their native country in Africa. This is important for the spiritual and emotional stability of the deportees. At this point, many are disappointed and the thought of having to go home empty-handed dampens their spirits. Recognising them as a mission field and offering them hope and strength through the Word of God could go a long way to sustain them.

Fifthly, the accusation of insincerity against some African refugees and asylum seekers who in the past approached APCs for assistance has made them reluctant to get involved. This is one of the commonest challenges militating against the APCs' quest to practice compassionate mission among African refugees and asylum seekers. But the recurrence of this attitude on the part of some African refugees may result from desperation and the quest to survive.

4.1.2.3 Volunteerism and mission

The importance of volunteers and volunteer groups for mission forms part of the mission pattern in Düsseldorf. Humanitarian crises such as wars, earthquakes, famines, and pandemics which result in mass migration usually require a multifaceted approach to handle the situation. At the peak of the refugee crisis in Germany between September 2015 and 2018, some volunteer groups

⁷⁵ Within the German religious culture however, attempts by migrant Christian groups to evangelise Germans are abhorred by even Christian groups like the Protestant churches. It is this culture that plays out in determining how much access APCs can have to the camps. Währisch-Oblau (2009) throws light on this issue stating that the right to organise worship services using one's own language and tradition is one that the German society encourages, but when migrant Christians begin to extend their evangelistic activities toward Germans then a conflict arises with the Protestant church.

sprang up both within and outside of the church just like anywhere else in the world to render services to the refugees at the camps and in the neighbourhood (Reinhard, 2016:81-94).

In most instances, the volunteer groups outside of the church received support from churches and individuals. But the support received from the churches was not meant to remunerate them. They acted altruistically with the sole aim of helping the refugees. The work these groups did highlights the place of volunteerism in Christian mission in such a context. It also brings to the fore the motivation of volunteers within human society (Smith and Kramer, 2015:2).

Apart from the volunteers' group from P1's church, the *Diakonie* and other NGOs as discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2, in the context of this research, the researcher finds the response of "Ökumenische Flüchtlingshilfe" (Refugee Aid) in Kaiserswerth-Düsseldorf compelling. This group is of interest to the researcher because of their mode of operation and the results produced.⁷⁶ In partnership with churches in Kaiserswerth, the group operated for three years from 2015. It registered 45 refugees who hailed from Syria, Morocco, Chechenia, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Yugoslavia. The churches took turns in organising tea sessions with the refugees and their helpers once a month. No attempt was made to proclaim the gospel to the refugees during these meetings. Four sessions were organised for the refugees by the volunteers daily. These were teaching sessions, children's sessions, logistics sessions, and social work.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ A couple who had retired but still felt they needed to give back to society formed this group. It offered services to refugees in Kaiserswerth, a rich neighbourhood in Düsseldorf. As is the pattern in Düsseldorf, they sold the idea to the Roman Catholic Church, Evangelical churches, and residents of Kaiserswerth. The churches and the community bought into the idea and offered financial support to the group. Soon, retired teachers, social workers and some lawyers in active practice made their services available to the group for free.

⁷⁷ (i) Teaching Session: During this session, monies provided by the churches were used to purchase relevant books for use by the refugees. The retired teachers took them through and helped them complete assignments. To facilitate their integration and make them economically marketable, language lessons were also offered during this session.

(ii) Children Session: This session was created to spend time with the children. They were also taught and taken through kindergarten lessons. Within this session, time was created to play with the children to help make them feel at home.

(iii) Logistics Session: At this session, clothes, footwear, furniture, electric gadgets, and other items donated by residents of Kaiserswerth were cleaned and displayed for sale. For psychological reasons, the refugees were asked to pay twenty cents for any item purchased. This session was also dedicated to helping refugees who wanted accommodation outside the camps to look for flats in the city. The rent for these flats was paid by the churches.

(iv) Social Work: This session helped with translation of letters served, and filing of papers/documents. It also dealt with issues that required legal attention. Two lawyers who had volunteered handled this session. Fees that had to be paid at the law courts were settled from the donations received from the churches. Emotional and psychological issues were appropriately catered for during this session by volunteers with competence in these areas. To ensure

The main motivation of the volunteers was altruism. They saw the refugee situation as an opportunity to assist humanity (Ireland (ed.), 2017:27). By so doing, they also got their bodies and brains active as retirees. Those who were curious about foreigners got the chance to work with them and realign their perceptions. No consideration was given to the gender, ethnic, or religious identity of the refugees. The basic qualification for receiving assistance was being a refugee and vulnerable. Although the churches did not go into the camps to preach the gospel, through this volunteers' group, they were able to extend godly love to the refugees. The work of this volunteers' group is similar to what the "*Diakonie*" does. The difference is that, whereas the members of the "*Diakonie*" are Christians and therefore fundamentally motivated by their Christian beliefs to do good, this volunteers' group did not operate from such a background. Both groups, however, offered purely social service without any religious trappings.

Nonetheless, some refugees, on the back of what the churches did through the volunteers generally, became converted to Christianity. This claim is according to the researcher's source in the volunteers' group (Refugee Aid). Currently, the majority of the refugees who participated in their sessions are gainfully employed and contributing meaningfully to the socio-economic situation in Düsseldorf and elsewhere (Trines, 2019).

The work done by volunteer groups in partnership with the church was successful because suspicion of conversion that usually characterises the church's social action efforts was eliminated. The church was not at the forefront of this social engagement. It led from behind. Its desire to win souls through conversion was indirectly achieved albeit not the primary focus. This partnership offers a model for social action by the church in Europe. In part, it allows the church to concentrate on the proclamation of the gospel whilst in the same breath through volunteer groups engaging in social action (Sanchez et al., 2021:10).

This model, however, raises questions about the place of compassion in mission, ownership, accountability, and character development. This is because the motivation and ethics of volunteers who are not Christians may be different. The framework within which Christian volunteers are

confidentiality and effective managements of their concerns, each refugee was assigned to a specific helper. Overall, every need of these refugees brought to the attention of this volunteer's group was taken care of.

required to carry out social action is Bible-based. This observation is not meant to suggest that non-Christians cannot exercise Christian virtues such as compassion. The point rather is that compassion defines the church's social engagement (Ireland (ed.), 2017:36-37; Morita, 2019:1).

Another observation from this model is the issue of ownership and accountability. With this collaboration, the church in a sense loses ownership over an important part of the *missio Dei*. A sense of ownership over social action programmes has a way of instilling virtues such as diligence and compassion in church volunteers. The church deprives itself of the opportunity to raise diligent, selfless, and compassionate people when it fails to engage directly in social action. Young people in the church who need such an experience to strengthen their character do not get it.

The long-term success of the collaborative model where the church partners with volunteer groups outside its fold depends on their ability to share in the common vision of securing the welfare of people on the margins and staying accountable to each other. When one reflects upon this mission model employed by the Roman Catholic and some Evangelical churches, the churches engaged in social action from behind. This model runs contrary to the ones whereby the church itself is at the forefront of its social ministry like we noted in P1's church. Also, the mission strategy of the Salvation Army readily comes to mind. They fully fulfil the missiological demands of Matthew 25:31-46. Their leaders focus on ways in which the Army can contribute to the well-being of a broken and blighted society rather than the observance of religious rituals (Winston, 1999:5-8; Wolf-Branigin, 2017:157-162).⁷⁸ Through its model, Salvation Army allows its members to put into practice biblical virtues and concepts such as love, compassion, kindness, longsuffering, mercy, patience, and empathy.

⁷⁸ The Salvation Army is a religious group noted in many parts of the world for their emphasis on the provision of humanitarian services as a way of transforming the society. Their volunteers are members of the Salvation Army. Unlike the Roman Catholic and Evangelical churches in Düsseldorf, the Salvation Army appears to thrive mainly through the humanitarian services it provides in the communities.

This is no surprise because its founder William Booth in stating his vision and in fact the group's mission intimated that, they (Salvationists) serve God by saving souls and redeeming a fallen world. By redeeming the world, he meant facing its challenges (poverty, unemployment, alcoholism, and prostitution) and turning its secular idioms (advertisements, music, and theatre) into spiritual texts (Winston, 1999:8).

In many contexts, whereas churches provide social services as an addendum to the preaching of the gospel, the Salvation Army seem to dwell much more on providing social ministry. Their fundamental theology directly takes advantage of prevailing economic and social circumstances.

The effort to support the broken and marginalised in society is a top priority for Salvationists. The Salvation Army's mission strategy is worth mentioning in the light of the collaboration between the traditional churches and volunteer groups in Kaiserswerth. The objective in both situations is to alleviate the suffering of the poor and marginalised. The motive and framework within which a church carries out social action may be different from that of a non-Christian volunteers' group. The church's social action programme is based on the dictates of the Bible and the demands of the *missio Dei* to produce compassionate responses. As argued earlier in section 2.6 of Chapter 2, social action carried out under the auspices of the church must be done with compassion (Ireland (ed.), 2017:36-37; Wolf-Branigin, 2017:157-162). Whereas one cannot categorically suggest that the same work done by volunteers outside the church is devoid of compassion, it may not be fundamental to their operations. Reasons such as curiosity, and enrichment of one's curriculum vitae (CV) for once being a volunteer may well be the motivating factors.

When the motive for engaging in social action is not altruistic, the whole idea of volunteerism collapses. The propensity for such complications is the more reason the church must have its internal volunteers to carry out social action as was the case in P1's church. Biblical principles and the demands of the *missio Dei* inform the church's social action activities, and this makes it unique (Ireland (ed.), 2017:37-39).

4.1.3 RQ 1.3. How have African refugees survived and how do their survival tactics reflect on the mission work of APCs in the research context?

4.1.3.1 Survival tactics

This section raises ethical questions about the choices of African refugees and asylum seekers in the context of survival. Questions about the rightness or otherwise of survival tactics they employ, and the alternative consequences should they decide not to rely on them come to the fore. When asylum applications are made, they are classified into two groups, namely: those who are likely to be granted a stay and those who are not. This distinction is usually based on the safety profile of the applicant's country of origin. Applicants from countries considered safe in all probability are likely to have their applications rejected. They are considered economic migrants. These are

deemed to have migrated voluntarily in search of better jobs and living conditions. The decision to grant an applicant a stay or otherwise is therefore based on their nationality (Hinger, 2020:5-9). As such, applicants from safe countries must come up with reasons that are compelling enough to support their application. There are others whose condition requires that they come up with creative tactics to survive. It is here that the survival tactics arise. Survival tactics, as the name implies, comprise any means by which a person's chances of living and obtaining a favourable decision on an asylum application is increased. It is therefore devoid of ethics on the part of many refugees and asylum seekers. The sole aim is to project a solid case so that an applicant survives the fate of being sent home or dying (Cuèllar, 2018:501).

African refugees and asylum seekers in the APCs demonstrated knowledge of survival tactics within the research context. They were also aware that these survival tactics lack ethics, but for the sake of the greater good they are compelled to employ them. These survival tactics cut across the refugee population and may be prevalent in other contexts too. They are employed irrespective of the individual's religious inclination as the sole aim is to survive.

The decision to declare oneself as a member of the LGBTQ+ community when, in fact, that may not be the case, appears extreme but effective. This is because it is an extremely private matter which may be difficult to dispute. Again, owing to the public criticisms, criminalisation, and sometimes xenophobic attacks on members of the LGBTQ+ community in some parts of Africa, those who use this survival tactic are likely to receive more sympathy in open societies such as Europe.

Generally, these survival tactics have consequences for both mission and integration of refugees/asylum seekers. For instance, where a female refugee is compelled by circumstances to get pregnant or enter a marriage of convenience for permanent stay, the number of years spent on pregnancy and nurturing the child affects integration. A study conducted by the Institute for Employment Research in Germany lends support to this analysis. It discovered that five years after Germany offered protection to refugees, 60% of the men found employment, while the figure for the women was much lower at just 28%. The study corroborates the analysis here that childbearing consumes the time of women (Walls, 2021).

While the church is there to transform lives, its impact in this area of the individual's life seems to be minimal because of the reality of survival. These survival tactics, therefore, present a spiritual and ethical struggle to both APCs and African refugees/asylum seekers in the research context. Thus, on one hand, they know it is un-Christian to create such solutions. On the other hand, they acknowledge the need for the vulnerable to survive. This dilemma challenges the effectiveness of the church's mission in the research context.

The survival tactics of utilising identity for economic advantage and the withdrawal method appear calculated and less injurious to APCs' mission praxis. The use of identity to gain sympathy and economic advantage is real in the context. Naturally, members of an identity group are obliged to support one another. Identity, therefore, becomes a viable card for economic survival among Africans in Düsseldorf, just as it was for the Hebrews (see section 2.4 of Chapter 2). Although the church is a community and therefore members should share challenges and testimonies, a decision to lead a withdrawn life is within the individual's right. This survival tactic becomes an option owing to the issue of mistrust within this identity group. In a trustworthy group, members are more interactive and expressive.

Whilst religious institutions can position themselves as a credible context for receiving refugees and migrants, the APCs in the research context appear reactive. It could be suggested that the inability of APCs to put in place mechanisms for a stronger relationship between arriving African refugees and the church is partly to be blamed for the adoption of survival tactics by some. It is also possibly the reason for refugees' reliance on NGOs and other civil organisations for support most of the time. An effective social action policy and strategy for the proclamation of the gospel could be a winsome situation for both parties (Hanciles, 2021:30-32).

The reference to Abraham's story in Genesis 20:1-2 by R19, for example, to explain their means of survival, indicates how the life of the Jews as migrants serves as a template for contemporary migrants (see section 2.4 of Chapter 2). Thus, the struggle between ethics, spirituality, and survival is part of the life of vulnerable migrant minority groups. It is also fair to suggest that the heavy-handedness of authorities in refugee destination countries contributes to the survival tactics refugees employ. Abraham, for example, lied to secure the safety of his family due to the hostile

attitude of Egyptian authorities toward “Semitic-speaking immigrants” (Hoffmeier, 1997: 53-60). In general, however, it does appear that Christians who are refugees, such as those who were interviewed, acknowledge and depend upon God for survival. But in some instances, they overlook their relationship with God and opt for survival tactics that are ethically at variance to their Christian faith.

Much as this study obtained data from African refugees and asylum seekers, this discussion on survival tactics as noted earlier applies beyond this regional group. The use of survival tactics suggest that we can talk about a refugee as a status, a condition or both. This is because, for a person who employs a survival tactic to acquire legal documentation as a refugee is only a refugee by status. Refugees’ survival tactics reflect the bigger picture of suspicion and mistrust, both on their part and that of authorities. It also reflects the desperation to survive on foreign soil and an inherent weakness in the operational structure of moral institutions such as the church.

4.1.3.2 Importance of the church

The role of the church in the life of African refugees and asylum seekers partly influences their choices in the research context. Looking at the needs of African refugees in the research context, and the expectations they have for the church in general, APCs cannot present themselves to the refugees as only a place for spiritual and moral formation. For people who are running away from wars, persecutions, disasters, and economic deprivation, the church means more than a place of prayer and religious instruction (Ireland (ed.), 2017:19-25; Harold, 2019:1-11).

The impact of the response APCs offered to those who came to them further suggests their importance. APCs represent a family, a centre for education, culture, security, hope, identity, and integration. They are a context for receiving African refugees and asylum seekers and informally facilitating their integration.

From the researcher’s personal experience of African refugees and migrants in the research context, the opportunity to serve as a leader in the church is considered very special. This is understandable because, in the social and economic setting of the society, African refugees and migrants mostly do low skill jobs. This impinges on their self-confidence and psyche. Getting

appointed in any leadership position in the church offers a new platform to generate confidence and identity. The church, therefore, plays a key role in helping African refugees and migrants to rediscover their self-worth. It also helps them to affirm their identity as God's people.

Further, the opportunity which APCs offer them to relate with people they can connect with at the religious and social level means a lot. Thus, within the church, their identity as God's people and Africans are affirmed. These two identities converge within the space which APCs provide to enhance integration and ensure their well-being.

So far, apart from the APCs' lack of proactivity in their response to the plight of African refugees and asylum seekers, they also appear not to have taken advantage of the church asylum provision to assist asylum seekers from Africa whose application for a stay was unsuccessful. This provision is important to ensure that the legal court in deciding on an applicant's case did not overlook any right offered to such individuals by the law (see section 2.5.2 of Chapter 2).

The church in offering asylum to these underprivileged persons listens and reassesses their situation before mediating between them and the authorities. In activating this provision, the church relies on the German Constitution and international laws. During the period of church asylum, the cost of accommodation, feeding, clothing, counselling, and healthcare is taken care of by the church. The church also provides legal support to those under its care. Usually, the church depends upon donations to be able to undertake these responsibilities.⁷⁹

The German Ecumenical Committee on Church Asylum is made up of German Protestant, Catholic and Free Church parishes. These churches offer asylum to asylum seekers under the church asylum law which protects people from deportation. Through this action by the church, cases of unsuccessful asylum seekers are reopened and re-examined to help them to remain in the country. In some instances, pastors and their parishes are fined for breaching this provision.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Ecumenical Federal Working Group Asylum in the Church, (2022). *Warm welcome*, viewed 16 August, from www.kirchenasyl.de.

⁸⁰ German Ecumenical Committee on Church Asylum/CCME-Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (2011): Resource Guide: Day of Intercession (Remembrance_2011_Resource_Guide_EN) in memory of those who have died at the borders of the EU 2011. Information, Intercessions and Ideas. Information on church asylum can be accessed at: www.kirchenasyl.de.

In the case of the APCs, the challenges of a lack of permanent places of worship, accommodation facilities and insufficient funds account for their inability to make use of church asylum in their response to the plight of African refugees and asylum seekers rather than a lack of awareness of this provision. Responses provided by P2, for example, in Chapter 3 implicitly suggest this position of the researcher.

4.1.3.3 Identity and APCs' mission praxis

Identity is fundamental to the APCs' mission praxis in the research context. The issue of identity as was noted in Chapters 1 and 2, and throughout this dissertation, is key to the success or failure of APCs' mission praxis, particularly towards African refugees and asylum seekers. APCs have an identity as a compassionate community; their members are Africans and have experience as migrants, i.e., regular, irregular, and refugees/asylum seekers.

Consequently, APCs are organised along regional and ethnic/cultural identity lines. In some cases, members of the entire denomination come from one particular country, i.e., Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon etc. In others, denominations are made up of people from a particular region within the African continent, for example, West Africa, or Southern Africa. Although as the APC leaders alluded to in the data collected (see Chapter 3, section 3.1.1.1), Christian identity is the most important form of identity that influences their response to African refugees and asylum seekers, cultural/ethnic identity plays a key role in how each denomination is constituted.

The advantage of this kind of situation is that communication is made easier as in most cases, a common language is spoken. Cultural issues are easily catered for since members share similar cultures. Other subtle identity relationships occasioned by marriages with non-Africans, professions and old school associations also exist. All these relationships create a stronger bond upon which the religious faith climbs for its mission endeavours in the research context. It is therefore fair to suggest that identity, be it Christian, cultural/ethnic, or social, influences the direction of Christian mission among APCs in the research context.

All these identities are integral to first, the composition of APCs and second, their response to the demands of the *missio Dei* in the research context. For, without their experience as migrants, the

urgency to form a fellowship to pray may not have arisen (see section 1.1 of Chapter 1). Also, without the ability to communicate and relate meaningfully through similar ethnic/cultural backgrounds, maintaining and growing this fellowship may not have succeeded. Lastly, without their faith as Christians, there cannot be a church.⁸¹

4.2 INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA OF PHASE ONE

From the data collected and analysis conducted, there are no visible contradictions between the responses offered by the APC leaders and those of the refugees and asylum seekers in their congregations. The point of contention is the gap between the expectations of refugees and asylum seekers on one hand, and the APCs' lack of proactivity towards their needs on the other hand. Whilst the APC leaders suggested that the behaviour of African refugees and asylum seekers contributed to the lack of proactivity toward their needs, the latter suggested nothing to that effect. The data revealed the assistance which African refugees and asylum seekers require. It also offered some insights into their relationship with the APCs in the research context.

The data collected, themes generated, and analysis made, suggest that the relationship between mission and migration, mission and identity, identity and integration, and then compassion in mission form the bedrock of this research. The following interpretation is placed upon the themes generated from the data and analysis made in this chapter:

Firstly, whilst African refugees and asylum seekers have pressing needs, the APCs doubt whether some of them are refugees or economic migrants. P2, for example, categorically asserted this.

⁸¹ Although APC leaders suggested that their response to the needs of African refugees and asylum seekers was motivated by their identity as Christians, the latter came to them foremost because of their African identity. Their shared African identity was important in bringing them together as it is within the APCs that they can communicate better and be properly understood.

So, in the research context, as may be the case in other European cities, African immigrants usually look for churches made of members who come from their own ethnic/cultural tradition or country. If they do not find one or are not happy with the one they find, then they look for a church made of people from Africa. Very few Africans are found in existing German congregations. Those found in such congregations are mostly there because they are married to a German. This situation certainly makes a case for the importance of ethnic/cultural identity in the context of APCs' mission praxis.

Thus, the response of APC leaders that help offered to African refugees and asylum seekers was based only on their Christian identity prompts the question of how much value they place on their similar ethnic/cultural identity.

Although the researcher interviewed and presented data from persons who identified themselves as refugees and asylum seekers from Africa within the selected APCs, not all of them may qualify as refugees and asylum seekers according to the currently accepted definition of refugees and asylum seekers by the United Nations Convention on Refugees Report, 28th July, 1951 (UNHCR, 1951), as discussed in Chapter 1.

This is because, as stated in section 3.1.1.2, some of them can strictly be described as economic or ‘voluntary’ migrants. However, upon reaching Germany, they submitted themselves to authorities as asylum seekers to obtain a resident permit. Some of these individuals have lived and struggled in the research area for years and then at some point decided to opt for asylum. Since the APC leaders are aware of all these details, the researcher thinks that it contributes to the lack of proactivity in responding to the needs of persons classified as refugees and asylum seekers.⁸² What this situation prompts in the global scheme of things is a revision of the UN definition of a refugee to include persons who are running away from severe conditions of poverty and economic deprivation since poverty breeds insecurity even in the absence of wars, persecutions, and natural disasters.⁸³

Secondly, APCs’ mission pattern is influenced by their understanding of mission and prevailing circumstances in the research context. Their understanding of mission takes its source from the Pentecostal ecclesiology which generally defines mission in terms of the proclamation of the gospel, prayer, and the movement of the Holy Spirit. This understanding of mission drives practitioners towards a situation of church centredness rather than kingdom centredness (Harold, 2019:2; Amissah; 2020:153-168). The focus of church centredness is to win souls and build a siege mentality among members. The focus of kingdom centredness, on the other hand, is to win souls

⁸² A revision of the currently accepted definition for a refugee to include economic migrants would reduce the incidence of individuals or a group of persons becoming legally recognised as refugees only in status. This interpretation offered does not deny the fact that among the individuals classified as African refugees and asylum seekers some are genuine. Again, it does not deny the fact that APCs as a branch of the wider Pentecostal family do not offer equal attention to social justice issues in comparison to religious experience such as speaking in tongues, miraculous healing, exorcism, prophecies, and proclamation of the gospel even in the wake of ‘Progressive Pentecostalism’.

⁸³ This call for a revision of the UN definition of a refugee to include a category of economic migrants is worth considering. This is because, for some of these migrants, the average daily minimum wage of over 11 USD paid in many European countries is something that may never happen in their lifetime in their respective countries of origin.

but also make the presence of the church felt in the larger society through social ministry. Effective application of the concept of ‘Progressive Pentecostalism’, as discussed in section 2.6 of Chapter 2 leans towards kingdom centredness (Miller and Yamamori, 2007:2).

The APCs’ existence and ability to embark upon Christian mission owe their source to the migration of Africans to the research context. Both the history of the formation of APCs and their current composition attest to this. This is aided by the fact that at some point, migrants depend upon religious faith for strength to face their many social, economic, cultural, and spiritual challenges (see section 1.1 of Chapter 1).⁸⁴

This evidence underscores the relationship between mission and migration. As already intimated by Hanciles (2008; 2021), the growth and expansion of the Christian faith is largely attributable to migration. Without migration, there would possibly be no APC in Düsseldorf. The absence of this brand of Christianity in the research field would reduce the level of religious and cultural diversity. The implication of this will be the lack of religious and social richness which is essential in a globalised world.⁸⁵

Thirdly, related to the APCs’ understanding of mission is the place of the Bible in the mission conception of APCs. APCs uphold the centrality of the Bible in their operations by referring to Bible passages as the basis for offering a response to the plight of African refugees and asylum seekers. Assistance in the form of money, language support, counselling, friendship, information about job opportunities and accommodation were extended to their vulnerable kinsmen who came

⁸⁴ Africans’ understanding of the relationship between the sacred and profane makes it easier to resort to religious faith for answers to physical challenges such as refugees and asylum seekers face. Africans generally believe that the sacred world influences the profane. It is therefore not surprising that the early African refugees and asylum seekers decided to resort to prayer for answers to their immigration and integration challenges. Out of this endeavour emerged the consciousness to engage in mission.

⁸⁵ Their absence would also mean more difficulties for African refugees and asylum seekers since they represent more than a place for religious instruction to them. Migration therefore gave birth to APCs in Düsseldorf and today God’s mission by this strand of Christianity can be discussed, investigated, and assessed in the context. This observation is however not without a caveat as through migration some Christians abandon their faith, or are compelled by circumstances to work during weekends, thereby preventing them from attending church.

to the church and requested assistance. These were done based on what the Bible has taught them to do.⁸⁶

Fourthly, from the analysis one can deduce that volunteerism is a paradigm for mission in the research context because it involves rendering service to the vulnerable in society. Serving humanity removes suspicion and creates trust. Out of this relationship of trust arises the opportunity to introduce the gospel to people when they become curious about the motive for rendering service to society. Therefore, from the data produced in this study, the quest for mission by migrants, such as the APCs, can be greatly enhanced when volunteer groups are created, adequately trained, and resourced for mission.

Fifthly, the APCs possess multiple identities. They are Christians, Africans, and migrants. As a privileged minority group, based on their identity as Christians, they were ready to assist African refugees and asylum seekers who came to them. Their identity as Africans and migrants served as a point of attraction to bring both sides together and communicate meaningfully. The APC leaders indicated that their quest to offer a response was because they were Christians and they quoted verses in the Bible to support their position (cf. Chapter 3, section 3.1.1).

This finding highlights the importance of identity to APCs' participation in the *missio Dei*. From the data collected, their identity as Christians played an important role in ensuring that African refugees and asylum seekers received some support from the church upon request. This means that whilst ethnic/cultural identity is important, APCs are deliberately trying to move away from this limited form of identification to an identity of an imagined global Christendom. This latter identity transcends ethnicity and is the one APC leaders emphasise. For the APC leaders, Christian identity is the most important, but for the African refugees and asylum seekers, all three forms of identity are important in their expectation of the APCs' response to their plight and for their quest to survive.

⁸⁶ It can therefore be suggested that for APCs in the research context, the Bible and its teachings are integral to their practice of mission. Without the Bible, APCs in the research context would require another point of reference for mission. The extent to which they carry out the requirement of the Bible to the benefit of the vulnerable in society and within the church is what this research suggests lacks proactivity.

Sixthly, the assistance offered to African refugees and asylum seekers in the churches continued beyond the termination of the open borders policy. This was evident in the steps the APCs took to mitigate the suffering of the needy in their congregations during the initial lockdown period of the Covid-19 outbreak. This shows that APCs in Düsseldorf are conscious of their responsibility towards the poor and disadvantaged. Although their response to social challenges lacks proactivity, the consciousness to respond to the needs of the underprivileged is ever-present and informed by their Christian identity.

Seventhly, the responses from the data and analysis suggest that the APCs contribute to the integration and survival of their vulnerable kinsmen. The language support, financial aid, counselling, and other forms of assistance be it formal or informal served a good purpose. Although APCs' responses lacked proactivity, the African refugees and asylum seekers who received support from them were better positioned to integrate.

Without their responses, many African refugees and asylum seekers would have suffered more than they did. Although government agencies and NGOs are around to support refugees and asylum seekers, the APCs provided a mother tongue and a sense of belonging. The consciousness of belonging to a community where you can be understood without the need for a translator was crucial for calming the nerves of African refugees and asylum seekers. The APCs in the research context are therefore a context for reception and integration of African refugees and asylum seekers just as in the case of Haitian refugees in Miami (Mooney, 2013:99-111).

Overall, the data collected, analysis, and interpretation thereof may be summed up as follows:

(i) African refugees and asylum seekers have many challenges. The notable ones among them are language skills, knowledge of the context, financial, employment, accommodation, emotion, and prayer.

(ii) The APCs generally responded to the needs of African refugees and asylum seekers who came to them. Although their response lacked proactivity and compassion, it aided the integration of African refugees and asylum seekers who benefitted.

(iii) The APCs' response to the plight of African refugees and asylum seekers reveals that their understanding of the *missio Dei* related to issues such as mission, migration, identity, and integration in the research area. Their response is marked by their attitude, action, and social action policy, as suggested in section 1.3 of Chapter 1.⁸⁷

(iv) The APC leaders affirmed that they see their migration as an act of God. They reckoned themselves as missionaries sent by God to do mission work in Europe. They mentioned the dwindling fortunes of Christianity in Europe and claimed that God brought them to Europe to rescue Christianity. How they arrived in Europe had no bearing on this claim.

Similarly, they interpreted the arrival of African refugees and asylum seekers in Düsseldorf as part of God's divine plan for them and their families back home. They suggested that through their arrival God is bringing more labourers to support the mission work in Europe. As missionaries sent by God to do mission, moving toward a missionary field in the form of refugees and asylum seekers should have been natural. This was, however, not the case, as there appears to be a chasm between the missionaries and the mission field. This observation reflects negatively on the APC leaders' claim of being sent to the research context as missionaries.

The APCs' inability to offer proactive responses to the needs of African refugees and asylum seekers contributed in their estimation to some of them adopting survival tactics which are in conflict with the ethics of Christianity. This notwithstanding, the APCs remain a viable institution for compassionate mission in the context (Matthew 25:31-46).

(v) The APCs from the refugees' perspective represent a useful contact network capable of furthering their integration and economic aspirations. The informal language support and the

⁸⁷On attitude, they were sympathetic yet lacked proactivity. This observation suggests the neglect of compassion in mission. Since there is a correlation between attitude and action, APCs' inaction equally demonstrated a deficiency in compassion. In terms of action, most of them if not all responded to requests made by refugees and asylum seekers in the church. Nonetheless, their response lacked structure and proactivity. That is, responses were offered on an "as and when" basis. Regarding social action policy, there was a problem producing a written document to justify any claim of possessing one. This situation justifies the observation by some scholars that African Pentecostalism is noted for orality.

identity which the APCs provided were vital. Based on these realities, it behoves the APCs to position themselves for maximum impact in the area of mission and integration. Reasons that militated against the responses offered by the APCs to African refugees and asylum seekers could be deduced from the data collected. The most outstanding were:

- a) The efforts of government and NGOs to stay in charge of matters concerning refugees and asylum seekers is believed to prevent incidences of proselyting refugees and asylum seekers.
- b) Volunteer groups outside the church took over the social role of the church in this space. These volunteer groups were however ready to partner with the church in social action, making it convenient for the church not to step physically onto the field and work. In many instances, churches in the research field entered into a partnership with some of them.
- c) Attempts to take the church for granted by some African refugees and asylum seekers in the past made the APCs cautious in opening their doors to African refugees and asylum seekers.
- d) The APCs' insufficient funds and accommodation facilities weakened their hands in taking advantage of provisions such as Church Asylum to assist African refugees and asylum seekers against unjust deportations.

4.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter analysed the data and themes generated from the data collected in Phase One. It also objectively offered an interpretation to the data collected and the analysis made. It was established that African refugees and asylum seekers have needs. APCs' response to these needs defined their understanding of mission. The next chapter focuses on analysis and interpretation of the data that were collected in Phase Two of the data collection process. It hopes to objectively interrogate the merits and demerits of a social action policy to mission based on the data that were collected in this phase.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION OF PHASE TWO

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the data that were collected in Phase Two of the research which identified and examined APCs' social action policy that guides their social ministry. In so doing, the researcher assesses the place of compassion in APCs' social engagements. Both the data and themes generated in Phase Two of the research, as noted in Chapter 3 are analysed in this chapter. The analysis of the data is supported by relevant literature such as the social action policy from selected traditional churches and other sources to facilitate the reader's understanding. Thereafter, the researcher draws some conclusions based on the data.

5.1 DATA ANALYSIS OF PHASE TWO

A social action policy aims to provide a scope of interventions for the vulnerable in society, design concrete means to safeguard social cohesion, and protect natural resources from undue exploitation. Areas such as welfare, justice, rights, health care, protection, social exclusion and financial security are all integral sections of a social action policy. In the context of a religious organisation, such a policy is designed to promote love and compassion as virtues that characterise a Christian mission (Ireland (ed.), 2017).

Thus, love and compassion underpinning the concept of the *missio Dei* is not only expressed through the verbal proclamation of the gospel but also concrete social action founded on a well-thought-out social action policy. Against this background, the social action policy of the selected APCs is examined in this chapter.

Out of the four APCs selected for this study, P1 and P2 claimed that their churches have a social action policy although all the four of them acknowledge it to be an integral part of the church's ministry. Of the two who said they have a social action policy, only P1 provided some material

evidence. This was a document that expresses how its volunteers' group operates. All four provided a welfare scheme (see section 3.1.2.1 of Chapter 3).

The selected APCs rely on a limited welfare scheme and encouragement from the Bible as tools to provide a safety net for the vulnerable in the church. The problem here perhaps is their lack of appreciation for having both a welfare scheme and a social action policy operating side by side. Gleaning from the data collected in Phase One, when the question of a social action policy came up, P4 suggested:

“Well, for my branch in Düsseldorf now I do not have errmm because it is a new church and it is now getting its feet on the ground. With our headquarters I am not sure whether we have one. I need to confirm”.

Whilst P4 found it convenient to suggest that the reason his church does not have a social action policy is that it is recently established, the researcher thinks that this same reason should have occasioned the development of a social action policy. This is because it forms part of the foundation of the church and what it hopes to achieve. Not only that, in a context where there is a crisis such as the refugee situation, a measured social action response from the church is needed as a testimony of God's love and compassion (Ireland (ed.), 2017:19-28; Allen (ed.), 2017; Louw, 2016:336-354). The absence of a social action policy and the reason assigned by P4 speaks of a gap in the APCs conception of mission.

He then gave further insight into how his church responds to social challenges:

“Well, what I know is that mostly we say that we need to help our brother, we need to help our sister. We need to do this, we need to do that, and anybody that can help, so people begin to donate, people begin to give what they have, and what we gather if it is enough in our eyes, we think that this is enough we can submit it to the person. If it is not enough, we go further and ask certain individuals, and if the church has more money, we can add it also and present it to the fellow” (P4).

Although his response suggests a measure of concern for the needs of the vulnerable, the instinctive and unstructured nature of his church's response raises questions about sustainability and effectiveness. Whilst a social action policy covers a much wider scope by caring for both living and non-living members of the created order, it considers issues of sustainability. It is also results-oriented.

P3 implied the following:

“To be frank with you, we do not have such a policy in place, but we have a welfare scheme to support our members. I think here in Germany or let me say Europe, there are many NGOs and government institutions like the social welfare where the poor can get help. So, what we do is to support our members in our own small way”.

P3's response gives an idea of what the reasons for the absence of a social action policy may be. That is, the systems put in place by the state and NGOs serve as a safety net for the poor. APCs are therefore not challenged to consider social action a major issue in their operation, at least in the research context.

If social action is understood as an integral part of the *missio Dei* and not just an activity the Bible encourages, then the church should have a social action policy to guide its social ministry. The desire to respond proactively toward the situation of the refugees and asylum seekers in Düsseldorf will increase. In addition, it would have been coordinated and not left to chance as appears to be the case in the churches of P3 and P4.

However, when mission is conceived of as chiefly proclamation of the gospel and every other thing second, the need for a social action policy is not appreciated. From the data collected in both Phase One and Phase Two, social action does not appear to have equal status in the APCs' appreciation of mission. The concept of compassionate mission espoused in section 2.6 of Chapter 2 is thus only partially fulfilled in the current scheme of things.

Analysing data obtained from the written church documents on the APCs' social ministry in the research context, the following issues emerged:

5.1.1 Welfare scheme versus social action policy

The data collected in Phase Two gives the impression that among APCs a welfare scheme can suffice as a social action policy. The welfare scheme is an important safety net for the vulnerable within the congregations. Examples of similar schemes can be found in the early church as recorded in Acts 2:44-47 and 4:32-37. Selling property and sharing the proceeds according to the needs of members served as a welfare scheme. This scheme was so effective in the Early Church that there was no poverty in the congregation. However, whilst the welfare scheme caters for the needs of church members and supports them in specific instances, it does not in any way qualify for a social action policy in the grand scheme of things (Allen, 2020:92). This is because:

Firstly, the welfare schemes within the APCs operate such that if one does not contribute financially, no benefit is enjoyed. Benefits are tied to a member's ability to pay a tithe or welfare contribution depending on the rules of engagement. This puts the vulnerable and unemployed in the church at a disadvantage. It raises questions about the place of compassion and love in the mission praxis of the church. Critically, it departs significantly from the welfare scheme started by the apostles in the Early Church (Acts 2:44-47; 4:32-37). In the Early Church, the principle of 'no contribution, no benefit' did not apply. Compassion underlined their welfare scheme as those who were economically sound willingly sold their property and brought the proceeds for the common good.

The vulnerable, described as "least brothers and sisters" in Matthew 25:31-46, did not have to contribute anything to qualify for compassion from the privileged. Already, African refugees and asylum seekers who may require assistance through the welfare system are disqualified by the rules of engagement since the majority of them may not be able to contribute financially to the scheme.

Among the African communities in Düsseldorf and other German cities, ethnic groups/co-operative associations outside the churches operate similar welfare schemes which also cover

limited areas such as farewell, marriage, bereavement, sickness, disaster, childbirth, and contingencies. The ‘no contribution no benefit’ concept of the church’s welfare scheme appears to be imported from the ethnic welfare schemes. As earlier noted, the welfare scheme practiced in the Early Church did not have such a concept, and if a church decides to operate a welfare scheme, then it must look to the one in the Early Church for guidance. Otherwise, the element of compassion expected to be the bedrock of the church’s mission activities has been replaced by legality. Such a situation takes away from the identity and essence of the church.

Secondly, the scope of the welfare scheme is limited only to church members. It does not have enough space for the needs of vulnerable persons outside the membership of the church and other non-living members of creation. The welfare schemes operating within the APCs as noted in section 3.1.2.1 of Chapter 3, covers areas such as farewell, end of service, childbirth, bereavement, marriage, support for the sick and incapacitated, natural disaster and accident, end of year appreciation, fun fair, and support for special cases. Whilst a response to these situations in the life of church members is crucial for internal cohesion, it does not represent compassion beyond the walls of the church. Nor does it show concern for other non-living members of the created order as evident in the social action policies of the UMC and Presbyterian churches (see section 2.5 of Chapter 2).

In the social action policy of the UMC, for instance, Article 160-161 hints at matters such as injustice, commitment, identity, marriage, family, sexuality, abortion, adoption, bullying, rights of religious minorities, children, women, men, immigrants, and other existential issues. It also concerns itself with how natural resources can be protected from exploitation. Fairtrade, social welfare for the poor, and choices that promote cohesion between the human person and the environment are all matters of concern in the UMC social action policy. Whilst these themes ultimately affect the church and its members, they are also matters bedeviling the world as evident in families, politics, business, and other institutions outside the church.

Chapter nine of the Presbyterian Church’s social action policy as alluded to in section 2.5 (ii) also shows commitment towards the well-being of the human being in a much broader sense. It pays attention to social, economic, political, and technical matters, all of which can impact the well-

being of the individual. Its fundamental understanding is that when these matters are not addressed, the image of God in the human being is negatively impacted.

The example of the Roman Catholic Church's social action through Caritas International in Düsseldorf, and the benefits refugees and asylum seekers enjoy as depicted in the data collected in Phase One (cf. Chapter 3), also speak to the limitedness of the content of a welfare scheme as opposed to a social action policy. The weaknesses identified in the welfare schemes reinforce the idea that whilst the issue of welfare is a part of the church's social action commitment, it does not in any way fully satisfy the demands of a social action policy.

Thirdly, granted that all that the 4 selected APCs have to show for their social ministry in terms of policy is what the researcher gathered, then, it gives a certain indication as to the kind of mission these selected APCs are likely to be engaged in. This is because, given the inward nature of the welfare scheme operational in these churches, it can only fulfil at best the aspirations of a migrant mission. This argument is based on the fact that social ministry and proclamation of the gospel operating together in a context bring home the essence of Christian mission to the population. Where the gospel is preached to the "outside world" and the "inside world" but the physical expression of love and compassion is limited only to members of the "inside world", then, it is the idea of migrant mission that the APCs are inadvertently pursuing.

As noted earlier, since the welfare scheme smacks of ideas and sentiments from the ethnic/cultural co-operative associations' practices, it will appeal to members of the minority African groups more than non-Africans. On the other hand, a social action policy that caters for existential issues that face human beings and their environment will hold more appeal to the generality of human society. This means that a comprehensive social action policy is fundamental to the APCs' ultimate goal of pursuing a reverse mission in the research area. A social action policy is therefore intrinsically connected to the kind of mission a church pursues.

Fourthly, the case of P2's church which suggests it has a social action policy but focuses its social ministry in Africa makes their social action policy a domesticated one in the sense that it is meant to address challenges within the environment of the people who designed it. Even as migrants,

their new environment does not benefit from their existence in terms of social help. Whilst one cannot explicitly state the rationale for this kind of situation, it can be inferred that perhaps this APC considers the social welfare deficiencies in Africa more grievous than what pertains in their current context in Europe.

Contrary to such a position, as already noted in section 4.1.1.1 of Chapter 4, African refugees and asylum seekers live in Europe but do not as yet have a taste of the economic success they see around them. Their situation is characterised by poverty and vulnerability. To focus on them and bring to them the full import of Christian compassion will be a great testimony of APCs' participation in the *missio Dei*. The peculiar situation of P2's church of the seeming lack of attention to the plight of African refugees and asylum seekers on the one hand, and the alacrity to send support to their brothers and sisters in Africa, on the other hand, requires a revision. Although Africa needs assistance from its citizens living abroad, it is fair that the vulnerable African living in Europe is not overlooked simply because they find themselves in an economically prosperous environment.

Fifthly, the response of P3 and P4's churches that they do not have a social action policy yet concede that social action is integral to the *missio Dei* raises concern. The absence of a social action policy speaks to their understanding of mission and level of commitment to social ministry. Before the year begins, these churches draw up programmes for revivals, prophetic prayer conferences and outreach activities in their bid to win more souls. These are advertised on their social media platforms. How does it then happen that the needs of the vulnerable and the environment, for example, are not considered but dealt with as and when the need arises? This lack of intentionality perhaps stems from Pentecostals' understanding of mission as constituting proclamation of the gospel and prayer through the power of the Holy Spirit as discussed in section 2.1 – 2.2.3 of Chapter 2 (Bevans and Schroeder, 2011:328-330; Amissah, 2020:153-165; Währisch-Oblau, 2009:30).

From the analysis so far, a welfare policy is important and forms part of a social action policy but given the narrow scope of the welfare scheme operational in the selected APCs, it does not satisfy all the demands of a social action policy.

5.1.2 The church and social action

Throughout this research, social action is argued to be an integral part of the church's mission as it serves as practical evidence of what practitioners verbally confess. However, social action delivered on the back of emotion and impulse is likely to be ineffective in the context of a compassionate mission. Social action properly structured, documented, and delivered has an impact on the church, especially on the life of individual church members. Both the review of responses to the refugee crisis in section 2.5.2 of Chapter 2 and the data collected in both phases suggest a certain model (Ireland (ed.), 2017:36-37; Harold, 2019:5-6).

In some contexts, the church collaborated with volunteer groups outside the church to carry out social ministry. An example is the partnership between “Ökumenische Flüchtlingshilfe” (Refugee Aid) and the churches in Kaiserswerth-Düsseldorf (see sections 2.5.2 of Chapter 2 and 4.1.2.3 of Chapter 4). In other instances, the church carried out the responsibility through its volunteers as noted in P1's church. Then there are churches that appear not to have engaged in any social ministry. This seems to be the case in P3 and P4's churches. Whereas in the first two models help was extended to the refugees and asylum seekers, the church and its members deprived themselves of key Christian and moral lessons in the first and third models. When the responsibility of social ministry is delegated to outside volunteers, the church and its members are disadvantaged.

The examples of the social action ministry undertaken by the UMC, “Diakonie”, the Roman Catholic Church through Caritas International, and the efforts made by P1's church offer church members the opportunity to practice compassion. It also assists them to develop virtues such as love, patience, volunteerism, and communal living. Thus, this observation implies that the absence of a social action policy and ministry does not only impact negatively on the vulnerable but also the church and its members. This makes the need for the church's engagement in social action even more compelling (Mooney, 2006:1455-1468).

According to a survey conducted by Baylor University on the impact of volunteering on Christian faith and congregational life, regular volunteering in social services has a positive impact on a person's faith. Exposure to people with diverse needs is important in challenging them to think and realign their conception of life. Such experiences change their behaviour and value system for

the better. The more compassion they show, the more compassionate they become. The survey suggests that these volunteers also score high when it comes to active participation in local church activities. Christians who engage in social action score higher in Christian maturity and practice than those who attend church but do not participate. The experience of helping and interacting with the people on the margins improves their perspectives on life (Baylor University, 2005).

Following this survey, the researcher's argument can be sustained that a church that does not have any social action policy and therefore sublets its social action ministry to a volunteer group outside the church deprives itself of the opportunity to raise selfless and compassionate people. His position is that churches should have a clearly defined social action policy informed by the Bible and expert opinion on contemporary challenges facing society. In addition, the presence of a well-trained Christian volunteers' group with the task of executing the church's social action policy will be a more beneficial approach to doing mission. The consciousness and effort to think about social needs and design response in itself is an important step toward compassion in mission. Likewise, leaving social action to impulse and emotion alone suggests the absence of compassion in mission.

5.1.3 APCs & orality

From the previous sections, (5.1.1 and 5.1.2), it is evident that APCs in the research context do not write a lot. Much of what they do as a tradition lacks adequate documentary evidence. They are more oral in their operations in comparison to their counterparts in the Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions. Although orality is an identity associated with the Pentecostal tradition, the level is higher among APCs in Düsseldorf. Attempts to obtain documentary evidence of meetings that were held to discuss assistance to African refugees, asylum seekers, and the vulnerable in Africa, as alluded to by P2's church, proved futile. Requests for written documents covering their social action policy or guidelines did not yield much result even from P1 and P2's churches which indicated that they have one.

Besides its oral liturgy and to a greater extent open-ended theology, APCs' mission activities are dominated by orality. This practice deprives the tradition of the benefit of written history. So, as generations pass, posterity may not have adequate written information about what their

predecessors did and what they need to do. This situation also affects proper accountability regarding APCs' mission praxis.

Inadequate written records cast doubts on claims made by leadership. Although within academia a lot is written about the theology and practices of Pentecostalism, much needs to be done in terms of writing at the local level by African Pentecostals. This will give legitimacy to the local claims made about their history and mission activities in the research context.

Unlike the APCs, the Methodist and Presbyterian churches have written social action policies to guide their social engagements as discussed in section 2.5 of Chapter 2. Their response was therefore not a spontaneous reaction to the humanitarian crises. Based on their social action policy, a clear intent to fully fulfil the demands of the *missio Dei* is seen.

Having noted the place of orality in the operation of the APCs in Düsseldorf, it is important to suggest that orality is also a trait associated with the African traditional society. Much of what Africans know from their forebears in terms of history, ethics, and values were communicated to succeeding generations through oral means. In many African societies, boys gained knowledge of their father's profession through oral and practical education. In the same way, girls learnt how to cook and keep the home not from any written document but from oral instruction by their mothers.

In continuing to organise their affairs in this manner, APCs are preserving a very important part of the African traditional identity through the practice of their Christian faith. With this awareness, a balanced situation between orality and keeping written documents may be an effective way for APCs' mission praxis in the research context. This gives priority to orality as an important part of the African tradition and evidence of written documents for the scientific evaluation of their activities.

In the absence of written documents, the use of video recordings and other forms of electronic recordings of their social ministry and other general Christian activities in the research field could be useful for researchers. For churches without permanent places of worship as is the case for many APCs in Düsseldorf, keeping records on paper and in books may pose a challenge. Electronic

recordings may be a viable alternative. This is however dependent on the calibre of personnel available to them.

5.1.4 The importance of personnel

Church personnel with plural orientation is key to the success or otherwise of the church's mission praxis. The issue of personnel at the disposal of APCs in Düsseldorf could perhaps be linked to the APCs' lack of written documents in the research field as alluded to in the previous section (see 5.1.3). Generally, members of APCs in the research context are literate but limited academically. The availability of highly educated individuals in a congregation raises its awareness of social, economic, and political issues. Likewise, the absence of the same impacts the church's ability to relate its faith to external happenings in the society such as climate change, injustice, unfair trade agreements and international migration (Hämäläinen, 2019:120-121).

This perhaps explains the absence of written documents to guide the social ministry of APCs in Düsseldorf. The misconception of evaluating mission to mean largely proclamation of the gospel and the substitution of welfare scheme for social action policy points to the reality of this observation. The inadequate number of highly educated individuals in the congregations impugns APCs' ability to engage civil authorities and publicly advocate on behalf of African refugees. This condition undermines the APCs' potential to achieve their missiological and social goals (Sanchez et al., 2021:14).

It is therefore not surprising that out of the four APCs selected for this research, only the one with multiple nationals, i.e., P1's church, was able to come up with the idea of a volunteers' group to prosecute the church's social action agenda. This is significant since volunteers' groups appear to be the most viable means for churches in the research area to engage in social action.

This example goes to show that the effectiveness of a church to prosecute holistic mission is dependent upon the calibre of personnel available. The calibre of personnel refers to formal educational level, competence in information technology, the extent of socialisation, and general awareness of contemporary issues within geopolitics and missiology. When both leadership and the majority of members are formally educated, their ability to appreciate the potential of the

church in alleviating the suffering of the poor becomes clearer. Less formal education on the part of the leadership and the majority of APC members means economic mindedness. Here, their primary focus is to work hard and make decent money. The task of engaging in mission is embraced but only as a second priority and heavily tilted towards the proclamation of the gospel.

Another factor connected with the issue of limited formal education is the economic power of such individuals. Social ministry in most cases requires financial support. When members are highly educated, it determines where they are employed and how much money they make. Since the churches' income is generated from the contributions of its members, limited formal education means low-income levels and therefore low financial contributions for church work. APCs' inability to engage internal or external volunteers and also make use of church asylum law for social ministry is linked to their income levels which are related to the issue of limited formal education (Hämäläinen, 2019:120).

5.1.5 Volunteerism and mission

As noted in section 3.1.2.1 of Chapter 3, P1's church produced a document that indicated the aims and objectives of the church's volunteers' association and explains that the association focuses on charity. Accordingly, the association raised support from within the church for the refugees and asylum seekers at the height of the crisis in Düsseldorf.

This focus of the volunteers' association is inspired by the ministry of Jesus Christ toward the disadvantaged in society. As such, it works to bring the gospel to the doorstep of all peoples, promote unity among one another and engage in endeavours that will be beneficial for the body of Christ. It selflessly spreads Christian education, fights poverty and provides diverse support through the Word of God (Reinhard, 2016; Allen, 2020:92).

Unlike the welfare scheme analysed in section 5.1.1, this policy document from P1's church expands its scope of operation. It looks beyond the church and seeks to provide solutions to challenges outside the confines of the church. It is therefore an upgrade over the welfare scheme and a more compassionate approach toward social ministry.

However, it is still not as comprehensive as the ones produced by the UMC and the Presbyterian church as discussed in section 2.5.2 of Chapter 2. The intent may be there but lacks clarity and direction particularly on climate change, economic inequalities, social justice, rights of minorities, and management of natural resources.

5.1.6 Public advocacy

Public advocacy forms part of the social ministry of the church. The absence of public advocacy by APCs on behalf of African refugees injures both the APCs' mission efforts and the well-being of the refugees. It suggests that their mission is not holistic and the voice of the voiceless is further suppressed. In a context where African refugees and some migrants struggle daily with seeking asylum, integration challenges, racism and discrimination, a voice in the public domain to articulate their concerns is critical. This voice may also seek to explain both to the government and the local public why African asylum seekers and refugees must be accorded special dispensations in the research context. The Catholic leaders in Miami for example advocated for Haitians to the general public and the government. The government was lobbied to regularise the status of Haitians in the USA (Mooney, 2013:102; 2006:1455-1468; Stotzky, 2004).

Such a task does not take the place of providing essential social services. In the grand scheme of what constitutes social action or ministry, advocacy is only a part of a whole. APCs in their quest to do mission in the research area appear to neglect public advocacy on behalf of African refugees as a mission area, although Pentecostals in general have a reputation as activists (Ma et al., (eds), 2014:391). This neglect implies perpetuating inhumane actions against people on the margins.

This observation finds expression in a similar work conducted in London by Adedibu (2016). He noted that: "Despite the declining fortunes of Christianity in the West particularly England, the Church of England, Methodist, Catholic Churches and a host of others have lent their voices to giving the migration crisis a human face by the European governments. Nevertheless, the burgeoning stream of the Christian tradition in Britain which is the African Pentecostalism appears indifferent to Europe's migration crisis. Ironically, the African Pentecostal churches' proliferation is one direct gain of migration to Britain as the churches welcome their kith and kin from Africa and Africans that travel through North Africa to Europe" (Adedibu, 2016:1).

In a similar vein to what the traditional churches did in London, the Methodist Bishop in Germany at the time was vocal at the peak of the crisis on behalf of the arriving refugees (cf. section 2.5.2 of Chapter 2). Traditional churches appear to show more involvement in public advocacy for the disadvantaged in comparison to APCs in Europe. To carry out advocacy effectively on behalf of African refugees, for example, constructive interaction must take place between APCs and African refugees to establish the real issues. Adequate information can be obtained for public advocacy out of such engagements.

Apart from these traditional churches, a pro-Christian NGO called 'Open Doors' also does public advocacy on behalf of Christian refugees in Germany. Their advocacy is based on a survey of life in the camps between February and April 2016 which suggests a close relationship with Christian refugees. The survey highlighted the persecution of Christians in German refugee shelters at the hands of their counterparts of other religious faiths and sometimes by the security personnel detailed to maintain law and order at the shelters. The outcome of this survey was meant to elicit response from both the religious bodies and civil authorities on behalf of Christian refugees.

Seventy-five per cent (75%) of those interviewed intimated that harassment of refugees who are Christians in the shelter was a regular occurrence. The harassment was manifested in the form of physical abuse, i.e., punches, spitting and pushing, death threats, insults, and noise pollution from loud religious music and prayer. Female victims of sexual abuse preferred to keep such incidents to themselves. These concerns were corroborated by Gottfried Martens, a Berlin-based pastor who lamented the reluctance of the police to investigate cases of abuse which had come to his attention.

Granted that these challenges were factual, one would want to ask about the motivation driving these purported actions. Are these challenges facing Christians in the refugee shelters accidental or isolated? Whichever way one looks at these findings, it appears a response from the church in the form of public advocacy is important.

These findings corroborate another survey published in December 2016 by the International Christian Consulate titled: A Survey of Christian Refugees in Greece: Vulnerabilities, Risks, Aid Provision and Future Prospects in Greece. The survey addresses the following themes concerning

the conditions of minority religious groups in refugee camps: introduction, demographic data, trauma exposure, risk of persecution following migration, identification of deficits in safety and security, assessment of humanitarian needs, asylum application and assistance from UNHCR, inter-agency cooperation, and Christian refugees' sentiments and prospects in Greece. The reported challenges Christians face in Greek shelters resemble what Open Doors talked about in the German shelters.

Since the views of refugees accused of persecuting the Christians in the shelters were not sought, one does not get a balanced image of happenings there. The survey appears to have focused on only the needs and persecutions of Christian refugees without being able to identify any opportunities or positives associated with the shelters for evangelism. Conspicuously missing are the voices of African Christian refugees who are in the minority in comparison with refugees from Syria, Iran, Afghanistan, and Lebanon. Usually, the voice of the minority is not heard and that is precisely what this survey appears to portray. Therefore, the challenge for APCs to step in and make the voices of African refugees heard is important.

In advocating for better living and employment conditions for African refugees and asylum seekers, APCs can also highlight their abilities both within the African community and without. This will assist their struggle toward economic independence. The scope of APCs' advocacy can extend beyond the issue of economic survival of African refugees and asylum seekers in the research context. A compassionate campaign to educate the population in their home countries about the dangers of irregular migration is crucial. It is in tandem with the social aspect of the *missio Dei*. APCs' approach and scope of advocacy must therefore seek to be broad and not narrow.

5.1.7 APCs and state relationship

APC leaders indicated the need for collaboration between their churches and the relevant state authorities. This they suggest is important for them to explain the conditions of their kinsmen better to authorities and also receive the necessary feedback from the state. Their responses as noted in section 3.1.1.1 of Chapter 3, appear to suggest issues of which the state authorities need to be aware to offer an appropriate response to the refugee crisis.

Thus, this relationship will certainly yield benefits for all the parties involved. Whilst their sentiments are legitimate, particularly in a context where the state offers adequate recognition to the church, APCs will need to put their house in order first. This they must do by creating the right structures and policies to facilitate any discussions at such a high level (Hämäläinen, 2019:120). Here, the need for a social action policy and trained personnel for voluntary work will be vital. The work of the Catholic Bishop's Conference in the USA and France as discussed in section 2.5.2 of Chapter 2, (Mooney, 2006: 1455-1468), and Haitian religious groups in Miami noted in sections 2.5.2 and 5.1.6 (Mooney, 2013:100-105) provides a blueprint for APCs. Also, the work of Roman Catholic and Protestant churches in Düsseldorf and their relationship with state authorities can inform the social ministry of the APCs' in the research context.

As noted by P4 in section 3.1.1.1 of Chapter 3, the state possibly does not fully understand the circumstances of African refugees and asylum seekers. The APCs' constructive interactions with state authorities could serve as an important platform for the exchange of ideas for the common good.

5.2 INTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED FOR PHASE TWO

Whilst in academia the concept of 'Progressive Pentecostalism' as discussed in section 2.6 of Chapter 2 is well recognised, practitioners in the mission field need to be more proactive. This interpretation of the situation is offered against the background that:

Firstly, the data collected and analysed indicate that APCs in the research field fail to appreciate the difference between a welfare scheme and social action policy. They also appear to underrate the impact of a welfare scheme and social action policy on a reverse mission which P4 in particular suggests is the reason God brought them to Europe. Thus, a revision of the APCs' conception of mission is required if a reverse mission is to be achieved.

Secondly, from that data collected, it is safe to suggest that among African Christians, orality is a tool for mission. Since orality is an identifiable feature of African society, recognising it as a tool for doing mission will lead to the situation of deepening the Africanness of African Christianity.

Therefore, instead of highlighting orality as a negative practice in the APCs mission praxis, it should be appreciated as a tool for mission. For APCs to succeed in their quest to achieve reverse mission, this African identity, however useful, may not need to be overemphasised.

Thirdly, although the church is important to African refugees and asylum seekers, it does appear that generally a gap exists between what most Christians profess and do in real-life situations. Whilst the church can conveniently lay the blame squarely at the feet of individual Christians and their exercise of free will, much attention must be paid to the absence of a structured social action policy and to the content of sermons.

If APCs were proactive and compassionate toward the needs of African refugees and asylum seekers through a well-thought-out social action policy, the use of unethical survival tactics as discovered in the data collected could be minimised (cf. sections 3.1.1.2 of Chapter 3 and 4.1.3.1 of Chapter 4). The fact that some refugees and asylum seekers resort to the use of creative but unethical survival tactics means that APCs and the church, in general, need to reassess the content of their sermons and their approach to mission toward the vulnerable in the research context. The need for a social action policy is therefore fundamental to the church's mission success.

This point is important because the church is expected to be an agent for transformation through the power of the Holy Spirit. The notion of transformation as discussed here presupposes the existence of a current situation that requires either significant improvement or a comprehensive overhaul. For transformation to occur within the human being and society, the current ad-hoc approach to social ministry cannot be relied upon. A certain level of intentionality and appreciation of what the challenges are within contemporary international migration will be required. Even if a few vulnerable people are liberated out of a thought-out social action policy, that alone represents a significant milestone. It is these transformed individuals whose deeds would help society to achieve the growth and cohesion necessary for existence.

Fourthly, the data collected and analysed suggest that the scope of Christian mission is not defined or limited. With the challenges of international migration, Christian mission now has to deal with not only the usual functions of the proclamation of the gospel and extension of support to the needy

but also move into areas such as integration, reintegration, poverty alleviation, employment creation, climate change, and globalisation policies. Such areas, hitherto typical of national and international geopolitics are now within the orbit of Christian mission.

Migration thus influences the velocity of Christian mission. In the current scheme of things, migration issues appear to be stretching the boundaries of Christian mission. The demarcation of some issues as belonging exclusively to the secular world and others to the sacred world is fading, if not already faded (Okesson, 2020:66-69).

This challenge means that training persons for mission work requires dexterity. From the data collected and analysed, it was evident that the calibre of personnel available in the APCs to some extent determined their response to the plight of the refugees and asylum seekers. The calibre of personnel available to the APCs also rendered them unable to do public advocacy on behalf of African refugees and asylum seekers. Although their neglect of church asylum policy can be attributed to lack of infrastructure and money, the lack of highly educated personnel to articulate the case of African refugees and asylum seekers under this policy can also be cited.

Fifthly, there appears to be no official relationship between the APCs and civil authorities in Düsseldorf. Although APC leaders hold that engagement with civil authorities will create a better understanding of how African refugees and asylum seekers are to be catered for, they took no concrete step to achieving this collaboration. Perhaps, uncertainties about ensuring that undocumented members are not exposed to official scrutiny account for this lack of engagement.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Overall, the analysis and interpretation of the data can be summed up as follows:

(a) Revision and clarification of the APCs' conception of mission and how to fulfil it is needed. When properly sorted out, this should guide their response to social challenges and the kind of mission they hope to pursue in Europe.

(b) The lack of a clearly defined social action policy to fulfil the demands of holistic mission played a major role in how the APCs responded to the refugee crisis. This was largely attributable to their conception of mission and the calibre of personnel available to the APCs in the research context, which in turn generally affected their mission approach. Until this situation is resolved, the APCs' best chance of engaging in social action in the research area may be through a partnership with volunteer groups outside the church.

(c) Cooperation is lacking between the APCs and the relevant state authorities. From the researcher's experience in the context, the state reimburses expenses incurred by some of the recognised churches on refugees and asylum seekers. Since the APCs currently have no relationship with relevant state authorities, whatever financial help they offer to African refugees and asylum seekers is at their cost.

This chapter focused on the analysis of the data and themes that emerged in Phase Two of the research process. It also objectively offered interpretations of the data that were collected and the analysis thereof. The importance of a social action policy in the mission pursuits of APCs was underscored. With these insights in mind, the next chapter explores the issue of identity and integration regarding APCs in the research context. It hopes to make a case for the APCs as not just a body that offers spiritual help, but as an important institution for integration and well-being of African refugees and asylum seekers both in Düsseldorf and in other jurisdictions as part of its mission praxis.

Beyond APCs, this position contributes to the argument that the religious faith of minority groups and identity can be viewed as a context for reception and integration. This will contribute to the theoretical understanding of the role of groups with common religious and cultural identity in economic and social integration. It will also look at the barriers to the integration of identity groups with special reference to African refugees and asylum seekers in the research field.

CHAPTER 6

INTEGRATION AND IDENTITY OF AFRICANS IN DÜSSELDORF

6.0 INTRODUCTION

The response of APCs to the plight of African refugees and asylum seekers whilst demonstrating compassion in mission also leads to integration. The researcher's construction of APCs as a representative of migrant African Christianity in Düsseldorf is positive for mission, particularly in the area of integration. From the analysis of the data that were collected in the previous chapters, one issue that emerged was the importance of identity to APCs' mission praxis (Vignoles, 2018:1-5; Bhugra & Becker, 2005). Although APCs need to be more proactive, they remained vital to the integration of African refugees. The concept of integration as discussed in this chapter is considered a part of the mission praxis of APCs.

This chapter explores the issue of integration and identity from the perspective of the findings made from the data and analysis thereof, examples from other contexts, and the researcher's knowledge as a resident in Düsseldorf. It focuses on the impact of identity as a paradigm for mission and integration as suggested by the collected data. It looks critically at APCs as agents of integration through the lens of religious identity. It also discusses cultural/ethnic identity and integration (Hanciles, 2008:144-148).

Finally, the downside of identity on integration among Africans in the research area is discussed. The argument is that religious and cultural/ethnic identity is fundamental to the integration of African refugees and asylum seekers in Düsseldorf. For APCs to fulfil their mandate as missionaries, they ought to utilise ethnic/cultural identity but keep emphasising their global religious identity.

6.1 INTEGRATION IN THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

Integration is a wide concept and therefore difficult to measure. However, in the research field, some indicators can help streamline discussions about integration. The ability to speak German fluently, and secure a residence permit, decent accommodation, and employment, signify integration among Africans. These factors improve social, economic, and other relations between migrants in general and natives. In discussing integration, therefore, for example, we can think of social, economic, and religious integration. APCs' mission focus ought to encompass all these different levels of integration (Klarenbeek, 2019:1-20).

Two processes of integration exist according to the data collected and presented in Chapter 3, namely: (i) the government officially structured process, and (ii) the unofficial one administered by friends and identity groups such as the churches. The official aspect covers the process governed by either state or local authority regulations. Sometimes these are put together as a bill or compact to dictate the integration process. The unofficial aspect covers the support received from individuals and groups with whom they share the same cultural/ethnic identity or religious faith. Currently, APCs appear to play their role unofficially although much proactivity is needed. Because migrant churches are made up of people from either the same country or region, they become agents for integration even without formal structures.

The use of languages widely spoken on the African continent for their meetings is an important avenue to help African refugees feel at home and get the opportunity to express themselves. Facilitating integration is an important role APCs should fully embrace and explore for mission. It can expand the frontiers of their mission practice and even bring them into dialogue with civil authorities for the good of African refugees and asylum seekers. The role of APCs in the integration of African refugees and asylum seekers who associated with them lends credence to the theory that integration is a local affair. Although integration bills are made at the national level, implementation and measurement of its success or failure take place locally (Bommes, 2012:125-156; Hinger, 2020:9).

The responses offered by African refugees and asylum seekers interviewed (cf. Chapter 3), give the impression that the integration process they go through is related to different phases of their lives. It relates to events in their home countries, and experiences on their journey and in their new environment. These are the pre-migration, migration, and post-migration phases. The *pre-migration phase* covers the psychological, social, financial and spiritual preparations before the start of the journey. This is difficult to define since pre-migration conditions are not the same for every refugee or asylum seeker. The *migration phase* covers conditions encountered during the journey. These are mostly life-threatening experiences particularly for those who use unapproved routes. The *post-migration phase* covers the period of arrival at the destination country. This phase involves the process of registration, screening, asylum application, and integration. At the integration stage, official programmes are followed. The individual makes the effort to identify contact points and participate in the life of society. This stage also covers moments of intimidation, discrimination, and deprivation for many refugees and asylum seekers (MacGregor, 2018:1-7).

From here onwards, the focus shifts to life in society. The official integration process in the research area involves learning German; taking orientation courses; learning a trade/profession; and access to social assistance, education, and healthcare. Another process leads to recognising skills and qualifications acquired in the refugee's native country and in the research context. When the legal status of residence is obtained, an opportunity exists for a family reunion. The aim is to get refugees and migrants to participate fully in the social, economic, and cultural life of the destination community (Hinger, 2020:3-16; Trines, 2019).

In all these phases, the government, NGOs, and the church have their unique roles to play. To transform the lives of individuals and society, effective integration policies both in the state and within APCs are needed which hope to help refugees fully develop their potential, ensure that their rights are not trampled upon, and make them feel at home in their new environment. If integration is understood as the opportunity for refugees and asylum seekers to achieve meaningful participation in the life of the destination community, then the issue of them gaining employment is crucial. It is perhaps the foremost issue in determining the success or otherwise of integration. All the other individual factors that ensure the facilitation of employment are equally crucial.

Through employment, refugees and migrants, in general, make a meaningful contribution to the economy of the destination country. Both refugees and destination countries are presented with opportunities through integration. Refugees and migrants get economic opportunities. The destination countries are also enriched culturally, economically, socially, and spiritually (Kenneth-Nagel, 2018:139-145; Hanciles, 2008:3).

However, one important concern for countries receiving refugees is how to achieve integration. This has become a prominent policy challenge. Whereas some groups of refugees or migrants easily integrate, others do not (Hinger, 2020:2-4). The reasons for this challenge may differ from one context to the other. From the perspective of African refugees and migrants, two reasons could generally be assigned for the difficulties to integrate:

Firstly, refugees and migrants in most cases lack a clear understanding of the process and its contents. As a result, an internal struggle exists. Part of them wants to integrate fully. The other part is hesitant and suspicious. This part prefers to retain the natural identity. It takes a bit of time for some people to overcome this internal struggle and find the right balance for integration to occur.

Secondly, sometimes the content of the integration programme by the state is very rigid and inward-looking. It does not make room for any of the migrant's cultures and perspectives. This situation causes conflict between the migrant, on the one hand, and the society, on the other hand. The effect is migrants' fierce resistance to integration and the destination country's insistence to exclude them if they fail to integrate. The question of content, scope, and the agency for integration are therefore fundamental to the success of integration at least from the point of view of refugees and migrants.

These challenges not only affect refugees and migrants. They bring upon the destination community the stress of adapting to diversity. Recognising this challenge, integration policies focus on curing some of the burdens on the destination community. This is done through measures that ensure that refugees and migrants fit into the system. The 2016 National Integration Bill in Germany focused primarily on incorporating refugees into the destination society. It introduced a

legal distinction between those who are generally considered as ‘genuine’ and ‘bogus’ refugees depending on the likelihood of staying.⁸⁸ The genuine ones are deemed likely to stay subject to successful participation in integration programmes (Hinger, 2020:5-8).

Currently, many countries in Europe have accommodated several refugees and asylum seekers. Whilst some may return to their home countries when conditions are right, a good number may desire to remain and continue with their lives in the destination country. Already, many are doing well socially and economically. These have broken barriers and acquired citizenship. There are still others whose efforts at integrating are met with one obstacle or the other. As such, not much progress in terms of integration has been achieved (UNHCR, 2014).

Angela Merkel at the height of the refugee crisis in Germany strongly asserted that: “Those who seek refuge with us also have to respect our laws and traditions, and learn to speak German”.⁸⁹ This statement aligns itself with the general notion within which integration bills are framed where the burden of integration is unequally shared. Although her position is understandable, the integration concept appears to have no room for the perspective of refugees regarding the processes for integration. Her remark emphasised the importance of refugees to integrate. The destination community expects to see refugees integrate. Although a shared responsibility, the burden of integration is heavily shifted onto refugees. Eligibility for social benefits and a residence permit are all tied to the ability to participate in integration programmes (Hinger, 2020:8; Trines, 2019). In the light of these challenges, APCs’ mission praxis requires a revision so that it focuses not only on religious integration but economic and social integration too. Because of the particular identity advantage APCs hold over government integration agencies regarding the integration of African refugees and migrants, the awareness to make holistic integration a priority in their mission praxis is crucial.

⁸⁸ Draft law for the integration law. (2016). Draft of an integration law.

Viewed March 07, 2019, from <http://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Mmeldung/2016/entwurf-integrationsgesetz.pdf%3Fblob%3DpublicationFile%26v%3D4>

⁸⁹ P. Oltermann, (2015). ‘Angela Merkel pledges to cut German immigration figures but rejects limit’. *The Guardian*. Viewed 10 February, from www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/14/angela-merkel-pledge-cut-german-immigration-figures.

The stringent measures for integration by governments, although necessary, raises the question of the extent to which they infringe the human rights of refugees and asylum seekers. This is because, whilst the governments of countries from which refugees come have failed to protect and ensure the safeguarding of their human rights, receiving countries tie the provision of the same rights to the refugees' ability to comply with certain regimented conditions such as language study and other integration measures. The protection and safeguarding of refugees' human rights are therefore not afforded to them on the sole basis of being displaced and vulnerable human beings. According to a publication on the 9th of March, 2021, by a local news outlet "*Deutsche Welle*" (German wave) titled: 'Germany maps the road to integration in 100 steps', plans are far advanced to roll out an improved integration of immigrants. In this new plan, integration does not only cover learning German and becoming employable through *Ausbildung*, but also focuses on introducing "integration scouts". This is a measure to ensure a kind of mentoring relationship between German trainees and non-German trainees.

From the perspective of integration policy formulators, this is a way of ensuring that the integration of refugees and migrants is achieved without any difficulties. From the perspective of refugees and migrants, it appears that gradually, what is supposed to be an integration process through these 'improved' measures smacks of assimilation. This proposed process, which moves beyond the current threshold of language, cultural orientation, and employment skills to ensure that immigrants subtly adopt the culture of their new environment through a mentoring scheme for the sake of social cohesion, amounts to assimilation. And if this assumption is sustainable, then, to an extent, this is an 'assault' on the identity of immigrants.

The other side of this argument is to determine what integration means. Possibly, the understanding levels of the policymakers and those to be integrated are in the opposite directions. Nonetheless, integration policies should not be defined by short-term, narrowly defined local and national interests. It should be interactive and considerate in nature. APCs in the research field can cure this suspicion with a holistic integration mission policy which can earn the government's backing. One common phrase the refugees and migrants, frequently hear in the research context is; "Here is Germany". This simply implies that the way of doing things in the destination community is defined and migrants must learn to fit in or go elsewhere. The UNHCR in its definition of

integration recognises the need for a multifaceted perspective in framing integration policies. It considers integration as a dynamic and multifaceted two-way process that requires all parties concerned to bring their perspective on board (UNHCR, 2005).

Defendants may argue that integration policy is formulated to prevent a parallel society developing as a result of the influx of refugees in Germany (Trines, 2019). Although tenable, integration policies must be developed from both the perspective of the destination community and the refugees or immigrants. In this way, both the destination country and refugees or immigrants become beneficiaries when integration occurs. The desire to stretch the generally accepted threshold of integration contributes to the resistance of integration and the use of unethical survival tactics by some refugees or immigrants (Hinger, 2020:1-16).

For example, in the German city of Osnabrück, the local integration department recognised the importance of acknowledging different perspectives in its integration efforts. The department noted:

Any demands for ‘integration’ are based on the erroneous assumption that integration processes are shaped above all by the immigrants themselves, since they have to integrate into the ‘host society’. However, if we understand integration as a task for society, including the opening of established social institutions, it becomes clear that the concept of integration must be based on a broader conceptual foundation (City of Osnabrück, 2018:9-10).

This observation represents a reasonable departure from the framing of the integration bill that puts all the burden on refugees and migrants. It introduces a sense of responsibility on the destination society to contribute to the integration of immigrants. Thus, the burden of integration becomes a shared responsibility between immigrants and natives. The city’s successful integration record shows the importance of this realisation. Currently, one out of every four persons you meet in the city has a migrant background. The statistics are even more impressive among children under six years of age. They account for 48% of that population (City of Osnabrück, 2016).

The researcher associates with the position expressed by the local integration department in Osnabrück. Integration policies must consider different perspectives including that of immigrants. Also, the demands for universal integration ought to be understood as a task for all. So, whilst immigrants are expected to be incorporated into the life of the destination society, the latter also adjusts to the presence of immigrants in their midst. Thus, both immigrants and natives integrate along with each other. This understanding eliminates the stress on the 'foreignness' of immigrants in integration discourse. It also reduces elements of discrimination and fully protects the human rights of refugees and immigrants (UNHCR, 2014).

In this manner, African refugees and asylum seekers who do not associate with APCs can still have their integration facilitated with fewer challenges to deal with. However, association with APCs becomes an added advantage in the quest to integrate into the research area.

Associated with integration is the issue of disintegration in the destination country, on the one hand, and reintegration in the country of origin on the other hand. Disintegration here refers to measures that exclude refugees and asylum seekers from integrating. For example, as noted in the 2016 National Integration Bill, those classified as 'bogus' face disintegration. Usually, those disintegrated are returned to their country of origin. This situation does not bode well for the country of origin which loses the remittances following the disintegration of their citizens overseas and faces the challenge of ensuring their reintegration (Hinger, 2020:5-8).

Integration and disintegration programmes are not universal across the states in the research context. While some states permit refugees irrespective of their legal status, to move into private flats, others do not permit that. Until recently, the focus of integration did not include persons with insecure residence who did not benefit from official integration programmes at all. The focus was only on those with secure residence (Hinger, 2020:2). Such arrangements suggest the disintegration of refugees and asylum seekers. This is because it does not allow them the opportunity to achieve dignified participation and incorporation into the life of the destination community.

The change also affected the economic life of both those with secure and insecure residence permits. For example, to work, all refugees and asylum seekers are required to have lived in Germany for at least three months. They will then need to apply for initial work authorisation. This application is granted on the basis that the employment prospects of German nationals, EU citizens and permanent residents will not be affected adversely.

Once granted, for a period of three years, they are not subject to any employment restrictions. At the expiration of this period, they can apply for permanent residency status. Attached to this permit is an unrestricted work permit. For applicants to obtain a permanent residence permit, they must demonstrate sufficient knowledge in German and financial sufficiency. Those living in the context under temporary protection status are required to reapply for stay permits at regular intervals since their original asylum application was rejected. Nevertheless, this category of asylum applicants can engage in economic activities and after five years in Germany apply for a permanent residence permit (Trines, 2019; MacGregor, 2018:1-7).

But the reality is that because processes leading up to the determination of refugees and asylum seekers' official status takes time depending on the individual's case, integration of a sort takes place informally. The integration that takes place at this level is heavily initiated and guided by identity. Persons in this category rely on 'integration lessons' informally from people they know from their region, ethnic group, or religious faith who have integrated. Well after the determination of one's status officially and subsequent completion of integration programmes, the role of identity remains vital. It helps in dealing with daily social and economic challenges (Marten, Hainmueller and Hangartner, 2019:1-20).

It appears that there is no 'one-size-fits-all approach' to dealing with the challenges of integration. A multifaceted approach adapted to the context may be a significant step towards finding answers to the integration challenges. As discussions at the policy making level are ongoing to shape integration policies, local dynamics and perspectives deserve equal attention. These local dynamics are context-specific and familiar with the challenges of integration. They can therefore contribute solutions to challenges such as the marginalisation of refugees, and denial of their human rights.

In the end, disintegrated asylum seekers are repatriated and face reintegration in their home country. Therefore, whilst discussing the integration challenges facing the destination countries, countries of origin of the refugees and asylum seekers also face their own challenges in reintegrating returnees into their culture and society. Reintegration has to do with the process of ensuring that individuals who return to their native countries and cultures regain the social, economic, and psychological stability needed for a productive life (IOM, 2019).

This process depends on several internal and external factors for its success. The experience of diverse cultures along their journey to Europe, and the impact of the culture of the destination country on them before repatriation, requires attention. This is because the interactions they had through migration alter their perspectives on life. In effect, the person who left is not the same person who returns. Identity alteration has occurred. In returning to their country of origin, attention should be paid to how they reset themselves to reintegrate sustainably.

Besides the issue of identity alteration, the ‘shame’ of returning home empty-handed makes any discourse on reintegration crucial. For many of these returnees, this situation alone is a major hurdle to overcome. Most at the time of arrival back in their native countries have lost social contact with friends and old schoolmates. Rebuilding a social network takes time and effort. Then there is also the factor of the state of the local economy in the native country. The weak national economy of most African countries makes the quest of returnees to reintegrate a daunting one (IOM, 2019).

The need for equal focus on reintegration policies in the same way that integration policies have attracted global attention cannot be overstated. Indeed, the IOM and EU recognise the difficulty facing some of these returnees. The IOM notes that while some return to contexts that are ready to receive and facilitate their reintegration, others do not have such favourable contexts. For these, external support is required to ensure their reintegration is more sustainable. This support needs to address issues related to the psychological, social, and economic dimensions of their lives. It must also find ways of positively impacting the community. The EU on its part recognises that for return

and reintegration policies to be effective, the rights of migrants must be protected. Opportunities for development within the countries of origin must also be ensured.⁹⁰

The importance of ensuring an effective reintegration programme for African returnees not only holds benefits for them but also for the society at large. This is because the exposure in terms of knowledge acquired whilst living in Europe is crucial for the development of their local societies. Effective reintegration compensates for the incidence of brain drain occasioned by the migration of Africans to other parts of the globe. It is for such reasons that issues of reintegration must be given the needed attention. Since returnees live among their people and a familiar cultural setting, they are likely to reintegrate faster when external support is available.

6.2 IDENTITY AS AN AGENT FOR INTEGRATION

Whilst international cooperation is needed to help frame integration policies, identity is integral to integration at the local level. This is because, in the general scheme of things, persons with both a secure and insecure residence permit form part of the society. As such, their integration or otherwise has a bearing on the overall well-being of the society. Their daily social and economic survival is significantly aided by their identity. From the perspective of the researcher, the role of identity is fundamental to the integration of African refugees and asylum seekers in the Düsseldorf.

Identity refers to unique characteristics such as: innate qualities, physical attributes, set of beliefs, practices, and the way an individual or a group of individuals view themselves and are categorised by others. Through identity, the question of who an individual or a group is, gets answered. The aspects of the unique characteristics of the physical attributes may include language, dress, and complexion. These for refugees and asylum seekers represent a source of definition to those searching for identity. Identity is part of their self-conception and perception of nationality, race, gender, beliefs, and way of life. For refugees and migrants in general, the process of migration and the experience of interacting with different people alters their identity to an extent (Vignoles, 2018:1-5; Bhugra and Becker, 2005).

⁹⁰ IOM, the EU, and partners discussing the sustainable reintegration of migrant returnees in Africa and inequalities at the European Development Days in Brussels on June 18, 2019.

Identity represents an important tool for analysing issues such as racism, refugeeism, nationalism, and other ideological systems in the context of analysing international relations. Identity is also important to the subject of migration and integration (Sackmann, Peters, and Faist, 2020). But the notion of identity and commitment to the same can sometimes cause instability in society. This occurs when an identifiable group or individual feels marginalised and discriminated against. The urge to protest and demand a change in such a circumstance usually turns chaotic. On the other hand, identity can serve as a source of positive energy for liberation, integration, and development of a minority community such as refugees.

When identity is used to create political constituencies in which case self-agendas are pursued, identity becomes a destabilising factor. It is however productive when it is used as a tool to create understanding regarding the different aspects of the identity of groups and individuals and their unique contribution to issues such as integration (Hanciles, 2008; Hieronymi, 2005:133-150). In both cases, however, identity is characterised by the degree to which one is disruptive and the other constructive.

Among migrants and minority groups, the issue of identity in both collective and individual sense is fundamental to their integration and survival. Through APCs, African refugees, and migrants in general, have their identities affirmed. This is evidenced as follows:

Firstly, through faith in Jesus Christ, they obtain a new identity as God's children. This identity as God's children breeds a sense of equality, fellowship, and accountability amongst them. Therein also lies the promise of stability and liberation essential for their integration.

Secondly, their African identity is affirmed through culture and worship life. They get the opportunity to worship in their mother tongue and in a manner suited to their religious orientation. Both identities hold them together, and provide support for their quest to integrate economically, socially, and spiritually. Since many African refugees and asylum seekers are low skilled and less formally educated, identity serves as a context of support for their integration. As identified in the data collected (see sections 3.1.1.1 and 3.1.1.2) of Chapter 3 and 4.1.3.3 of Chapter 4), African refugees and asylum seekers enjoyed language, financial, emotional, social, and in some cases,

legal support, from their kith and kin. On the economic front, they relied on their identity to bargain for items purchased from the Afro shops and also for job opportunities (Battisti, Peri and Romiti, 2016).

A recent work conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in conjunction with the European Commission indicates that it takes about 20 years for refugees in Europe to attain the same employment rates as other migrant groups. This is because they are low skilled migrants.⁹¹ In the face of such realities, identity as a factor for integration requires intentional exploration.

6.3 RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION

As already noted in the two previous chapters, African refugees who found their way to APCs see the church as more than just a place of prayer and religious instruction. There, they hear their mother tongue spoken. Both themselves and their children get the opportunity to interact with their home culture through songs, planned activities, and clothing worn. Informally, they receive advice and encouragement from their kith and kin about life in their new environment. Additionally, they receive some language support and information about job opportunities. Although uncoordinated, APCs facilitate the integration or incorporation of African refugees and give them an identity (Adogame, 2010:58). The whole idea of belonging to a community of one's people and sharing a common religious faith is helpful for integration (cf. Chapter 3).

The other side of the coin is the content of the APCs' faith which enjoins practitioners to demonstrate love, care, compassion, hospitality, and godliness. These amiable qualities contribute to their identity (Allen, 2020: 52). They are largely formed through lessons drawn from stories of the Jews who themselves were refugees at some point in their history (Cuèllar, 2018:501). As custodians of these biblical examples, the APCs have the tools to provide the right context for the integration of current African refugees and asylum seekers (Hadjiev, 2018:515-527). APCs may

⁹¹ Information from a keynote lecture delivered by Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General at Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, Washington DC, 7 October 2016.

not be the first point of reference for any discourse on refugees and integration. They, however, have the context and the capacity conducive for integration of their kith and kin.

APCs serve as an alternative source of information. African refugees receive informal language skills training as their letters from the immigration and integration office are read out to them. They are presented with examples of their own who have integrated. This is a very important psychological boost for a vulnerable people. According to Foner and Alba (2008), in the USA, religion serves as a bridge for migrants to integrate easily. In Europe, however, religion serves as a barrier to the integration of migrants. This research and other studies considered in this section will illuminate this argument. Do religion and religious identity influence the integration of migrants in Europe or oppose the process?

Mooney (2013) conducted a survey about viewing religion as a context for reception in a case study of Haitian immigrants in Miami, Montreal, and Paris. The survey considered the religious landscape in terms of the history and contemporary dynamics of each of the three countries. It showed that the consensual differentiation between religion and state as is the case in the USA promoted incorporation or integration of immigrants. Religious institutions provided immigrants with a common meeting place, offered them social services, and helped create an identity. The study concludes that: “Haitians in Miami have greater indicators of symbolic and structural incorporation than in Montreal or Paris” (Mooney, 2013:100). Here, the religious institutions played a crucial role in serving as the mediating platform between those who arrive and the state. This situation helped the Haitian immigrants to maintain both their ethnic and religious identity.

The survey affirmed the role of the Haitian church in assisting the integration of Haitians in Miami in the following words:

Because many Haitians who had arrived in Miami were undocumented or awaiting decisions on asylum claims, and because of racial prejudice and language difficulties, many of the poorest Haitians were afraid of directly approaching government institutions that were frequently highly bureaucratic, unfriendly towards them, and unfamiliar with Haitian culture and language. To bridge this gap, the leaders of Notre Dame and the Toussaint Centre

mediated between Haitian immigrants and the government in three ways: a) political advocacy, b) social service provision, and c) community organizing (Mooney, 2013:102).

A similar attempt was made in Montreal. The Haitian religious leaders in Montreal in collaboration with the Catholic clergy through their Christian faith “sought to improve Haitians’ reception by the Quebecois government and to build a strong community to support Haitians’ incorporation” (Mooney, 2013:105).

This was necessary because unlike the USA, the Quebec government was wary about religion eroding the Quebecois’ national identity. Although Catholicism is pronounced in this context, religion generally does not enjoy the ‘public power’ to enable it to influence national policy such as integration in contemporary times. Reasons for this are attributable to internal happenings among Haitians and other external factors. The situation in the French context according to the survey is no different from Montreal.

Initially, there was a collaboration of a sort between the government and Haiti Development, a group that prosecuted Haitians’ integration and socio-economic agenda. Later, the state became the only face for integration issues. The public influence of religion in the context is increasingly diminished. This is a result of France’s unbending secular identity. Haitian religious culture was opposed to France’s secularism. State control and supervision of religious activities were deemed necessary for social cohesion. The strong Haitian Development activists currently focus more on developmental issues in Haiti than issues of Haitians’ integration in Paris. Hitherto, they were the interface between the French government and Haitian asylum seekers (Mooney, 2013:99-111).

In the Polish situation cited in section 2.5.2 of Chapter 2, religious context and identity became the platform, firstly, for reception and secondly for integration. Overall, the examples from Montreal in North America and Paris in Europe suggest that the observation of Foner and Alba (2008) is true, namely, that in contexts of secular nationalism, religious faith becomes a barrier to the integration of migrants. The data provided by this research in section 2.5.2 of Chapter 2, Chapters 4 and 5 which discuss examples from Poland and Germany (European territories), suggest that in Europe, religion and religious identity serve as a bridge for the integration of

migrants. This occurs when religion is given recognition in a context. In the specific case of this research, APCs served as a context for the integration of African refugees through their responses, albeit informal. APCs in Europe, through structure and a revision of their understanding of mission, possess the potential to aid the integration of Africans in a more pronounced manner than is the case currently. They also stand the chance of acquainting themselves with the church asylum law and exploring it to the benefit of its vulnerable members.

Despite APCs' current lack of proactivity toward African refugees and asylum seekers, the latter still find it necessary to approach the former for help on various concerns. African refugees do not only approach APCs for help but also have high expectations of them as a compassionate community. Therefore, central to APCs' mission must not only be the proclamation of the gospel. Issues associated with the proclamation of the gospel, such as compassionate social interventions, deserve equal attention (Harold, 2019:3-4; Furlong, 2017:283; Louw, 2016:336-354). APCs' religious faith and identity are viable contexts for the integration of African refugees and asylum seekers in Europe. This becomes more pronounced through appropriate response to the contemporary international human migration challenges. By emphasising their religious identity, APCs not only position themselves as a context for reception and integration of African refugees but also allow themselves to expand their mission frontiers.

The absence of religious institutions' influence in the public life of a nation may not be for the best. The responses religious institutions offered to the refugee crisis in Düsseldorf as reviewed in section 2.5 of Chapter 2 of this research, affirm this notion. The language support, clothing, food, accommodation, and spiritual support which religious institutions offered cannot be discounted. In instances where difficulties existed, the public presence of religious bodies was still felt through volunteers.

Again, since in some cases the government's integration programmes kick in after a decision is made on asylum applications, religious institutions in the intervening period help those individuals with an insecure residence permit. They begin the integration process for many refugees and migrants through their usual church activities. Through their informal language support, financial help, and platform for networking, refugees and other migrants are gradually eased into the system.

For instance, during Sunday divine services, it is customary within migrant churches to introduce newcomers and mention their specific needs to the congregation. Here, both the church as an institution and individual church members share the burden of providing a solution to the needs mentioned. The idea is to demonstrate godly love and compassion to aid the integration of a fellow African Christian who is vulnerable.

As participants of the *missio Dei*, the promotion of secular ideologies and civil laws reduces its impact in the public space. Such moves relegate religious influence in public life. Montreal and Paris are examples. The situation denies the church its divine right to fully participate in the *missio Dei*. Religious context and identity as demonstrated in this section are agents for integration even in Europe. Religion ought to be viewed as an important option to solving contemporary international human migration and integration challenges (Mooney, 2006:1455-1468).

In many European countries, migrant churches are mono-national in nature. In some instances, one finds more than one nationality or region in the churches. The APCs succinctly exemplify this observation. This situation suggests the interplay of both religious and national identities in migrant churches. The sense of community bond which migrant churches foster is important for the integration and socio-economic development of refugees and migrants in general. In framing integration policies, therefore, the role of the church as an agent for integration ought to be given prominence.

6.4 CULTURAL/ETHNIC IDENTITY AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AMONG AFRICANS IN DÜSSELDORF

Culture expresses the way a group of people live in a society. Culture is learned and transferrable to succeeding generations. It binds people together and makes them unique. Within cultural groups are different ethnicities. Cultural/ethnic identity covers race, gender, sexuality, and the way of life identifiable to a group. Following discussions on the importance of religion and religious identity as a context for reception and integration, this section looks at the issue of cultural/ethnic identity as a context for economic integration among Africans in Düsseldorf. Währisch-Oblau (2009) in her work suggests that Pentecostal/Charismatic migrant churches in Germany reject any ethnic or

national labels in identifying them. The data collected and presented in Chapter 3 also supports this observation as they try to emphasise their Christian identity, but there is no denying the fact that cultural/ethnic identity plays a key role in how these congregations are formed (Währisch-Oblau, 2009:48).

Although Africans have significant cultural differences, some major commonalities do also exist. Culture or ethnicity is a habitat for seeking and expressing identity. Within identity lie opportunities for integration. The issue of economic integration among Africans is critical since the majority have economic ambitions as their foremost agenda. Even those who initially arrive as refugees and asylum seekers strive for economic success.

One theory suggests that when refugees of the same cultural identity or ethnicity live in the same space, their economic and social integration is hindered. This theory assumes that, when refugees are dispersed, their economic and social integration is assured. In Germany for instance, refugees and asylum seekers are not permitted to relocate from their assigned federal state within a certain period of their arrival. Punitive measures such as cancellation of financial support are applied to offenders (Marten et al., 2019:1-20). However, little evidence exists to affirm this theory among Africans in the research context. The following existential factors suggest that among African refugees, cultural or ethnic identity facilitates economic integration:

Firstly, as indicated in section 4.1.1.1 of Chapter 4, the issue of language is crucial for African refugees and migrants. Due to language difficulties, newcomers who arrive in the context either as refugees or voluntary migrants look for persons from their cultural context to help them find their bearing. Usually, these newcomers do not have the luxury of time to go through the formal laid down procedures before they are empowered to make money. Economic pressures back home do not afford them time to hang around for a long time without a job. Unfortunately, their knowledge of German is minimal. Through cultural ties, these newcomers rely on their kith and kin to read, interpret, and reply to their letters. When vacancies occur at workplaces, or in advertisements, newcomers are informed and schooled on how to secure the job (Gürer, 2019:1-20; Hinger, 2020:1-27).

Secondly, the kinds of jobs most Africans do in the research area are usually similar and located within a specific enclave. They are mostly found in the service sector of the economy. Transmission of information about opportunities for jobs is easily networked when they live together or are close to one another. It is therefore a disadvantage to newcomers to stay far away from their kith and kin. Sensitive and useful pieces of information are missed. Staying together or closely by people of one's cultural/ethnic background enables them to share information, experiences, and ideas at a much faster rate. Significantly, those who have their businesses employ their own people. At other times they get the opportunity to be introduced to individuals who can help them. Although some newcomers report instances where their own people have cheated them after assisting them to find jobs, this model remains effective (Dimitrov and Angelov, 2017:584-600).

Thirdly, one gets to learn about the local economy faster through cultural/ethnic identity. The local economy in this sense means where to buy less costly food, clothing, and get affordable accommodation. Within the research context, cultural/ethnic identity is a tool for economic negotiations such as bargaining for a discount on food and other items sold by a person of one's own cultural/ethnic group. In many respects, this education also includes access to lawyers who offer a special discount to Africans in terms of fees charged. These lawyers have many African clients and therefore have affordable rates for them. It also includes education about NGOs and religious organisations that render services to newcomers and ensure that they are not exploited economically. These pieces of information and education are fundamental to their economic integration. This is because at this stage the income levels of newcomers are very low and therefore any education to help them make ends meet is vital (Gürer, 2019:1-20; Dimitrov and Angelov, 2017:584-600).

Fourthly, cooperative associations are formed along with cultural/ethnic identities. These associations are there for individuals of the same regional, national, and ethnic identity to be helped economically. They support members in times of bereavement, marriage ceremonies, sickness, and other difficult circumstances of life through monthly contributions. Due to the common cultural/ethnic identity of members of the association, there is a mutual appreciation of the support needed in times such as bereavement, marriage ceremonies and incapacitation. Through these

associations, soft loans are sometimes made available to members to help empower them economically. As typical of developed countries, a bank account cannot be opened when a person does not have legal documentation. This means that for the newcomer who is without legal documents, access to bank credit is beyond reach. In such circumstances these associations founded on cultural/ethnic identity come in handy to support members economically.

The ethical principles such as communal living, good neighbourliness, compassion, hospitality and love found in the Bible are part of the African ethos. These are demonstrated by the cooperative associations formed to reflect the identity of the African society. These ethics are taught through instruments such as proverbs which serve as a moral paradigm for Africans. For example:

“If you do not allow your neighbour to have (or reach) nine, you will not have (or reach) ten”.

In other words, if you do not help your neighbour to make progress, you will also not make progress. Other proverbs which serve as a moral compass for behaviour include:

“If you take good care of the plantain, take good care of the banana too because no one knows when famine will occur”.

This proverb inspires the African to be thoughtful in whatever he/she does. The future is unknown, therefore treat all persons with dignity. For the one you despise today may become useful to you in the future. This proverb promotes good neighbourliness and ensures peaceful co-existence. Another popular one that readily comes to mind is:

“Even if the housefly does not have anything, it rubs its hands together”.

This proverb invites the African to support the needy with the least he/she can afford. In other words, it is ‘unAfrican’ to look on whilst others suffer and not offer any response. The value of humanity and human dignity is generally promoted among Africans (Gyekye, 1998:55-71).

Based on such cultural education, a response to the plight of the vulnerable is expected of the African who may not even be a Christian. Therefore, whilst the Christian identity was fundamental to the response of APCs as noted in the data collected, their African orientation and experience as migrants should play a significant role too. Perhaps not, much thought has been given to the influence of their identity as Africans and experience as migrants to APCs' mission endeavours in Düsseldorf.

Fifthly, through cultural identity, security is provided for both refugees and natives. By living together or closely relating to one another, they get to know themselves. This association serves as a check on members of the migrant society. As such, informal monitoring of activities of members in the society easily takes place. Also, support of diverse kinds is offered at critical times to members of a cultural/ethnic identity. By this, social cohesion is fostered. Refugees in this context are not enticed into vices. They enjoy adequate social support.

Sixthly, through cultural/ethnic identity, refugees and asylum seekers obtain emotional support from their own. Stories of how older generations went through screening, application, and finally getting a favourable decision, are significant. They serve as a source of inspiration for current African refugees and asylum seekers. The fact that newcomers know those of their own kind who have succeeded gives them strength to face their stress and uncertainties. Again, they represent a significant contact network for information and guidance.

This primary knowledge from the research context is corroborated by a study conducted on the economic integration of refugees in Switzerland. In that context, some refugees were by law upon arrival made to reside in a specific location in their first five years. They were not allowed to relocate within the stated years. The study discovered that refugees who lived among their co-nationals were more likely to enter the labour market. It also found that in a company that employed several refugees, the majority of them shared nationality, ethnicity or spoke the same language. The conclusion was that ethnic residential networks underlined the dissemination of information about job vacancies (Marten et al., 2019).

This study and data provided by the researcher from the research field contribute to the position that rather than what is feared, cultural/ethnic identity facilitates economic integration. Cultural identity as a context for economic integration among Africans in the research context occurs at different levels. There is the regional level where economic integration occurs simply because the refugees and migrants are all from Africa. The other level is where economic integration takes place because they come from the same African country. A level of economic integration also occurs because they come from the same cultural/ethnic group of a country.

Furthermore, a study by Gürer (2019) which examined the integration process from the perspectives of refugees in Germany, discovered that refugees and asylum seekers found it difficult to access information or help from members of the destination community. They experienced limited social interaction with members of the destination community. Members of their identity group served as the point of contact for integration (Gürer, 2019:1-20).

Another study found that Turkish refugees and asylum seekers located within the North-Rhine Westphalia in Germany mostly approached Turkish organisations for help instead of the natives. This was because these organisations shared similar political views and social backgrounds as them. The study further suggested that even within the Turkish community in the North Rhine Westphalia, significant differences existed. The more similar the shared identity, the more likely a relationship is to develop. Turkish refugees and asylum seekers do not easily develop relationships outside their specific identity group (Röing, 2019).

This situation applies to Africans in the research area as well. It is so concrete to the extent that they move between identities in a day in pursuit of an advantage. In some instances, the African identity is invoked. In others, either the cultural/ethnic or religious identity is appealed to in order to receive support. For the Africans in the research context, identity plays a key role in their integration and survival.

The most probable downside to the economic integration arising out of the cultural/ethnic identity is the level and quality of jobs to which newcomers are referred. Usually, because African refugees and migrants are driven by economic motives, enough time is not spared to improve themselves

academically which in turn affects their level of socialisation and economic capacity. As a result, their recommendations may not offer a high paying job. Newcomers are therefore confined at the same economic level as the generation before them. In some unfortunate situations, university graduates from Africa find themselves doing the same job as their friends whose formal education terminated at the senior secondary school level. This observation is affirmed by a study in Germany which found positive effects of ethnic identity on employment but also suggested that economic gains obtained in this manner decreased rapidly (Battisti et al., 2016).

Among the Africans in Düsseldorf, a pattern has emerged in the last few years. When they arrive, they prefer to live among their own and join the APCs. As already discussed, within these two communities they get easy access to information and integrate faster. However, as their economic life improves, many of them relocate to areas considered to be German natives' suburbs. They however continue to fellowship with their own people in the APCs. This observation lends support to the theory that identity is not constant but that it evolves depending on factors that impact it. These factors may be either external or internal to the individual or group (Hieronymi, 2005).

Having said that, it is important for APCs in the research context to frame their mission praxis in a way that does not discount the importance of cultural/ethnic identity to both mission and integration of African refugees but at the same time does not overemphasise it. This is because, when cultural/ethnic identity is overemphasised by the APCs, it narrows their prospects of reaching out to persons who fall outside this identity group. Such a situation then diminishes the APCs' quest to impact the religious landscape of Europe.

6.5 CHALLENGES TO RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL/ETHNIC IDENTITY INTEGRATION AMONG AFRICANS

After receiving refugees and asylum seekers from other parts of the globe, recipient countries in Europe are now left with the challenge of integration. Factors that facilitate or inhibit integration may differ according to the context. This section engages with barriers to integration associated with religious and cultural/ethnic identity. Although the potential of religious and cultural/ethnic identity for the integration of Africans in the research field is noted, some significant barriers also exist (Trines, 2019). These are discussed below.

Firstly, African refugees who arrive receive pieces of informal advice regarding how to integrate from their kinsmen. This is limited to the scope of experience and knowledge of their older kith and kin. This means that the more exposed a person is the better the advice given. When a person of limited exposure influences a refugee who just arrived, this person's potential to integrate faster is severely hampered. This challenge, as already discussed in section 6.1, suggests that many refugees and migrants do not usually understand the demands of integration policies. Their interpretation thereof is also not progressive because their perspectives are mostly not incorporated into the policy formulation. In this sense, identity as a factor for integration does not turn out to be progressive. On the other hand, when a more informed briefing is received from persons with whom African refugees share a common identity, identity becomes a progressive factor for integration. The key issue then is the quality of information transmitted in the absence of proper structures (Hämäläinen, 2019:121-123).

Secondly, identity projects a certain image in the minds of the native population and thus may serve as a barrier. This perception is grounded in the behaviours of members of that identity group who first arrived in the destination community. The image associated with members of an identity group can be positive or negative. New refugees and asylum seekers without assessment are sometimes judged based on the image their identity group has projected over the years. Newcomers therefore have a hurdle to overcome before they take their first step. This situation serves as a barrier to integration because they may be unfairly denied the opportunity to be treated based on

the content of their character. In this sense, identity becomes a factor for discrimination and disintegration.

Another challenge associated with this point is the lack of social contact and interaction with natives. Sometimes as a result of the negative image projected against a particular identity group, natives do not offer them social interaction. An African refugee or asylum seeker sits next to them on the bus or train, and they leave for another seat. By these actions, a non-verbal message of ‘your kind is not welcome here’ is relayed. The opportunity casually to exchange greetings and pleasantries with natives becomes a remote possibility. The situation is worse for political asylum seekers who in most cases do not enjoy open social interaction with their identity group members. This lack of social interaction limits the chances of successful integration.

Thirdly, the comfort provided by members of one’s identity group can serve as a barrier to integration. For some people, discomfort triggers their sense of ingenuity. It pushes them to ask questions, acquire new knowledge, and learn to do things for themselves. The need to reply to letters, attend interviews, and find a job is an impetus for creativity. The support and comfort they receive from members of their identity group, therefore, become an incentive to be laid back. As it is usually said, “Necessity is the mother of invention” (Plato). One example revolves around language study. Although within an identity group refugees/asylum seekers get a lot of help, it takes them a long time to be fluent in German because when they meet, they use their mother tongue. This comfort in the long run becomes a barrier to fluency in German which is a condition necessary for social and economic integration in the research context.

A typical example is a response offered by R14 when the researcher asked about how life would have been had they not received any help at all from the APCs. In this regard, R14 noted:

“Ehmmmm I think it would have been normal because you will make do with resources at the camp. For instance, today you have to go and meet this lawyer, do this or that for yourself so I think if you are left alone, you can also do what you have to do for yourself”.

R14's response implies that they would find creative ways to survive if there was no help from the APCs. In this sense, help from identity groups in a way serves as a barrier to integration and creativity.

Fourthly, the evolving nature of identity is another challenge. As noted in section 6.4 of this chapter, identity is not constant. It is subject to varying factors available to the individual or group. This suggests that identity as an agent for integration does not produce the same result over time. Its success or failure in relation to integration is dependent upon factors capable of influencing it. These factors may include education, economic success, religious experience, or social association. The experience of changing identity within a given period can be progressive or retrogressive. This is perhaps determined by the success or failure of the person's integration profile.

Fifthly, another barrier is negative feedbacks from the destination community which are a great disincentive to integration, such as instances of discrimination, racism, and mistrust by members of the destination community towards members of an identity group. Sometimes the attitude that says 'you are different from us' makes identity group members who are in the minority feel unwelcomed. A sense of acceptance and respect from the destination community bodes well for peaceful coexistence. It also helps the integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Thus, the way people see and react to them influences to a large extent their self-esteem and identity. The lack of sincere social interaction after all that they experienced on their way to the destination country is inimical to the quest for integration (Gürer, 2019; Trines, 2019). Although a general challenge, African refugees and asylum seekers feel it the most because of their unique complexion.

Sixthly, one problem associated with identity groups is the incidence of jealousy. In its escalated form, this incidence of jealousy leads to betrayal. Here, a jealous identity group member leaks information about a compatriot who entered the country illegally to the police or immigration authorities. The victim is picked up, interrogated and in most cases, repatriated. Stories like this are the reason some African refugees and asylum seekers are weary of associating with their kith and kin. This situation also sometimes repeats itself at the workplace. Jobs are either lost or suspensions meted out to individuals following a betrayal by one's identity group member.

This section highlighted the challenges posed by religious and cultural/ethnic identity. However, religious and cultural/ethnic identity remain vital factors for the integration of African refugees and asylum seekers in the research area and perhaps beyond. They are also important for the success of APCs' mission in Düsseldorf.

6.6 PROPOSAL FOR MISSION

From the discussions so far, APCs will need to be strategic in their mission approach and participation in the *missio Dei*. Adopting a universal mission strategy may not be effective owing to the different identity groups found in the research context. They must have a mission strategy designed for reverse mission and another designed for migrant mission (Kim, 2011b: 148).

Historically, the Pentecostal movement utilised elements within African culture to strike a chord with Africans to thrive in Africa as noted in section 2.2.1 of Chapter 2 (Anim, 2009:32). APCs will also need to identify elements within the host culture and utilize them in order to thrive in Europe. Here, APCs will have to regulate their African and migrant identity and emphasise an identity in Christ as the basis for worship and mission. This emphasis on Christian identity is important for achieving reverse mission.

On the other hand, APCs will need to emphasise Christian identity, cultural/ethnic identity, and the experience of migrants as a design for doing migrant mission and ensuring the integration of African migrants. In this context, APCs utilize their multiple identities just as the Apostle Paul utilised his identity as a Roman and Jew to his advantage (Acts 22:22-29; Philippians 3:4-5). In this way, the APCs utilise identity to the fullest as a tool for pursuing both migrant and reverse mission in the research field. From the perspective of refugees and asylum seekers, identity becomes a viable option for both religious and economic integration in their new environment.

6.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter established the relationship between integration and identity. It discussed integration and identity as it plays out in the research context. It emphasised the importance of framing

integration policies to include different perspectives such as the views of refugees and asylum seekers. It touched on the disintegration and reintegration of refugees and asylum seekers as areas connected with the subject of integration. The factors that constitute disintegration were discussed. Likewise, the challenges and importance of reintegration were also considered.

Identity and its impact on the integration of refugees and migrants in the context of APCs' mission praxis was explored. Two types of identity in relation to integration were explored. The chapter looked at the impact of religious and cultural/ethnic identity as the two types of identity for the integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Thus, the chapter argued that identity is an important factor for the integration of minority groups.

In contexts where the church is recognised by the state, religious identity facilitated the integration of refugees and migrants in general. The positive impact of cultural/ethnic identity on the survival and integration of its members was also highlighted. Whilst religious and cultural/ethnic identity facilitate the integration of African refugees, APCs ought to frame their mission praxis in a manner that utilises both but consciously emphasise its religious identity to expand.

The chapter also recognised the negative factors associated with religious and cultural/ethnic identity in relation to integration. These barriers, when left unaddressed, limit the potential of refugees and migrants to integrate. The recognition of the importance of identity in the mission praxis of APCs led to the proposal of a two-pronged mission strategy. The next chapter concludes the by providing a summary of the key findings and suggesting possible areas of further research.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSION

7.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes the entire research study. In addition to presenting key sections of the research and highlighting the researcher's original contribution, it discusses recommendations aimed at offering fresh perspectives on how to handle contemporary mission, migration, and integration challenges. These recommendations also seek to underscore the importance of a compassionate religious response to the refugee crisis. The chapter concludes with suggestions for areas of further research in the field of mission and migration.

7.1 KEY SECTION(S) OF THE RESEARCH

As noted in sections 1.1 and 1.2 of Chapter 1, the researcher's encounter with the situation of refugees in Düsseldorf motivated him to conduct this study. A request which his congregation received from the '*Diakonie*' on behalf of some Syrian refugees in Unterrath, a suburb of Düsseldorf, was also a motivating factor. This request generated both academic and missiological questions regarding the response of the church to contemporary challenges in society such as the refugee crisis.

This research aimed to investigate the responses of APCs to the plight of African refugees in Düsseldorf between 2015 and 2020. This contextual study, therefore, set out to examine the current condition of African refugees in the research context and the APCs' response to their plight. It also sought to explore the APC leaders' understanding of their migration and the refugee crisis in relation to thoughts expressed in Matthew 25:31-46. The issue of survival tactics of African refugees and their impact on the APCs' participation in God's mission was given attention (cf. sections 3.1.1.2 of Chapter 3 and 4.1.3.1 of Chapter 4).

To deal with these issues, scientific data were required. APCs who belong to the Christian tradition considered as the fastest growing Christian tradition in the world were selected for the case study (Anderson, 2013:1; Lindhardt, 2018:1). As recipients of African refugees in the research area, the researcher selected some APCs for the research. The researcher made a painstaking attempt to trace the history of APCs in Düsseldorf (see section 1.1 of Chapter 1).

Owing to their Christian identity as a compassionate community, African orientation, and experience as migrants, the researcher deemed APCs the most appropriate Christian tradition whose response to the plight of current African refugees hold academic interest. Their response was defined according to their attitudes, actions, and written social action policy aimed at mitigating the challenges of African refugees and asylum seekers.

Being a qualitative study, the case study approach was employed. Under a case study approach, the single or instrumental case study approach was selected. Two data collection methods were employed, namely: a semi-structured online interview for selected APC leaders and African refugees/asylum seekers, and an examination of written church documents. In total, 24 persons purposefully selected from four specific APCs participated in this research. In each APC, one leader and five African refugees or asylum seekers were interviewed online. These Pentecostals hailed from the western, eastern, and southern parts of Africa.

The Covid-19 restriction protocols in the research context influenced the chosen methodology. As such, the researcher was denied the opportunity to benefit from physical interaction with the research participants. He was consequently denied the opportunity to expand the scope of his questions while observing non-verbal communication cues such as the tapping of the feet. Nevertheless, sufficient data were collected via the data collection methods that were utilised which aided the analysis and formulation of recommendations.

To recap, this dissertation consisted of seven chapters and comprised a literature and empirical study. The study emphasised the importance of the church in God's mission (Okesson, 2020:65-93; Tennent, 2010:101). The mission of God aims at redeeming the totality of creation. As part of its core mandate, the church's response to the challenges of society is to participate in God's

mission. The church in mission, therefore, focuses on both the spiritual and physical dimensions of life.

To this end, an inquiry into the APCs' responses to the plight of African refugees was legitimate. The extent to which they have used their Christian identity as a compassionate community, African identity and experience as migrants and former refugees to help current African refugees integrate became the focus of the research.

The literature study component of the research focused on mission and migration. An argument was made for a contextual definition of the Pentecostal phenomenon since the phenomenon manifested itself diversely in different places (Ma et al., (eds.), 2014:2). This argument was also predicated on the relationship between understanding a definition and the responsibilities therein. In other words, the APCs' response to both the spiritual and physical needs of society is linked to the content of who they are and what they represent. The study proceeded to review the response of Pentecostals to Africa's religious landscape, individual lives, politics, and economics. Here it was discovered that contrary to Pentecostals 'other world' centred, they have begun to show an interest shift toward social issues although for them more can be done (Warrington, 2015:1-34; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2010:1-6; Ma et al., (eds.), 2014:390).

The relationship between mission and migration, and mission and identity minority groups in a globalised world was also reviewed. It was discovered that a strong bond exists among these. As result, a theology of migration ought to take the centre stage of Pentecostal theological discourse. This discovery led to the review of responses to the plight of refugees in the research field. Responses reviewed here looked at NGOs and religious institutions. In most instances, responses took the direction of the majority to minority; there were also responses from the privileged to the vulnerable. The question of what the response of the privileged minority to the vulnerable minority is, remained unanswered. This set the stage for empirical research to fill this knowledge gap.

The data collected indicated that African refugees have needs and require support from different sectors of society. Their needs include language skills, money, legal documentation, employment, accommodation, counselling, prayer, and emotional support (Trines, 2019). These needs when

attended to aid their survival and integration. APCs in Düsseldorf see themselves as agents of mission sent by God to carry out mission in the research context and beyond. However, APCs who consider themselves as God's people sent to carry out mission in the research field were not proactive in their response to the needs of African refugees and asylum seekers. Although they responded to their needs based on a shared Christian identity, the APCs' response lacks proactivity and compassion.

This was evidenced in most cases, in that they waited for African refugees to approach them for assistance before offering a response. Some of the assistance offered include prayer, language support, money, information about jobs, and accommodation. Counselling was offered based on the individual's request. Individual church members also offered various forms of assistance to African refugees and asylum seekers.

The APCs inattentiveness to the needs of African refugees and asylum seekers stems from the fact that their conception of mission is largely focused on the proclamation of the gospel and prayer in the power of the Holy Spirit. This limits their sense of social ministry to their members (Bevans and Schroeder, 2011:328-330). The incidence of some refugees and asylum seekers breaking their trust in the past also contributed to their response. Additionally, the non-registration of some APCs, as well as lack of highly educated personnel, infrastructure, and money, meant that they were unable to engage in public advocacy and utilisation of church asylum policy.

It was revealed that this laid-back approach and lack of compassion on the part of APCs toward the plight of African refugees led the latter to adopt survival tactics such as telling creative stories, verbally changing their sexual preference identity, getting pregnant out of wedlock and contracting marriages of convenience (see sections 3.1.1.2 of Chapter 3 and 4.1.3.1 of Chapter 4).

Although these survival tactics were adopted by many African refugees and asylum seekers for a reasonable end, they reflected unfavourably on APCs' missionary activities. The reason is that action and confession cannot be divorced in the context of mission. Both the APC leaders and African refugees/asylum seekers that were interviewed however alluded to the importance of prayer, although with different emphases. Whilst APC leaders see prayer as integral for the success

of mission, African refugees and asylum seekers see prayer as an important factor for securing legal documentation to enable them to stay in the research context.

The data also indicated that orality was an integral part of the APCs' mission praxis. That is, although they engaged in some social ministry, much of what they do is not written or captured in any document. This observation means two things: 1). Through orality APCs maintain a very important identity trait of African society. Oral literature has been a feature of the African society even in contemporary times. 2). Future members of APCs will have a hard time trying to recapture their mission trajectory in the research area. Current members will also have difficulty trying to evaluate their mission praxis over a period.

Lastly, the data suggest that APCs serve as a context for the integration of African refugees/asylum seekers in Düsseldorf through religious instruction, cultural orientation, and social interaction.

These findings highlight the following issues:

- (i) Vulnerable minority groups like African refugees/asylum seekers have pressing needs and therefore require help.
- (ii) There is a missing link, i.e., compassion, in the mission praxis of APCs. This speaks to the need for the church and APCs in particular to review their concept of mission and participation in the *missio Dei*.
- (iii) APCs through their mission praxis serve as agents for the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in the destination countries.
- (iv) Identity is important for Christian mission, and economic and social integration among the African migrants in the destination countries.
- (v) A social action policy is needed to help improve the situation of African refugees and asylum seekers. An effective social action policy properly executed will curb the incidence of unethical survival tactics usually adopted by some refugees and asylum seekers.

The point made in this research is that identity largely facilitates the APCs' mission and integration of migrants. The two forms of identity discussed in Chapter 6 were religious and cultural/ethnic identities. The researcher contends that these two identities serve as a context for the integration

of African refugees and asylum seekers in the research context. However, they were not without barriers. Identity sometimes serves as a barrier to the integration of minorities. The challenges associated with religious and cultural/ethnic identity in relation to the integration of refugees and asylum seekers require attention.

Whilst one may assume that since APCs share a similar identity and social circumstances with African refugees and asylum seekers that they will respond proactively toward the needs of their vulnerable kinsmen, this research has shown that this is not the case. Due to their conception of mission, bad previous experience of dealing with refugees and asylum seekers and some legal trappings APCs have reduced their social ministry to welfare issues within their congregations. The proclamation of the gospel and prayer in the power of the Holy Spirit has remained the mainstay of the APCs' conception of mission (Harold, 2019; Bevans and Schroeder, 2011:328-330).

The consciousness arising out of the findings of this research is therefore crucial for a revision of mission praxis among APCs within the research area and beyond. This is because they challenge the core function of the church as rooted in the *missio Dei*. Such a revision will broaden the APCs' missionary activities and encourage a more holistic outlook. Having already noted the importance of APCs as agents for the reception and integration of African refugees/asylum seekers, a revision of their mission conception will mean that the vulnerable amongst them and beyond will receive the needed compassionate attention. Lastly, as noted in the data (see section 3.1.1.1 of Chapter 3) a revision of the APCs' conception of mission will foster engagement with civil authorities and promote collaboration for the good of African refugees/asylum seekers.

7.2 SUMMARY OF ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

Following the literature review, empirical data collection, and analysis of the data, this study contributes to the body of knowledge in the following ways:

Firstly, it argued for a contextual definition of Pentecostalism as a means of highlighting the unique expression of the Pentecostal phenomenon in specific contexts. The advantage of this situation is

that the identity produced by a contextual definition will influence the actions and responses of practitioners to existential issues.

Secondly, this research highlighted the importance of the prosperity gospel among Africans. It noted APCs' key ability to engender a psychological shift of its members from poverty to the possibility of prosperity through the preaching of the prosperity gospel. This is because, for a poor and broken society the ray of hope is important as it gives reason(s) to live. The study, however, also argued for a balanced emphasis on prosperity and suffering within Pentecostal theology.

Thirdly, this research developed a diagram to depict the essence of compassionate mission through the interpretative framework of Matthew 25:31-46. This diagram simply shows the various areas of needs the church can attend to as a way of alleviating the suffering of the vulnerable.

Fourthly, the empirical data collected and presented represent this study's unique contribution to the body of knowledge. Through the data, the knowledge gap that existed regarding the response of APCs to the plight of African refugees and asylum seekers in Düsseldorf was filled. Although contextual, it gives a sense of what may be the case in similar contexts.

Fifthly, this research argues for a de-Africanisation of APCs' style of worship if they are to achieve reverse mission in Europe and other continents beyond Africa.

Based on the insights of this research, the following recommendations are made.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

For African refugees and asylum seekers, the church is more than a religious institution. APCs represent a context for multiple functions. It is this notion of APCs' importance obtained from the data collected and analysis made that informs the recommendations. African refugees and asylum seekers have existential challenges, and in some respect, look to APCs for a proactive compassionate response to mitigate their physical, economic, emotional and spiritual challenges. Such a response from the APCs is effectively executed on the back of well thought out social

action policy. This will help reduce, if not eliminate, challenges confronting African refugees and asylum seekers. Recommendations discussed in this section are divided into three broad areas, namely: mission, migration, and integration. Thereafter, recommendations are made for further research. These are discussed further under their respective sub-headings below.

7.3.1 Mission

(i) *Re-evaluation of mission praxis* – Mission as discussed has both spiritual and physical content. Deducing from how APC leaders see themselves and what is happening on the ground concerning their response to the plight of African refugees, a re-evaluation of mission is needed. The researcher recommends that APCs in the research context re-evaluate their concept of mission in order to overcome any gaps.

Currently, it does appear that their focus is heavily tilted towards the proclamation of the gospel and winning new members. Their involvement in social action lacks proactivity. Instead of waiting for the needy to approach them for help before they act, a conscious effort should be made to identify the needy and help them. Such a move will not only be in tandem with the demands of holistic mission but will demonstrate compassion to alleviate the suffering of the people on the margins (Harold, 2019:1-2; Amissah, 2020:153-168).

As already noted in previous chapters, APCs' identity as a compassionate community of Africans and former refugees/migrants requires that they review their mission practice in the research field. These attributes of theirs place them in an advantageous position to impact society more than is currently the case. And this is likely to happen when they re-evaluate their concept of mission. This recommendation is made bearing in mind all the constraints pertaining to the context.

The re-evaluation of what mission means to them should also pay attention to how APC pastors and leaders who do other jobs express their Christian faith through these secular jobs. In expressing their Christian faith through their secular jobs, a conscious effort is needed to be extra diligent, compassionate, honest, and selfless in going about their secular jobs. Thus, through their lawful economic pursuits, they become missionaries to the Christian faith. This is another paradigm of doing mission in the research context (Hanciles, 2008: 6).

(ii) *The need for a social action policy* – The practical expression of compassion toward the disadvantaged in society fulfils the demands of the *missio Dei*. Proclamation of the gospel alone is not enough to satisfy God’s mission of rescuing and restoring creation.

So far, the data collected showed that APCs in Düsseldorf do not have a comprehensive social action policy that advocates for the caring of both living and non-living resources of creation. The need to develop a social action policy to guide the church’s social action, as well as advocate for the judicious use of the resources, is important. We live in a world characterised by corruption and, inequality, and where abuse of natural resources, marginalisation of the poor, and discrimination against minorities is a frequent occurrence. The redemptive agenda of the *missio Dei* demands that the church caters for all these issues. Failure to address these systemic challenges neglects the church’s prophetic role (Matthew 5:46-48; Luke 6:36; Ireland (ed.), 2017:19-25; Harold, 2019:1-2).

In situations where the personnel available to a particular APC do not match up to this demand, the assistance of qualified Christians in other denominations can be sought. This is because some of the areas which a comprehensive social action policy covers are a bit technical, for instance, pollution of the environment, global warming, sustainable development, migration, integration, globalisation, economic inequalities, and geopolitics. As far as all these areas impact human beings and other members of creation, the church must have its say on them. This policy must incorporate the current welfare schemes operational in the APCs. So as the welfare schemes take care of in-house matters, the other aspects of the social action policy attend to matters beyond the walls of the church.

(iii) *Revision of welfare schemes to give them a compassionate identity* – One of the issues identified in the data collected is the lack of compassion in framing welfare schemes. In most congregations, welfare benefits are tied to a person’s ability to contribute to either the congregation or the welfare scheme financially. In this way, the poor who find themselves in dire need but have not contributed are denied any benefit. This situation requires revision because it is un-Christian and lacks the virtue of compassion. What these congregations can do is to set aside a percentage of their total income to take care of welfare matters. This approach bodes well for social cohesion

in the congregations. Also, it does not expose the financially poor. Instead, it shows compassion and love which are attributes of the Christian faith (Acts 4:34).

(iv) *Creation of volunteer groups* - From the data collected and analysis made, the issue of volunteer groups became apparent. The creation of volunteer groups to offer services to the poor, or the church supporting volunteer groups outside the church to undertake social activities, proved vital. It is recommended that given the peculiarity of the context, APCs should form volunteer groups to carry out the church's social activities. As already noted in Chapter 4, there is a benefit for both the church as an institution and the individuals who engage in volunteer work. This situation addresses the lack of proactivity in APCs' social action approach (Reinhard, 2016:81-94; Smith and Kramer, 2015:2).

(v) *APCs should network for aid to support refugees* – As part of the church's corporate social responsibility, APCs in the research context can network with other organisations and secure food, water, and clothing for refugees within their reach. Whilst some organisations have material resources to support people on the margins, the church has the human resource and credibility required for social work. In partnership with such organisations, aid can be secured for the poor and marginalised in society. Such a move gives empirical meaning to the preaching of the gospel (Acts 20:1-5; Romans 15:26).

(vi) *Chaplaincy* – Unfortunately, some African migrants have got involved in irregularities which have landed them behind bars or at the deportation camps. Chaplaincy is one of the key areas APC leaders can specialise to support their unfortunate kinsmen. Due to the peculiarity of the language challenge in the research area, Africans who are in prison, or at the deportation camp, and who do not speak German may find life extremely tough. Visits to such persons will provide great support. It will also reveal the areas of difficulties for appropriate response by the church.

There are also instances of Africans who are admitted to hospital but do not have any relatives around to visit. Hospital chaplaincy is another area APCs can take up. Here, the focus is not only on church members but Africans in general who are admitted to the hospital. The emphasis is on Africans because of the issue of language and culture.

(vii) There is the need for emphasis on a *theology of mission and migration* within African Pentecostal theology. This projects migration issues to the centre of the theological discourse. A well-defined theology of migration will increase consciousness and elicit a theological response to migration and integration challenges. Such a theology considers the place of refugees and migrants in God's missiological plan. The absence of this contributes to the lack of appropriate response from APCs (Montgomery, 2012:1; Padilla and Phan (eds.), 2013:1-2).

Experiences of the Jews in the Old Testament, Jesus' own experience in Egypt as a refugee recorded in the New Testament, the history of the spread of Pentecostalism from Azusa Street to Africa, and the experiences of contemporary migrants as discussed in Chapter 2 are important resources for developing a theology of mission and migration. The development of such a theology will put migration issues at the heart of Christian mission and theology. APCs' response to issues of migration and integration will then be properly informed and shaped. It will also serve as a platform for migrants to derive strength to face their current challenges. Out of a clear theology of mission and migration, a conscious effort to read the Bible from the perspective of the migrant and migrant centred liturgy emerges (Cuèllar, 2018:501).

(viii) *The need for a common dialogue* – APCs are not the only migrant African Christian body in the research context. There are also Methodists, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Baptists and Adventists. Through a common dialogue, all these African churches can come together and put in place mechanisms to help the vulnerable African community.

Together, the African Christian community can actively work for justice, peace, reconciliation, integration, preservation of creation and interreligious dialogue. APCs' inability to take advantage of the Church Asylum policy could be resolved when efforts are pulled together from these different sources. The solo ministry approach among African migrant churches in the research field does not benefit the vulnerable African brothers and sisters.

7.3.2 Migration

(i) *Reducing economic migration* – There are root causes for the mass movement of people across the globe particularly from the south to the north. Some of the root causes for this are wars, persecutions, pandemics, political instability, climate change, and lack of economic opportunities (Padilla and Phan (eds.), 2013:1-10). Already, some APCs mobilise financial resources to undertake projects such as school buildings in Africa. This initiative should be expanded to target poverty alleviation in Africa. In this scheme, credit unions could be set up to provide soft loans for the youth through their local branches to stem the current tide of migration.

Such an initiative is crucial because in many African communities all a young person requires to start up a small business is 100€. To help at least ten young people in a month is a massive step towards poverty reduction. The cumulative effect is that many young people in Africa will become gainfully employed. In the end, the number of those who migrate in search of greener pastures is likely to reduce. The situation of a brain drain is also brought under control when the migration of young Africans to other continents is reduced. The African continent, therefore, retains its most productive force for economic development and sustainability.

(ii) *Partnership with NGOs for poverty alleviation* - Another economic impact APCs could make in Africa to reduce economic migration is to offer financial support to NGOs offering skill training to young people in deprived communities. Already, several local NGOs are striving to provide skill training to unskilled young people on the continent. Some of the areas include dressmaking, soap making, and information communication technology (ICT). However, funding is a problem for them. Through a partnership with some of them, unemployment which leads to agitation and political unrest in some communities is eliminated.

Although some governments on the African continent pursue youth employment programmes, they are over politicised. In the end, those who really should benefit do not. However, the non-partisan and compassionate nature of the church serves as an attractive point to motivate many to join a skill training programme with which the church is associated.

(iii) *Advocacy against illegal migration* – Africans living in Europe know that many of their compatriots try to enter Europe through unapproved routes. Many of these people either die on the high seas or in the desert. There are instances where traffickers take captive some migrants, thus cutting short their dream of reaching Europe. Those who make it to Europe usually recount their experiences in horror. APCs can be at the forefront of advocacy against illegal migration (MacGregor, 2018:1-7).

APCs' advocacy can be in the form of communique, engagement with authorities, online activities, and through songs. Songs are powerful means of speaking to Africans and could be a viable means of carrying a message across to the youth in Africa especially. This will not only be a response to the problem but a lifesaving campaign. For effective results, APCs can partner with organisations such as IOM, UNHCR, Advocacy Network Against Irregular Migration, and other like-minded international bodies to promote safe, orderly, and regular migration.

Through its voluntary return programme, the IOM, for example, has opened offices in many African countries in their quest to tackle some of the root causes of illegal migration. In partnership with the EU, many initiatives are being undertaken to ensure that incidences of illegal migration are reduced. This includes the setting up of an EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. Out of this, economic support is given to returnees to help the reintegration process. A partnership with them to educate young Africans and share experiences with them in order to reduce illegal migration has become more feasible than previously.

In Germany, the government, following data on yearly remittances to Africa, has set up an online platform called WIDU.africa in partnership with the African diaspora in Europe to provide capital and coaching for small scale businesses in Africa. In this partnership, an African who lives in Germany registers as a donor and finds a relative or friend who owns a small business in Africa that requires capital injection. It could also be a partnership with a person in Africa who only has a business plan. Together a business proposal is crafted. The partner in Germany commits to contribute half of the cost, and the partner in Africa also contributes the remaining half of the cost. WIDU.africa will then provide an amount equal to the contribution of the partners to help finance the business. This is free money, but the business will be monitored.

This initiative is one that APCs can introduce their members to so that whilst relations back in Africa are empowered economically, the incidence of irregular international migration is reduced. This is possible because a sustainable source of income is created for the youth in Africa (WIDU.africa).

7.3.3 Integration

(i) *Formation of humanitarian corridors* – APCs can model their responsibility regarding the integration of African refugees according to what the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy is doing. In the Italian experience, the churches initiated what they called “humanitarian corridors”. This initiative was designed to save lives when they realised that many migrants were dying on the high seas. Their efforts facilitate safe and legal access to Italy from outside the EU. They make use of the national valid humanitarian visa as contained in Article 25 of the Schengen Visa Code. Currently, one corridor operates from Lebanon, and another corridor for Ethiopia under the supervision of the Catholic Church is being reviewed. On the drawing board, Morocco is being considered for a corridor.

The Protestant Church hosts many of the refugees and asylum seekers who arrive in Italy through the initiative. The minors amongst them are accommodated in a separate facility. To the churches’ credit, some quickly learn Italian and find jobs. Others find themselves in the university and other apprenticeship programmes. This is a healthy sign of migration and integration which the church facilitates. APCs in the research context can learn from this Italian experience.⁹²

(ii) *APCs as a context for integration* – APCs have to their advantage Christian identity, African identity, and experience as migrants. These circumstances of the APCs in Düsseldorf qualify them to be classified as a privileged minority group. Most of their members have lived longer in the city for many years, are familiar with the system and can speak German. They have adequate knowledge about immigration issues and the culture of the city. Through their interactions with the natives, they have earned their trust to a considerable degree. Many of them are married either

⁹² Conference on the 20th CCME General Assembly Churches’ Role in the Integration of Refugees and Migrants Prague, 22nd June 2017.

to Africans or other nationals and have raised families in the city. The presence of one's immediate family members when alone in a foreign land is therapeutic.

Economically, the majority of APC members are employed and have experience in the labour market. The most important of all is the acquisition of a residence permit or German nationality. Many have acquired them. These are privileges that the current generation of African refugees do not have but urgently need. APCs and their members, being privileged, represent a useful context to integrate current African refugees (Mooney, 2013:99-111; 2006:1455-1468).

The data collected showed that APCs served as an important platform for information about jobs, accommodations, and opportunities in the system which are essential elements for integration. Not only that, the emotional, language, and financial support extended to refugees were important for their integration. With these interventions, it is essential that APCs officially reckon themselves as a useful context for the integration of African refugees.

This they can do when a structure is added to their responses. For example, a research desk to investigate the needs of African refugees for appropriate response could be set up. Another desk could oversee monitoring and evaluating the church's social responses. A third desk could also be responsible for a discipleship programme for African refugees who join the church within a specified period. In this way, both the physical and spiritual needs of refugees are catered for to facilitate their integration (Hämäläinen, 2019:121).

During Sunday divine services, a deliberate effort should be made to create a platform for education on simple laws, opportunities available in the context and to share experiences. The expertise of qualified persons outside the church could be secured for such educational programmes. Special days such as World Migrant and Refugee Day should be incorporated into the church's programme and celebrated. It allows the community to reflect on their past, as well as present, and make resolutions for the future.⁹³

⁹³ Migrants Refugees.(n. d). Viewed 19 August 2022, migrants-refugees.va.

(iii) *APCs as an interface between African refugees and local authorities* – In Chapter 6, the argument was made that integration takes place at the local level. Therefore, integration policies must consider the perspectives of refugees to make it the task of all. This argument finds practical expression when APCs position themselves as an interface between refugees with whom they share common experiences and the local authorities. This relationship allows them to make inputs towards integration policy formulation at the local level. It also gives them the platform to argue for ‘community-welcome’ culture initiatives in integration policies where there are none. This positions APCs as the official mouthpiece to do advocacy on behalf of African refugees in the research context. Such a move will go a long way to reduce; if not eliminate; the incidence of refugees’ disintegration. This cooperation strengthens state and church relationships to deal with the problem of integration (Hinger, 2020:3-4; Bommers, 2012:125-156).

(iv) *APCs as an interface between African refugees and African culture* – Africans are typically brought up to view life through communalistic, religious, and humanistic lenses. They may share this worldview with other cultures. Nonetheless, being communalistic creates recognition for extended family ties, friendships, and other relationships. As such, there remains a connection among Africans. Repositioning themselves, APCs could become the platform for African cultural education and formation.

Some of the second and third generation of African migrants in the research area have little contact with African culture. Some do not speak any African language, have never visited their ancestral home and are not even accustomed to African history. To serve as an interface for this category of young people, APCs can organise traditional services, a history week, and an exhibition Sunday. These fora provide an opportunity to introduce them to their roots. Such a move will help clarify some lingering questions about themselves and strengthen their knowledge of who they are. Whilst APCs provide language support in German for current African refugees, local African language support can also be offered to these young people who have no such knowledge.

APCs can organise an annual or biennial field trip to any African country of their choice for these young people who have appropriate documentation to have a life-changing experience about their heritage. Such an experience will better position these young people to appreciate the religious and

cultural life of their parents or older relatives. They will integrate better in the congregations and emerge as ambassadors of African religious, social, and traditional values in the research context.

(v) *APCs and mass media* – The mass media provides APCs with enormous opportunities to educate Africans in the research field. APCs are noted for their extensive use of the mass media to promote the gospel. However, in addition to promulgating the gospel they can also disseminate useful tidbits on integration via these communication platforms to facilitate the integration of African refugees. Live Facebook sessions can be frequently held so give viewers the opportunity to ask questions. Additionally, air time on African radio stations can be purchased for education on integration. Moreover, guidance to newcomers can be prepared and published on social media platforms to aid the integration of African refugees in the research context (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2010:29-30).

(vi) *Legal support* – Sometimes the interviews and processes refugees and asylum seekers go through require legal coaching. Not every one of them can afford the services of a lawyer or legal aid. APCs as a matter of policy can arrange to make legal aid available to refugees and asylum seekers amongst them so that they are appropriately represented in the law court. Usually, an individual or organisation registers with a law firm and pays a fixed monthly premium so that the law firm provides legal service anytime it is needed. APCs can enter such arrangements on behalf of their members.

Apart from documentation related issues, there are instances where private employers try to cheat refugees and asylum seekers of the wages they deserve. In such matters too, the services of a lawyer come in handy. Another area of conflict that needs legal help is rent agreement. Sometimes, private property owners try to circumvent the rent agreement they have entered with refugees and asylum seekers. And because they know that these people do not know much about the law regulating such agreement, they cheat them. Thus, for the poor and marginalised, the church can arrange legal support for them.

(vii) *Creation of African migrants' support fund* – Here, the focus is on all African migrant churches in Düsseldorf. This includes Roman Catholic, Protestant, and all the different strands of

the Pentecostal/Charismatic traditions. Since they do not all have the same numerical strength and economic power, it is sometimes difficult to meet the financial requests they receive. The researcher recommends that all the African migrant churches come together and create a fund purposely for alleviating the financial burden of refugees, asylum seekers, and illegal migrants of African descent. This recommendation is made on the back of the concerns expressed by African refugees and APC leaders interviewed regarding the needs of the former. Once a quarter, a joint service could be held during which funds are raised and the proceeds administered solely to address the financial needs of their unfortunate kinsmen.

(viii) *Church twinning* – In some cases, asylum seekers are repatriated after an unsuccessful application for a legal residence. Having lost their former selves, professions, and significant contacts since their migration, returning empty-handed is a difficult ask. Some of them as a result of the trauma of being denied a residence permit develop mental health issues. Such persons require care and coping mechanisms to live a productive life again in their country of origin. It is for this reason that the idea of church twinning is important (Ireland (ed.), 2017:9-10).

A twinning relationship between the APCs in the research context and Pentecostal denominations in the African countries where the returnees are going to reside will be an important step. Through this relationship, emotional, psychological, financial, and spiritual support can be extended to them. This support will help them cope better with their situation. It will also help them to reintegrate into their communities much faster. This arrangement will also call for a cordial relationship between APCs in Düsseldorf and authorities at the repatriation camps. Regular visits and interactions with inmates before their deportation date are important for their emotional and spiritual well-being. Out of this twinning relationship, other areas of co-operation can be developed for the benefit of the African people. Thus, just as APCs in the research area serve as agents for the integration of African migrants so will the twinned church in Africa serve as an agent for reintegration for the returnees.

(ix) *APCs and Reintegration Policies in Africa* – There is a need for APCs to be involved in shaping reintegration policies in Africa. Whilst the EU and IOM combine efforts to help African countries to develop comprehensive policies for reintegration, APCs can support the initiative with

their wealth of experience as African migrants. Some of them were irregular migrants who entered the research context through dangerous routes. Others acquired secure residence through asylum applications. Today, they are properly integrated. With their depth of experience in migration and integration issues, APCs can offer their expertise in a more coordinated fashion to their home authorities to help in the formulation of local reintegration policies (African Union Commission [AUC], AU Department for Social Affairs, 2018).

7.3.4 Recommendations for further research

Furthermore, the findings and discussions in this dissertation prompt further research into why African Churches in Düsseldorf do not take the initiative in reaching out to help new migrant arrivals, but rather wait to be approached by them. Is it because they themselves still feel insecure and do not wish their situation to be compromised by such involvement? Is it because they have begun to identify more with the resident majority population rather than with the African and migrant identity of the new arrivals? Or as suggested by P2 in section 3.1.1.1 in Chapter 3, is the non-registration of APCs the main reason?

Another potential area of research requiring further investigation is how the second and third generations of children born to African refugees evaluate the religious and cultural/ethnic context as agents for integration.

Further research could also focus on the contribution of African refugees and asylum seekers to the operation of APCs in the research area or look at how refugees see themselves in the context of mission in the research field.

Lastly, research could also be done to assess the impact of APCs in the research context on the socio-economic conditions of their home and destination countries within a defined period.

7.4 THE RESEARCHER'S REFLECTION

As noted in sections 1.1 and 1.2 of Chapter 1 and repeated in section 7.1 of this Chapter, this study is the outcome of the researcher's encounter both directly and indirectly with refugees in

Düsseldorf. The focus of the research was set by this encounter. The researcher thus, set out to understand and interpret the situation of African refugees/asylum seekers and how the African churches, in particular those of the Pentecostal orientation, have responded to their situation.

As an African churchman, the findings and consciousness raised by this research are not only meant to create an understanding of the refugee crisis and challenge APCs' mission praxis in the research area, but they are also useful for the researcher's tradition and work in the research context. The interest shown in this study, and the permission that was granted to the researcher by the hierarchy of his church to pursue this dissertation alongside his regular schedule, indicates the benefit they hope to reap from the study.

The magnanimity of the selected APC leaders to participate in the research and also encourage African refugees/asylum seekers in their respective congregations who qualify to participate, shows their understanding of the importance of this research to their mission endeavours in Europe. Whilst some of the selected APC leaders are persons the researcher has personal knowledge of, the same cannot be said of the refugees and asylum seekers who participated in the study.

As someone who is not a member of the Pentecostal tradition, the opportunity to interact with Pentecostals and listen to their perspectives on various issues was enriching and illuminating. APC leaders' expression of their self-conception as missionaries sent by God to do mission in Europe and the openness to share details of their ministry among African refugees/asylum seekers were helpful. With the changing trends of social challenges, a constant assessment and revision of the church's response to the same are crucial for its fidelity to the *missio Dei*.

The opportunity this research provided the researcher to listen to the stories of African refugees and asylum seekers on their situation and relationship with the church was a revelation. They demonstrated inner strength and confessed faith in God to change their situation. This experience informs the researcher's own journey as a Christian and general work as a migrant missionary.

The journey to pursue an investigation into the response(s) of APCs to the plight of African refugees in Düsseldorf has been a revelation. It brought the researcher into virtual contact with

people from the same continent and religious faith yet in entirely different socio-economic circumstances. It affirmed that the world in which we live is not one. Depending on what your experiences are, you have a reality of a world of your own. Indeed, the world of refugees and migrants to a greater extent mirrors the world of the helpless sinner for whose sake the *missio Dei* exists.

7.5 FINAL CONCLUSION

This research has suggested that for the church (compassionate community), the demonstration of compassion is critical and has implications for mission. Although it is narrower in scope and thus contextual in nature, its essence is by no means narrow. The needs of African refugees and asylum seekers identified by this research such as language skills; accommodation; basic legal orientation; and emotional, financial, and prayer support are not peculiar to refugees and asylum seekers in Düsseldorf. The quest for such a disadvantaged people to survive at all cost and the choices they make to achieve survival cannot be limited to African refugees and asylum seekers in the research context.

Also, the role of migrant churches as a context for the reception and integration of people with whom they share a similar culture or identity is a universal principle. The reasons for their lack of proactivity may also be natural to migrant churches in different contexts. The j of migration issues in different parts of the globe, and the complexity of the refugee crisis arising out of contemporary international migration gives this study a global significance. The implications of the data produced by this research are therefore not limited to the context from which it was obtained.

Human migration has resulted in cultural diversity and enriched social life in many parts of the world. It has enhanced Christian mission but at the same time posed questions for mission to answer. Migration has created a challenge for the world which is integration. To deal with this challenge, all hands must be on deck. The church is in a unique position to contribute compassionate solutions particularly in contexts where it is recognised by the state.

The research journey brought to the fore the need for a new way of conceiving and doing mission, that is, *mission underlined with compassion*. The enormous potential for mission work among refugees and asylum seekers was telling. The experience challenged the researcher's understanding and practice of Christian mission. As a researcher and church worker, the entire journey has been illuminating and enriching.

This qualitative research set out to obtain data about the responses of APCs to the plight of African refugees in Düsseldorf. Four APCs were selected for a semi-structured online interview and in each APC a leader and five African refugees/asylum seekers were interviewed online. Attempts were made to obtain and examine each denomination's written social action policy or document. All the leaders interviewed indicated the response their respective congregations have offered and as well as shared the constraints they face. Whilst some of the refugees appeared satisfied with the responses received so far, others were far from being satisfied. Those who were not satisfied highlighted some form of help they expected the APCs to offer. To them, a lot more proactivity is required in how APCs handle their social calling. They suggest that the inability of APCs to respond adequately to their concerns contributed to some of them adopting survival tactics that are inimical to Christian mission.

This notwithstanding, the APCs remained an important outlet for the integration of African refugees and asylum seekers. Through the provision of language assistance, financial help, prayer, the Word of God, friendship, and information about jobs and accommodation, the APCs contribute to the integration of African refugees and asylum seekers. They represent a source of community where identity is defined and affirmed. Through identity, African refugees and asylum seekers survive economically and socially. They move between identities to gain leverage for daily survival. Identity as a context however has its challenges. These challenges do not outweigh the benefits African refugees and asylum seekers derive.

Following the data collected, the analysis made, and the general discussions in this research, recommendations were proposed. These suggested ways of improving APCs' approach to issues of mission, migration and integration. The recommendations reflect the findings made as well as conceptual framework underpinning the research, namely compassionate mission.

It concludes that a contextual conception of Pentecostalism is required to influence the response of practitioners to issues. Issues of migration should become integral in both theology and missiology. APCs require a lot more proactivity in responding to the needs of African refugees. Their understanding of mission in the research field must be balanced. Attention must be paid to social action. A comprehensive social action policy must be developed to guide their activities in this area of mission. The church's participation in God's mission must be carried out with compassion. Finally, religious faith and cultural/ethnic identity must be viewed as a prominent context for achieving the integration of African refugees and asylum seekers.

In situations where privileged identity groups offered a positive response to the plight of their vulnerable kith and kin, it reduced their burden and helped their integration. It also went a long way to ease their emotional pain and give them hope. The talents and skills of the vulnerable group were highlighted to aid their economic integration. A similar experience was evident in the biblical narratives as discussed in section 2.4 of Chapter 2.

A reflection on privileged and vulnerable minority groups in relation to the APCs and African refugees raises two observations, namely: 1) In cases where a privileged minority group is unable to offer an adequate response to the plight of a vulnerable minority group, and thus provides a response lacking compassion, the latter suffer sustained pain and anguish. 2) The opportunity to engage in Christian mission can be found around us. This is because the presence of African refugees represents a great missionary opportunity for APCs. Such insight changes the notion of conceiving of mission as foreign and distant. Thus, the attitudes, actions and policies of APCs toward African refugees should take their source from their identity as a compassionate community, African orientation, and their own experiences as migrants.

It is important to restate that although this research is context-specific and an instrumental case study, the data collected, findings made, and recommendations proposed can apply to different contexts. The researcher therefore expects that this work will contribute to the ongoing debate in the area of mission and migration about religious responses to social challenges. It will also offer perspectives to the discourse about how the relationship among minority groups impacts their

integration. It hopes to lend support to a constructive theology of migration and effective mission praxis within African Pentecostal Christianity.

The many incidences of wars, conflicts, economic hardships, the widening gap between the rich and poor in society, the broken social structure, and the inequalities in global structures, all of which have resulted in mass migration and the phenomenon of refugeeism, point to the urgent need for Pentecostals who are currently the dominant force in Christianity to engage in social actions to help mitigate the suffering of those on the margins. The blueprint for social action presented in Matthew 25:31-46 demonstrates that those who practice such acts of compassion are the true followers of Jesus Christ.

To close this study, I leave you with these few words:

*The presence of brothers and sisters from different cultures should be celebrated as a gift to the Church.*⁹⁴

⁹⁴ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (2022). *Quotes from Church teachings on the rights of migrants and refugees*. Viewed 19 August 2022, from <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/migrants-refugees-and-travelers/quotes-rights-migrants-refugees>

REFERENCES

- Adedibu, B. (2016). 'Welcoming Strangers! The Responses of African Pentecostal Churches in London to Europe's Migration and Refugee Crisis'. *Missionalia*, 44(3), <http://dx.doi.org/10.7832/44-2-173>.
- Adogame, A. (2010). 'Transnational Migration and Pentecostalism in Europe', *PentecoStudies*, 9(1). Doi: 10.1558/ptcs.v9i1.56.
- Alexander, Y. E. (2011). *Black Fire: One Hundred Years of African American Pentecostalism*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic.
- Allen, G. (2020). 'A Theology of Compassion: Encouraging Local Church Ministry to Children in Foster Care'. Doctoral dissertation. Southeastern University.
- Allen, M. (ed.). (2017). *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*. California: Sage.
- Amissah, P. K. (2020). 'Proclaiming Good News to the Poor (Isa 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19) - Pentecostalism and Social Justice in Ghana', in N. Wariboko and A. Adehyina (eds.), *African Pentecostalism and World Christianity - Essays in Honour of J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu* (pp. 153-156, 163-168). Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications.
- Anderson, A. (2004). *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Anderson, A., Bergunder, M., Droogers, A., and van der Laan, C. (eds.), (2010). *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Anderson, A. H. (2013). *To the Ends of The Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Anderson, A. H. (2016). 'Contextualization in Pentecostalism: A Multicultural Perspective'. *International Bulletin of Mission Research*.
- Anderson, P. N. (2013). 'Matthew 25:31-46 Exegetical Perspective'. Faculty Publications, College of Christian Studies.
- Anil, M. (2005). 'No More Foreigners? The Remaking of German Naturalization and Citizenship Law, 1990-2000'. *Dialectical Anthropology*, 29(34), 453-470.
- Anim, E. (2009). 'The Prosperity Gospel in Ghana and the Primal Imagination', *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, 16(2), 30-53.

- Asamoah-Gyadu, J. (2005). *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. Leiden: Brill.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, K. J. (2010). “*Taking Territories & Raising Champions*”: *Contemporary Pentecostalism and the Changing Face of Christianity in Africa 1980 – 2010*. Accra: Trinity Press.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, K. J. (2013). *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: Interpretations from an African Context*. Oxford: Regnum Books.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, K. J. (2015). *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit: Ghanaian Perspectives on Pentecostalism and Renewal in Africa*. Oxford: Regnum Books International.
- African Union Commission (AUC), AU Department for Social Affairs. (2018). Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action (2018-2030), Addis Ababa.
- Baggio, F. (2010). ‘The Migrant Ministry: A Constant Concern of the Catholic Church’, *Asian Christian Review* 4(2), 47-69.
- Bajekal, N. (2015). The Welcome. Germans Open Their Homes to refugees. Time. Special Report. Exodus. The Epic Migration to Europe & What Lies Ahead. 73-76.
- Bathke, B. (2020). ‘In Germany, the coronavirus disproportionately affects migrants’. Viewed from <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/author/benjamin%20bathke/>. [2021, 15 February].
- Battisti, M., Peri, G. and Romiti, A. (2016). *Dynamic Effects of Co-Ethnic Networks on Immigrants’ Economic Success*. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Bediako, K. (1995). *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Bediako K. (2011). ‘*The Emergence of World Christianity and the Remaking of Theology*’, in William R. Burrows, Mark R. Gornik and Janice A. Mclean (eds.), *Understanding World Christianity: The Vision and Works of Andrew F. Walls* (243-255). Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
- Bergunder, M. (2006). *Crossing Boundaries: Issues of Representation, Identity and Postcolonial Discourse in Pentecostal Studies, Paper for the Conference of the European Research Network on Global Pentecostalism on ‘What is Pentecostalism? Constructing and Representing Global Pentecostalism in Academic Discourse’*. Birmingham, UK.

- Bevans, B. S. (2013). 'Migration and Mission: Pastoral Challenges, Theological Insights', in Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan (eds.), *Christianities of the World: Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology* (pp. 157-177). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bevans, B. S. and Schroeder, P. R. (2011). '*Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*', American Society of Missiology Series, No. 30, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
- Bhugra, D. and Becker, M. A. (2005). 'Migration, cultural bereavement and cultural identity'. *World Psychiatry: Official Journal of the World Psychiatric Association (WPA)*, 4(1), 18-24.
- Bommes, M. (2012). 'Integration takes place locally'. On the Restructuring of Local Integration Policy, in C. Boswell and G. D'Amato (eds.). *Immigration and Social Systems: Collected Essays of Michael Bommes* (pp. 125-156). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Bosch, D. J. (2011). *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
- Bosch, D. J. (2006). *Witness To The World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective*, Imprint: Wipf and Stock.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. London, England: Sage.
- Brown, T. (2016). Exegesis of Matthew 25: 31-46 with an Emphasis on the Identity of "All the Nations" and "the Least of These". Viewed from <https://www.academia.edu>. [2021, 13 January].
- Brücker, H. (2019). 'Germany: In 20 years, 1 in 3 People Will Have Migrant Roots'. Viewed from *dw.com*. [2020, 31 July].
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Burdick, J. (1993). Struggling Against the Devil: Pentecostalism and Social Movement in Urban Brazil. In Garrard-Burnett, V. & Stoll, D. (eds.). *Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America* (1-20). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Burgess, R. (2011). 'Bringing Back the Gospel: Reverse Mission among Nigerian Pentecostals in Britain', *Journal of Religion in Europe*, 4, 429-449.
- Carey, G. (2014). 'Commentary on Matthew 25:31-46'. *Working Preacher*. Viewed from www.workingpreacher.org. [2022, 12 May].

- Charbonnier, L., Cilliers, J., Mader, M., Wepener, C. and Weyel, B. (eds.), (2018). *Pluralisation and Social Change: Dynamics of Lived Religion in South Africa and in Germany*, De Gruyter Series: Praktische Theologie im Wissenschaftsdiskurs. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME). (2017). Conference on the Occasion of the 20th Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) General Assembly. Churches' Role in the Integration of Refugees and Migrants. Prague, 22 June 2017. Viewed from <https://ccme.eu>. [2021, 05 April].
- City of Osnabrück. (2016). *Tätigkeitsbericht 2015. FB Integration, Soziales und Bürgerengagement*. Viewed from https://www.osnabrueck.de/fileadmin/eigene_Dateien/Ta-tigkeitsbericht-2015-FD-50-5.pdf. [2019, 06 March].
- City of Osnabrück. (2018). From the Initial Admission to the Transfer to the Control Systems: Integration of Refugees in the City of Osnabrück. Viewed from https://www.osnabrueck.de/fileadmin/eigene_Blaetter/_Integrationskonzept-der-city-Osnabrueck. https://www.osnabrueck.de/fileadmin/eigene_Dateien/Integrationskonzept-der-Stadt-Osnabru-ck-2018.pdf. [2019, 07 March].
- Collins, H. (2010). *Creative Research: The Theory and Practice of Research for the Creative Industries*. Worthing, West Sussex: AVA Publications.
- Collins, M. E., Cooney, K. and Garlington, S. (2011). 'Compassion in Contemporary Social Policy: Applications of Virtue Theory'. *Journal of Social. Policy*, 41(2), 251-269.
- Complete Breaking News Channel (CNBC). (2022). Latest News. Viewed from <https://www.cbnc.com>. [2022, 03 August].
- Cortès-Fuentes, D. C. (2003). 'The Least of These My Brothers: Matthew 25:31-46', *Apuntes*, 23(3), 100-109.
- Cox, H. (1994/95). *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Creswell, J. W. and Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (4th edition). London: Sage.
- Cruz, T. G. (2013). 'A New Way of Being Christian: The Contribution of Migrants to the Church', in Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan (eds.). *Christianities of the World: Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology* (pp. 95-120). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Cuèllar, L. G. (2018). 'A Migrant-Centric Reading of Exodus 2: Tactics of Survival for Immigrant Women and Their Unaccompanied Children'. *Biblical Interpretation: A Journal of Contemporary Approaches*, 26, 499-514.
- Czymara, S. C. and Schmidt-Catran, W. A. (2017). 'Refugees Unwelcome? Changes in the Public Acceptance of Immigrants and Refugees in Germany in the course of Europe's Immigration Crisis'. *European Sociological Review*, 33(6), 735-751.
- Dokos, T. (2017). 'Migration and Globalization – Forms, Patterns and Effects. *Salzburg Trilogue*'. Viewed from www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de. [2021, 18 February].
- Deakin, H. and Wakefield, K. (2013). 'Skype Interviewing: Reflections of two PhD researchers', *Qualitative Research* 14(5). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794113488126>.
- Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). 'Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research', in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (1-32). Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (eds.), (2017). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Department for Migration and Integration - Düsseldorf office. [2018, 10 January].
- Deutsche Welle (German Wave). (2019). 'InfoMigrants'.
<https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/16563/refugees-in-germany-legal-entry—without-asylum>
- DeYoung K. and Gilbert, G. (2011). *What is the Mission of the Church: Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway.
- Diakonie in Düsseldorf. Viewed from <https://www.diakonie-duesseldorf.de/diakonie/ehrenamt/engagement-fuer-gefluechtete/https://www.diakonie-duesseldorf.de/arbeit-soziales/migranten-gefluechtete/>. [2020, 19 December].
- Dimitrov, A. and Angelov, G. (2017). 'Refugee integration in the EU: Challenges and economic impact', *Economic Alternatives*, (4), 584-600.
- Donahue, R. J. (1988). *The Gospel in Parable: Metaphor, Narrative, and Theology in the Synoptic Gospels*. Minnesota: Fortress Press.
- Draft law for the integration law. (2016). *Draft of an integration law*. Viewed from <http://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Meldung/2016/entwurf-integrationsgesetz.pdf%3Fblob%3DpublicationFile%26v%3D4>. [2019, 07 March].

- Ecumenical Federal Working Group Asylum in the Church. (2022). *Warm Welcome*. Viewed from www.kirchenasyl.de. [2022, 16 August].
- Evangelisch Methodistische Kirche (EMK). (2016). *Leaders Meeting Minutes Evangelisch Methodistische Kirche - Düsseldorf*. [2016, 10 December].
- Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E., Loescher, G., Long, K. and Sigona, N., (eds.), (2016). *The Oxford Handbook of Refugees & Forced Migration Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Foner, N. and Alba, R. (2008). 'Immigrant Religion in the US and Western Europe: Bridge or Barrier to Inclusion?', *International Migration Review* 42(2), 360ff.
- Furlong, W. J. (2017). *Smart Compassion: How to Stop Doing Outreach and Start Making Change*. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, Kindle edition.
- Fyfe, C. and Walls, A. (1996). *Christianity in Africa in the 1990's*. Edinburgh: Centre of African Studies.
- Gautam, R. T. (2006). 'Causes and Impact of Migration: A Sociological Study of Emigration from Kandebash, Baglung, Nepal', *Dhaulagiri Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*. Doi: 10.3126/dsaj.v1i0.285.
- Germany: Population hits record high. (2020). Viewed from <https://www.dw.com>. [2020, 31 July].
- GhanaWeb. (2018). 'Revealed: Mensa Otabil, Shareholders Took About GHC 450m From Capital Bank'. Viewed from [www. mobile.ghanaweb.com](http://www.mobile.ghanaweb.com). [2021, 14 January].
- Goheen, M. W. (2014). *Introducing Christian mission today*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic.
- Groody, D. G. (2009). 'Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees'. *Theological Studies*, 70(3), 638-667.
- Groody, D. G. (2012). 'Homeward Bound: A Theology of Migration for Fullness of Life, Justice and Peace', *The Ecumenical Review*, 64(3), 299-313.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, M. K. and Namey, E. E. (2012). *Applied Thematic Analysis*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Gürer, C. (2019). Refugee Perspectives on Integration in Germany. *American Journal of Qualitative Research*, 3(2), 52-70.
- Gyekye, K. (1998). *African Cultural Values: An Introduction*. Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company.
- Hadjiev, S. T. (2018). 'I Have Become a Stranger in a Foreign Land: Reading the Exodus Narrative as the Villain', *Biblical Interpretation*, (26), 515-527.

- Hailbronner, K. (2001). 'Das neue deutsche Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz', *Neue Verwaltungszeitschrift*, (20), 1329-1335.
- Hämäläinen, A. (2019). 'The Significance of Refugees and Asylum Seekers to the European Pentecostal Church'. *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association*, 39(2), 116-125.
- Hanciles, J. J. (2008). *Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration, and the Transformation of the West*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Hanciles, J. J. (2021). *Migration and the Making of Global Christianity*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publication Company.
- Harold, G. (2019). 'An Evangelical Understanding of The Missio Dei as Inclusion of Social Justice: A Critical Theological Reflection', *Pharos Journal of Theology*, 100, 1-10.
- Harris, M. and Orna J. (2000). *Cultural Anthropology* (5th edition). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Haug, K. S. (2018). 'Migration in Missiological Research'. *International Review of Mission*, 107(1), 279-293
- Hempelmann, R. (2009). *Pentecostalism*. Viewed from www.sekten-sachsen.de. [2021, 08 April].
- Hieronymi, O. (2005). 'Identity, Integration and Assimilation: Factors of Success and Failure of Migration', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 24(4). doi: 10.1093/rsq/hdi095.
- Hinger, S. (2020). 'Integration Through Disintegration? The Distinction Between Deserving and Undeserving Refugees in National and Local Integration Policies in Germany', in S. Hinger and R. Schweitzer (eds.), *Politics of (Dis)Integration* (pp. 99-39). IMISCOE Research Series. Cham: Springer.
- Hoffmeier, K. J. (1997). *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hollenweger, J. W. (1997). *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*. Peabody: Hendrickson.
- Hooley, T., Wellens, J. and Marriott, J. (2012). *What is Online Research?: Using the Internet for Social Science Research*. London: Bloomsbury.
- InfoMigrants. (2019). 'Almost 700 Migrants Across Channel in One Day', *InfoMigrants*, June 20. Viewed from <https://www.infomigrants.net>. [2022, 03 August].

- International Rescue Commission (IRC). (2019). Migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants: What is the difference? Viewed from <https://www.rescue-uk.org/article/refugee-migrants-asylum-seekers-and-immigrants-whats-difference?>. [2020, 07 August].
- International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2015). *Global Migration Trends Factsheet 2015*. Viewed from <https://publications.iom.int/books/global-migration-trends-factsheet-2015>. [2022, 20 August].
- International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2019). *IOM Releases 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights*. Viewed from <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-releases-2019-return-and-reintegration-key-highlights>. [2022, 23 August].
- International Organization for Migration (IOM), the European Union (EU), and partners discussing the sustainable reintegration of migrant returnees in Africa and inequalities at the European Development Days in Brussels on June 18, 2019.
- Iovino, J. (2015). ‘German Bishop on Migrants: “Meet People, Not Problems”’. *The People of the United Methodist Church*. Viewed from <http://ee.umc.org/how-we-serve/german-bishop-on-migrants-meet-people-not-problems>. [2019, 12 September].
- Ireland, M. J.(ed.), (2017). *For the Love of God: Principles and Practice of Compassion in Mission*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock.
- Isichei, E. (1995). *A History of Christianity in Africa from Antiquity to the Present*. London: SPCK.
- James, N. and Busher, H. (2012). Ethics of Research in Education, in Anne Briggs, Marianne Coleman and Marlene Morrison (eds.), *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management* (pp. 90-105). London: SAGE Publications Inc.
- James, N. and Busher, H. (2016). ‘Online Interviewing’, in D. Silverman (ed.), *Qualitative Research* (pp. 245-260). London: Sage.
- Jenkins, P. (2007). *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kärkkäinen, V-M. (2014). The Pentecostal understanding of Mission, in W. Ma, V-M. Kärkkäinen and K. J. Asamoah-Gyadu (eds.), *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity, Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series Volume 20* (pp. 26-45). Oxford: Regnum Books International.

- Kärkkäinen, V-M. (2004). 'Theology of the Cross: A Stumbling Block to Pentecost/Charismatic Spirituality?', in W. Ma and R. P. Menzies (eds.), *The Spirit and Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Russel P. Spittler*. London: T&T Clark.
- Kazmer, M. M. and Xie, B. (2008). 'Qualitative Interviewing in Internet Studies: Playing with Media, Playing with the Method', *Information, Communication & Society*, 11(2). Viewed from <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691180801946333> [2021, 05 November].
- Keck, E. L. (ed.), (2015). *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary*, (1). Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Kenneth-Nagel, A. (2018). Migration and Interculturality, in Charbonnier, Lars et al. (eds.), *Pluralisation and Social Change: Dynamics of lived Religion in South Africa and in Germany* (pp. 139-155). De Gruyter Series: Praktische Theologie im Wissenschaftsdiskurs. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Kim, H., (2011). 'Receiving mission: Reflection on reversed phenomena in mission by migrant workers from global churches to the western society'. *Transformation*, 28(1), 62-67.
- Kim, S. (2019). 'Mission As Process: Korean Missionaries' Critical Christocentric-Trinitarian Approach to Missio Dei in their Reverse Missionary Endeavours in England'. Doctoral Thesis, Vrije University.
- Klarenbeek, M. L. (2019). *Reconceptualising 'Integration as a two-way process'*, Department of Political Science, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam.
- Kohlmeier, M. and Schimany, P. (eds.). (2005). *The Impact of Immigration on Germany's Society: The German Contribution to the Pilot Research Study "The Impact of Immigration on Europe's Societies" within the framework of the European Migration Network*. Nürnberg: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees Migration and Integration Research Department.
- Landeshauptstadt Düsseldorf. (2022). Office for Statistics and Elections. Viewed from <https://www.duesseldorf.de/statistik-und-wahlen/statistik-undstadtforschung/statistics.html>. [2022, 03 August].
- Larbi, E. K. (2001). *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*. Accra: Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies.

- Lindhardt, M. (2018). 'Introduction: Presence and Impact of Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in Africa', in M. Lindhardt (ed.), *Pentecostalism in Africa* (pp. 1-53). Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies. Volume 15. Leiden: Brill.
- Louw, J. D. (2016). 'Missio Dei' as embodiment of 'Passio Dei'. The Role of God-Images in the Mission-Outreach and Pastoral Caregiving of the Church – A Hermeneutical approach'. *Missionalia*, 4(3), 336-354.
- Lutz, U. (2005). *Matthew 21-28: A Commentary*, Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress.
- Ma, W., Kärkkäinen, V-M. and Asamoah-Gyadu, K. J. (eds.). (2014). *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series Volume 20. Regnum Books International: Oxford.
- MacGregor, M. (2018). 'On the Outside: Living in Uncertainty at a German Anchor Centre', *InfoMigrants*. Viewed from <http://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/13252/on-the-outside-living-in-uncertainty-at-a-german-anchor-center>. [2020, 30 August].
- Magezi C. (2017). 'Migration Crisis and the Church: A Response to Lacunae and Considerations for Christian Ministry Engagement'. *Verbum et Ecclesia* 38(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ve.v38i1.1671>.
- Manning, P. (2005). *Migration in World History*, New York: Routledge.
- Martén, L. Hainmueller, J., and Hangartner, D. (2019). 'Ethnic Networks can Foster the Economic Integration of Refugees'. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(33), 16280-16285.
- Mbiti, J. S. (1974). Theological Importance and the Universality of the Church. *Lutheran World*, 21(3), 251-260.
- Mbiti, J. S. (1969). *African Traditional Religion and Philosophy*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.
- Merriam, S. B. and Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action (2018-2030): Migration for Development in Africa. African Union Commission (AUC), African Union Department for Social Affairs, 2018.
- Miller E. D. (2009). Progressive Pentecostalism: An Emergent trend of global Christianity. *Journal of Beliefs & Values*. Viewed from <http://www-tandfonline.com.nwulib.nwu.ac.za>.

- Miller E. D. and Yamamori T. (2007). *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Mooney, A. M. (2006). 'The Catholic Bishops Conferences of the United States and France: Engaging Immigration as a Public Issue', *American Behavioral Scientist*, 49(11), 1455-1468. Doi: 10.1177/0002764206288461.
- Mooney, A. M. (2013). 'Religion as a Context of Reception: The Case of Haitian Immigrants in Miami, Montreal and Paris', *International Organisation for Migration*, 51(3), 99-111. doi: 10.1111/imig.12073.
- Montgomery, L. R. (2012). ASM Meeting on The Future of the Discipline of Missiology: Two Resources Needed for Missiological Theory Leading to a Three-Step Approach in Producing Missiological Theory. Viewed from <https://www.asmweb.org>. [2021, 05 November].
- Morita, T. (2019). *Book Review: 'Compassion and the Mission of God: Revealing the Invisible Kingdom'*, *Transformation*, 36(1), 36-37.
- Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel According to Matthew*. Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Mostert, J. (2014). Ministry of Mercy and Justice, in Ma, W., Kärkkäinen, V-M. and Asamoah-Gyadu, K. J. (eds.), *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity, Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series Volume 20* (pp. 167-186). Regnum Books International: Oxford.
- Myers, L. B. (2015). 'Progressive Pentecostalism, Development, and Christian Development NGOs: A Challenge and an Opportunity', *International Bulletin of Mission Research*. doi: 10.1177/239693931503900301.
- Myers, M. D. (2008). *Qualitative Research in Business & Management*. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington, Melbourne: Sage.
- Narkowicz, K. (2018). Refugees not welcome here: State, Church and Civil Society Responses to the Refugee Crisis in Poland', *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 31(4), 357-373.
- Nehls, K., Smith, D. B. and Schneider, A. H. (2015). Video-Conferencing Interviews in Qualitative Research, in Shalin, H-V. *Enhancing Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research with Technology* (140-157). Hershey, PA: IGI Global. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-6493-7.

- O’Connell, E. (2006). *The New Face of Global Christianity: The Emergence of ‘Progressive Pentecostalism’*. Interview with Donald Miller in *Pew Research Center: Religion & Public Life*. Los Angeles, California.
- Okesson, G. (2020). *A Public Missiology: How local churches witness to a complex world*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Oltermann, P. (2015). ‘Angela Merkel Pledges to Cut German Immigration Figures but Rejects Limit’, *The Guardian*, December 14. Viewed from www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/14/angela-merkel-pledge-cut-german-immigration-figures.
- Onyinah, O. and Ntuny, M. (eds.), (2016). *Into the World We Go: The Missionary Enterprise of the Church of Pentecost*. Mumbai: Quarterfold.
- O’Reilly, K. (2009). *Key Concepts in Ethnography*, Loughborough University: UK, Sage.
- Ott, C. (2013). ‘Missionary methods: the questions that still dog us’, in C. Ott, and J. D. Payne (eds.), *Missionary Methods: Research, Reflections and Realities* (pp. 195-212). Pasadena: William Carey Library.
- Padilla, E. and Phan, C. P. (2014). *Theology of Migration in the Abrahamic Religions*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Padilla, E. and Phan, C. P. (eds.), (2013). *Christianities of the World: Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Payne, J. D. (2013). ‘Introduction’, in C. Ott and Payne, J. D. (eds.), *Missionary Methods: Research, Reflections and Realities* (xvi). Pasadena: William Carey Library.
- Porter, E. (2006). ‘Can Politics Practice Compassion?’, *Hypatia*, 21(4), 97–123.
- Presbyterian Relief Services and Development [PRS&D]. (2002). *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana in Mission*. <https://pcjonline.org/development-social-services/>.
- Quayesi-Amakye, J. (2015). ‘Prophetic Practices in Contemporary Pentecostalism in Ghana’. *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity*.
- Quinn, E. (2016). ‘*The Refugee and Migrant Crisis: Europe’s Challenge*’, *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 105(419), 275-285.
- Reinhard, N. A. (2016). *Local Responses to the European Refugee Crisis: Volunteering and the Critique on Humanitarianism*, Grafo Working Papers, Vol. 5, 81-94.

- Rivera-Pagán, N. L. (2013). 'Xenophilia or Xenophobia: Toward a Theology of Migration', in Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan (eds.), *Christianities of the World: Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology* (pp. 31-51). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Röing, T. (2019). *Continuation of political conflicts or a new beginning? Turkish Wet in North Rhine-Westphalia BICC*. Working Paper No. 6. Viewed from <https://www.bicc.de>
- Runde, D., Yayboke, E. and Gallego, C. (2019). *Out of the Shadows: Shining a Light on Irregular Migration* (47-55). Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).
- Sackmann, R., Peters, B. and Faist, T. (2020). *Identity and Integration*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Sanchez, N. J., Dzubinski, M. L. and Parke, J. (2021). 'Ministry Amidst the Refugee Crisis in Europe: Understanding Missionary-Refugee Relationships', *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies*. Viewed from <https://doi.org/10.1177/02653788211048373>.
- Sande, N. and Samushonga, M. H. (2020). 'African Pentecostal Ecclesiastical Practices and Cultural Adaption in a Changing World', *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association*, 40(1), 17-31.
- Sarantakos, S. (2013). *Social Research* (4th Edition). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Scribbr, (n.d.). *Presenting your Path to Academic Success*. Viewed from <https://www.scribbr.com>. [2022, 3 August].
- Selby, S. G. (2008). *Martin Luther King and the Rhetoric of Freedom: The Exodus Narrative in America's Struggle for Civil Rights* (Studies in Rhetoric and Relifio, 5). Waco TX: Baylor University Press.
- Setiloane, G. (1978). *African Theology: An Introduction*. Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers.
- Settler, F. (2018). 'A Postcolonial Perspective on Religion and Migration', in Daisy L. Machado, Bryan S. Turner and Trygve Wyller (eds.), *Borderline Religion: Ambiguous Practices of Difference, Hope and Beyond* (99-113). Routledge.
- Shore, H. M. (2016). "'Jesus as a Refugee", The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Brevard – North Carolina', *Journal for Preachers*, 1-7.
- Smith, J. M. and Kramer, W. M. (2015). *Case Studies of Nonprofit Organizations and Volunteers*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

- Smith, L. T. (1978). 'Religion and Ethnicity in America', *American Historical Review*, 83(5), 1155-85.
- Starcher, L. R., Dzubinski M. L. and Sanchez, N. J. (2018). 'Rigorous Missiological Research Using Qualitative Inquiry', *Missiology: An International Review*, 46(1), 50–66.
- Stenschke, C. (2016). 'Migration and Mission According to the book of Acts', *Missionalia* 44(2), 129-151.
- Stott, J. (2006). *The Cross of Christ, 20th Anniversary Edition*. Nottingham: InterVarsity Press.
- Stotzky, I. P. (2004). Haitian Refugees and the Rule of Law, *Guild Practitioner*, 61(3), 151-192.
- Swamy, M. (2017). 'Refugee migration today: Challenges of Doing Theology', *Theology*, 120(5), 334-346.
- Taylor, L. (2020). 'Making Room for the Missio Dei in Missiological Research', *Mission Studies* 37, 52–77.
- Tennent, C. T. (2010). *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-first Century*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publication.
- Terpstra, C. J. (2001). 'Pentecostalism's View of the Christian Life'. Viewed from www.prca.org/pamphlets/pamphlet_91b.html. [2021, 31 January].
- Trines, S. (ed.), (2019). 'Humanitarian Issues: The State of Refugee Integration in Germany in 2019', *World Education News + Reviews (WENR)*. Viewed from <https://wenr.wes.org/2019/08/the-state-of-refugee-integration-in-germany-in-2019>. [2022, 20 August].
- United Nations (UN). (2010). *Minority Rights: International Standards and Guidance for Implementation. (HR/PUB/10/3)1_E/CN.4/Sub.2/384/Rev.1*, para. 568. Viewed from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/publications/special-issue-publications/minority-rights-international-standards-and-guidance>. [2022, 09 August].
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2021). Refugee Crisis in Europe. United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees. Viewed from <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/refugee-crisis-in-europe/>. [2021, 16 February].
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2014). The Integration of Refugees: A Discussion Paper, Nicosia. [2021, 2 April].
- United Nations Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration agreement. (2018). <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/g...>

- United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR). (1951). Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Adopted 28 July 1951. Viewed from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-relating-status-refugees>. [2022, 3 August].
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (2022). *Quotes from Church teachings on the rights of migrants and refugees*. Viewed from <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/migrants-refugees-and-travelers/quotes-rights-migrants-refugees>. [2022, 19 August].
- Verfassung, Lehre und Ordnung der Evangelisch-methodistischen Kirche, Ausgabe 2017, Stand: März 2018.
- Vignoles, L. V. (2018). 'Identity: Personal and Social, University of Sussex', in K. Deaux and M. Snyder (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Personality and Social Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- von Balthasar, U. H. (2000). *Mysterium Paschale: The Mystery of Easter*, trans. Aidan Nichols; San Francisco: Ignatius Press.
- Währisch-Oblau, C. (2009). *The Missionary Self-Perception of Pentecostal/Charismatic Church Leaders from the Global South in Europe: Bringing Back the Gospel*. Leiden: Brill.
- Wainwright, E. A. (2014). 'Crossing Over; Taking Refuge: A Contrapuntal Reading', *HTS Theologiese Studies/HTS Theological Studies*, 70(1), 1-6.
- Wallis, E. (2020). 'UNHCR: Numbers of displaced people in world passes 80 million', *Infomigrants*, December 10. Viewed from <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/29030/unhcr-numbers-of-displaced-people-in-world-passes-80-million>. [2021, 29 June].
- Wallis, E. (2021). 'German study finds gender gap in refugee employment chances', *InfoMigrants*, published on April 16. Viewed from <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/31573/german-study-finds-gender-gap-in-refugee-employmentchances#:~:text=A%20study%20from%20the%20Institute,market%20than%20their%20male%20counterparts>. [2021, 22 April].
- Walls, F. A. (2002). 'Mission and Migration: The Diaspora Factor in Christian History', *Journal of African Christian Thought* 5(2), 3-11.

- Walls, F. A. (2017). *Crossing Cultural Frontiers: Studies in the History of World Christianity*. Orbis Books: Maryknoll, New York.
- Warrington, K. (2015). 'Social Transformation in the Missions of Pentecostals: A Priority or a Bonus?', *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association*, 31(1). <https://doi.org/10.1179/jep.2011.31.1.003>. [2022, 08 March].
- Winston, D. (1999). *Red Hot and Righteous: The Urban Religion of Salvation Army*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wolf-Branigin, M. (2017). 'The Background and Roles of the Salvation Army in Providing Social and Faith-Based Services', in B. R. Crisp (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Religion, Spirituality and Social Work* (pp. 157-163). New York: Routledge.
- World Council of Churches (WCC). (2012). *Oikoumene* (November 2012), p. 273. Viewed from Oikoumene.org. [2022, 20 August].
- Wuthnow, R. J. (2011). 'Taking Talk Seriously: Religious Discourse as Social Practice', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 50(1), 1-21.
- Yeh, A. (2016). *Polycentric Missiology*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic.
- Yin, K. R. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*, Los Angeles: Sage.
- Zapata-Barrero, R. and Yalaz, E.(eds.), (2018). *Qualitative Research in European Migration Studies*, IMISCOE Research Series (pp. 1-8). London: Springer.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INDIVIDUAL CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH INTERVIEW

TITLE OF RESEARCH:

**Responses of African Pentecostal Churches to African Refugees in Düsseldorf Between 2015 and 2020:
A Case Study of Mission and Migration**

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

This research is intended to produce scientific data regarding the plight of African refugees in Düsseldorf and responses of African Pentecostal Churches. It focuses on the responses of the churches to African refugees who are members of their congregations. It also seeks to establish the factors that influence the responses and how a better understanding of migration theology could shape future responses.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

You are invited to take part in a study conducted by Charles Gyasi, from the department of Missiology at Stellenbosch University. You were approached as a possible participant because:

Category A: (a) You have experience as a refugee/asylum seeker in Düsseldorf. (b) This experience spans not less than three years. (c) You are African and a member of African Pentecostal Church in Düsseldorf.

Category B: (a) You are African and a leader of African Pentecostal church in Düsseldorf. (b) You have either lived or worked in Düsseldorf for more than five years.

CONSENT

I, do hereby volunteer to participate in research conducted by Rev Charles Gyasi from Stellenbosch University.

I understand that this research is designed to gather information for academic purposes. I offer to be one of the research participants.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary but the researcher will pay for the cost of data used.

At any point during the interview, I reserve the right to decline to answer any question that I deem too personal, emotional, or uncomfortable.

I reserve the right to withdraw my participation at any stage of the research.

I agree to be interviewed for a period lasting up to 60 minutes. During this period, notes shall be taken and the conversation accurately recorded for the researcher's use.

I understand that the researcher shall not disclose my identity or Information that would identify me in publications.

I understand that this interview shall be conducted online with only the researcher at the other end.

I understand that the information I supply to the researcher will be anonymised and will be published in academic publications.

Every point has been read out to me and I understand the demands herein stated.

Since interviews shall be conducted online, participants shall be encouraged to send a thick against a statement; ✓ 'I consent' provided by the researcher or sign the consent form. It shall then be forwarded to the researcher by post.

.....
Signature of participant

.....
Date

.....
Signature of researcher

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are invited to take part in a study conducted by Charles Gyasi, from the department of Missiology at Stellenbosch University. You were approached as a possible participant because:

Category A: (a) You have experience as a refugee/asylum seeker in Düsseldorf. (b) This experience spans not less than three years. (c) You are African and a member of African Pentecostal Church in Düsseldorf.

Category B: (a) You are African and a leader of African Pentecostal Church in Düsseldorf. (b) You have either lived or worked in Düsseldorf for more than five years.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research is intended to produce scientific data regarding the plight of African refugees in Düsseldorf and responses of African Pentecostal Churches. It focuses on the responses of the churches to African refugees who are members of their congregations. It also seeks to establish the factors that influence the responses and how a better understanding of migration theology could shape future responses.

2. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to choose a time for an online interview lasting up to sixty minutes. The interview questions revolve around the conditions of African refugees, the responses of African Pentecostal Churches and recommendations. This semi-structured online interview will be conducted for a participant at a time that is convenient for you. The researcher however upon a request may contact you via phone call, WhatsApp message or email for clarifications on responses given where necessary.

3. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Because the interview involves recollection of difficult personal experiences, there is the possibility of emotions being aroused. In such situations, the expertise of a certified clinical

psychologist and psychiatrist will be made available for therapy. They can be contacted on these addresses:

(a) Dr. Jacob Owusu Sarfo (Senior Clinical Psychologist), sarfojo@gm-iLcom, +233 246 485 735 and

(b) Dr. William Frank Hill Koornson (Psychiatrist), bjJLfrankhilL@gm-iLcom, +233 244 446 083. Arrangement for general counselling shall also be made for participants who may need such help.

4. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO THE SOCIETY

This research hopes to provide African refugees with the opportunity to share their experiences and expectations of the church. It also hopes to create awareness among African Pentecostal Churches in Düsseldorf about the need for an active social ministry. Such an awareness could result in the needs of African refugees being attended to. Their integration will be given the needed boost when the church is able to shoulder some of their burdens.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Participation in this research is voluntary but the researcher will pay for the cost of data used. A budget is also proposed to cater for the services of health professionals consulted for this research.

6. PROTECTION OF YOUR INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND IDENTITY

Any information shared with me during this study that could possibly identify you as a participant will be protected. This will be done by making sure information obtained is used for only the intended purpose. Again, pseudo names shall be recorded against the responses given.

Data collected shall be kept on my computer, a pen drive, same emailed to myself and on additional platform such as One Drive. The initial handwritten copy shall be filed and kept in a locker accessible only by myself.

At any point during the interview, a participant reserves the right to decline to answer any question that he/she deems too personal, utterly emotional, or uncomfortable.

A participant is permitted to withdraw his/her participation at any point without any penalty.

Please be assured that information collected shall not be shared with any other agency except for the purpose intended. Audio recordings made with the consent of a participant shall be transcribed and information used in the thesis. Because audio recordings shall not directly form part of the final work, it shall not be played back to a participant. It shall be erased after viva.

In any future academic publication involving data from interviews conducted, commitment is hereby given that identifiable names or clues of individuals shall not be mentioned. Pseudo names shall always be used.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Research participants reserve the right to either continue or withdraw from the study. You also reserve the right to refuse to answer any questions you do not deem appropriate. The researcher will comply with your request to withdraw from this study. Also, a participant may choose to withdraw without giving reason(s).

8. RESEARCHERS' CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Rev. Charles Gyasi at Volkardey Weg 15, 40472 Düsseldorf, revnanagyasi@gmail.com or on mobile number +49 176 301 27 219 and/or the supervisor Prof. D. X. Simon, at Stellenbosch University, South Africa, dsimon@sun.ac.za

Written consent template. REC: Humanities (Stellenbosch University, South Africa).

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT

As the participant I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide, have been explained.

By signing below, I study, as conducted by Charles Gyasi. agree to take part in this research

Signature of Participant Date

DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the principal investigator, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant has been encouraged (and has been given ample time) to ask any questions. In addition, I would like to select the following option:

The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent. The conversation with the participant was conducted with the assistance of a translator (who has signed a non-disclosure agreement), and this "Consent Form" is available to the participant in a language in which the participant is fluent.

Signature of Principal Investigator Date

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

TITLE:

**Responses of African Pentecostal Churches to African Refugees in Düsseldorf Between 2015 and 2020:
A Case Study of Mission and Migration.**

PART ONE

(These set of questions are intended to be answered by research participants who are leaders of African Pentecostal Churches in Düsseldorf and have lived in the city at least since 2015).

SECTION A (RQS 1)

The focus in this section is to collect data relating to the participant's personal knowledge, thoughts, and experience of the refugee/humanitarian crisis within the research location.

1. How long have you lived in Düsseldorf?
2. Did you previously live in another German city before settling in Düsseldorf?
3. What was the experience like from your personal perspective as a church leader when many refugees arrived?
4. What was your church's response at the time? Response here means attitudes, action, policy, and other practical things done by the church.

SECTION B (RQS 1)

The focus in this section is to collect data relating to the responses of institutions (actions) specifically the government and the church.

5. Were you in Düsseldorf during the period of the open border policy of the German government in 2015?
6. If there was a response, is your church still supporting the refugees or has stopped? The rationale behind this question is to find out if the church responded also to Covid-19.

7. What influenced your church's response to the plight of African refugees?
8. If there was no response, what challenges accounted for that?
9. Do you consider prayer for refugees by the church a response?
10. What is your assessment of the government's approach in dealing with the refugee situation in Düsseldorf?
11. How can your church help the government in dealing with this humanitarian crisis now and in the future?

SECTION C (RQS 2)

Section C focuses on respondent's ability to relate Bible knowledge to social humanitarian challenges which then could prompt a response.

12. How do you interpret your migration in relation to Christian mission?
13. Can you think of any Bible verse or story that places an obligation on the church and Christians to help the poor and the needy?
14. Reading Matthew 25:31-46, how does it relate to the conditions of refugees today? What are your views?
15. What recommendations would you give to the hierarchy of the church to help it fulfil the thoughts expressed in Matthew 25: 31-46?

PART TWO

(These questions are intended to solicit responses from African Refugees both in the church and outside the church regarding their condition).

SECTION A (RQS 1)

Section A focuses on gathering data relating to the background of the participants which in the end could clarify some of the responses given.

1. How are you doing?
2. Are you a Christian?

3. If yes, how long have you been a member of your church?
4. Is your church made up of only Africans or there are some who are not Africans?
5. How long have you been in this city? It is the imagination of the researcher that those who lived through the crisis are better positioned to offer accurate responses. Here a minimum of two years and the maximum of three years will be desirable.
6. How have this time affected you and your response to issues?

SECTION B (RQS 1)

This section focuses on collecting data relating to the conditions of the refugees in the shelters and life in general.

7. Where are you currently housed?
8. Is your current accommodation your first and only or have there been previous experiences? Experiences even in the shelters are not the same.
9. Can you describe conditions in the shelter(s)? The import of this question is to gain insight regarding accommodation, feeding and general social life at the shelters. Even those who are currently living outside the shelters initially experienced life in a shelter and therefore can offer some insight.
10. Are you satisfied with life in the shelter and life in general? Here satisfaction means having access to basic human needs such as food, water, accommodation and security.
11. What improvements do you wish to see if there are any?

SECTION C (RQS 1)

The focus of this section is to gather data relating to African Pentecostal Churches' response to the refugee crisis in the defined context.

12. Do you have any idea about institutions and organisations that can help improve the life of refugees? Name them if yes.
13. If yes, how have they responded to your situation?
14. If no, could the church be one?

15. Is there any relationship between African refugees and the African Pentecostal denominations in this city?
16. Can you recount any help they have offered African refugees in this city?
17. How has their response or otherwise affected your life as an African refugee?
18. Is there anything they have done or can-do going forward to make life better for you?
19. Do you consider prayer for refugees by the church a response?

SECTION D (RQS 3)

The purpose of questions in this section is to collect data that will inform recommendations the researcher intend to propose at the end of the research.

20. How have you survived in the absence of adequate response from the church?
21. How do these survival tactics reflect on your faith as a Christian?
22. Given the opportunity what contribution(s) can you make to this society?

APPENDIX 3: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



NOTICE OF APPROVAL

REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form

1 July 2021

Project number: 15212

Project Title: Mission and Migration: Responses of African Pentecostal Churches to African Refugees in Dusseldorf between 2015 and 2020

Dear Mr C Gyasi

Your REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form submitted on 30/06/2021 08:54 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (REC: SBE).

Please note below expiration date of this approved submission:

Ethics approval period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
1 July 2021	30 June 2022

GENERAL REC COMMENTS PERTAINING TO THIS PROJECT:

The researcher has responded to all comments. The researcher should please just address one small point in the informed consent form uploaded under 5.16, please complete the sentence "at a time [that is convenient for you]."

INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: SBE, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (15212) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

You are required to submit a progress report to the REC: SBE before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

Once you have completed your research, you are required to submit a final report to the REC: SBE for review.

Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Investigator CV (PI)	REVISED CV - CHARLES	08/11/2020	word
Data collection tool	FINAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	08/11/2020	word
Proof of permission	Rev Gyasi-Merged	08/11/2020	merged document
Proof of permission	Rev Gyasi-Merged	08/11/2020	merged documents

Default	Rev Gyasi_Letter from CP	08/11/2020	pdf
Default	RESPONSE LETTER	25/11/2020	word doc.
Budget	PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE RESEARCH	25/03/2021	word
Informed Consent Form	Merged-doc	25/03/2021	word
Informed Consent Form	CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH INTERVIEW	25/03/2021	word
Research Protocol/Proposal	20 PAGE PROPOSAL	25/03/2021	word
Letter of support_counselling	Rev Gyasi_Letter (1)	25/03/2021	word

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at cgraham@sun.ac.za.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Social, Behavioral and Education Research

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number: REC-050411-032.
The Research Ethics Committee: Social, Behavioural and Education Research complies with the SA National Health Act No.61 2003 as it pertains to health research. In addition, this committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research established by the Declaration of Helsinki (2013) and the Department of Health Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes (2nd Ed.) 2015. Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

Principal Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

As soon as Research Ethics Committee approval is confirmed by the REC, the principal investigator (PI) is responsible for the following:

Conducting the Research: The PI is responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC-approved research protocol. The PI is jointly responsible for the conduct of co-investigators and any research staff involved with this research. The PI must ensure that the research is conducted according to the recognised standards of their research field/discipline and according to the principles and standards of ethical research and responsible research conduct.

Participant Enrolment: The PI may not recruit or enrol participants unless the protocol for recruitment is approved by the REC. Recruitment and data collection activities must cease after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials must be approved by the REC prior to their use.

Informed Consent: The PI is responsible for obtaining and documenting affirmative informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents/process, and for ensuring that no participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their affirmative informed consent. The PI must give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents, where required. The PI must keep the originals in a secured, REC-approved location for at least five (5) years after the research is complete.

Continuing Review: The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period**. Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, it is the PI's responsibility to submit the progress report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur. Once REC approval of your research lapses, all research activities must cease, and contact must be made with the REC immediately.

Amendments and Changes: Any planned changes to any aspect of the research (such as research design, procedures, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material, etc.), must be submitted to the REC for review and approval before implementation. Amendments may not be initiated without first obtaining written REC approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.

Adverse or Unanticipated Events: Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research-related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to the REC within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. The PI must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the RECs requirements for protecting human research participants.


Research Record Keeping: The PI must keep the following research-related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence and approvals from the REC.

Provision of Counselling or emergency support: When a dedicated counsellor or a psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.

Final reports: When the research is completed (no further participant enrolment, interactions or interventions), the PI must submit a Final Report to the REC to close the study.

On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits: If the researcher is notified that the research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, the PI must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.

APPENDIX 4: EDITOR'S LETTER



PROOF-READING

PROFESSIONAL EDITING SERVICES

PHD PRACTICAL THEOLOGY (SU) • MTH PRACTICAL THEOLOGY (SU) • BA (HONS) PSYCHOLOGY (UNISA)
BTH (HONS) PRACTICAL THEOLOGY (UNISA) • BTH PASTORAL COUNSELLING (UNISA)

DR LEE-ANNE ROUX
EDITOR | PROOFREADER

+27 82 825 7325
leanne@proof-reading.co.za
www.proof-reading.co.za

24 August 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: LANGUAGE EDITING

This letter serves to confirm that I have edited the dissertation titled:

**Responses of African Pentecostal Churches to African Refugees in Düsseldorf Between
2015 and 2020:**

A Case Study of Mission and Migration

By

Charles Gyasi

Please feel free to contact me if you need any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Lee-Anne Roux