

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA'S
CONTRIBUTION TO THE INTERSECTION OF THEOLOGY, GENDER, AND
DEVELOPMENT.**

By

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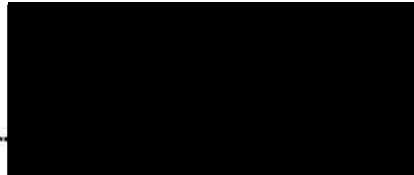
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13 DECEMBER 2023

DECLARATION

As required by University regulations, I hereby state unambiguously that this work has not been presented at any other University or any other institution of higher learning other than the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg Campus) and that unless specifically indicated to the contrary within the text it is my original work.



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As candidate supervisor, I hereby approve this thesis for submission.

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Maz'nethole

ABBREVIATIONS

CCS	Christian Citizenship Secretary
Com Dev	Community Development
DDSR	Department for Development and Social Responsibility
FBO	Faith-Based Organizations
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
LEAN	Local Ecumenical Action Network
LPA	Local Preachers Association
MCSA	Methodist Church of Southern Africa
MU	Mission Unit
MWP&SU	Manyano Women's Prayer and Service Union
MYWP&SU	Manyano Young Women's Prayer & Service Union
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SANAC	South African National Aids Council
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TB	Tuberculosis
WA	Women's Axillary
WCC	World Council of Churches
WG	Wesley Guild
WHO	World Health Organization

WID	Women In Development
YMG	Young Men's Guild

ABSTRACT

Human dignity is often undermined by those seeking to serve their interests. This is why theologians must study human development further, significantly, since the Doctrine of Anthropology elevates humanity as being made in the image of God. The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) has a critical role in this discourse as one of the custodians of theological thinking and practice. The MCSA has held this position in society since missionaries arrived in 1897 and has interacted with the indigenous people of Southern Africa. However, this interaction has been rife with challenges, particularly in the interest of the people of Southern Africa. The development of the MCSA has been influenced by modernisation and the desire to westernize Africans.

This study explores the theologies and policies the MCSA has contributed to shaping the MCSA and Southern Africa. The second critical point of the study is to examine how these theologies and policies have assisted in the development of previously disadvantaged groups, particularly women and people experiencing poverty. This development section raises questions about the methods and motives of development and developed theologies.

Kimberle Williams Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality is regarded as revolutionary as it recognizes and brings to light the complex and layered nature of individuals' lives (Crenshaw, 1991: 1243). Intersectionality posits that a person's identity is not singular but is shaped by multiple social factors such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and others. These factors interact with one another, and their intersections can either positively or negatively impact an individual's life (Carastathis, 2016: 17).

By utilizing this theory, the research aims to delve deeper into various forms of discrimination that people may encounter. It seeks to shed light on how the intersection of different factors can lead to unique experiences of discrimination, which might not be visible if analyzed through a single-factor lens. In doing so, the research aims to assist the MCSA in comprehending the diverse range of factors that shape personal development, including those that provide advantages.

Thus, intersectionality is a tool that not only helps us understand the multifaceted nature of human identity but also enables us to better comprehend the diverse experiences of individuals and to create more inclusive policies and practices.

The third quest of the research is to examine the strides made by the MCSA in the development of human beings through development strategies within the framework of the MCSA. The research focuses on the Mission Pillar of Human Development as a theological and policy framework for the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development. The MCSA must continue building on this framework and ensure its policies and practices promote equality and justice. This will lead to a better society where everyone is valued, respected, and treated with dignity.

Keywords: *Theology, Gender, Development, Intersection, Welfare, Relief, People.*

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

The primary objective of this research is to examine the correlation between gender, theology, and development within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) and its literary works. The MCSA is a renowned establishment in Southern Africa, established by English missionaries, but its colonial ties have led to notable political discourse. The combination of political, social, and religious factors has had both advantageous and disadvantageous outcomes. Consequently, Kimberle Williams Shaw's intersectionality theory proves to be an effective tool in comprehending the influence of these diverse factors on development in Southern Africa (1989).

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) is a prominent religious institution in Southern Africa. It has been a member of the World Methodist Council (WCC) since 1948, making it one of the longest-standing Methodist members of the Council (WCC, 2023). The movement began with John Wesley's concern about social issues, which led to spiritual growth and eventually social holiness (MCSA, 2016: 12). The arrival of Methodism in the region, both as a religious movement and an organized Church, can be attributed to the work of missionaries over 200 years ago (MCSA, 2023). With the lenses of the David Korten's fourth generation development strategy (Swart, 2006) this impact will be examined.

The significant impact of British missionaries on the spread of Methodism throughout Southern Africa is widely acknowledged. Through their unwavering dedication, they played a pivotal role in laying the foundation and expanding the Methodist faith among diverse communities in the region. The primary objective of these missionaries was to convert individuals to Christianity, which led to numerous positive moral and social transformations. Nonetheless, this also gave rise to some unease among African populations as it challenged their traditional cultural identities and heritage. The lenses of Beverly Haddad (2003) and Storia Sietisho (2017) as African Scholars who look at how gender in particular women influences development or women undermined by development players will be helpful resources for the study.

While scholars argue that the missionaries' primary focus was evangelism and spiritual guidance, their activities often intersected with the broader colonial enterprise.

Methodism is not immune to this criticism in its symbiosis establishment as the exploited and the exploiter in society are meant to have a common purpose of doing God's work (Dreyer, 1986: 62). Of course, this is only truly possible if there is domination or submissiveness from one party to the other. The colonial context provided a platform and support structure for the missionaries' work, enabling them to establish mission stations, access resources, and influence indigenous populations. The intersectionality of theology and development presents a complex and intricate subject matter. Considering this, studying colonial history's cryptic nuances is of particular interest as it can potentially inform the concept of development as a phenomenon in an African setting. This research explores and analyses the intersectionality of theology and development and its impact on African development.

To fully grasp the political context surrounding missionary work, it is crucial to examine the historical and underlying motives behind it. Although missionaries may have been genuinely motivated by the desire to spread Christianity, their actions were often part of a broader colonial agenda aimed at exerting control, exploiting resources, and dominating indigenous populations.

In fact, as far back as 1855, George Grey articulated this approach, suggesting that if talented and honourable European gentlemen interacted with Xhosa chiefs and worked towards their improvement and advancement, they could gradually gain influence over them. The ultimate goal was to persuade the chiefs to adopt European customs and laws over their own, thereby undermining and destroying their existing traditions (Gump, 1998: 90). Therefore, considering the historical context when evaluating development and addressing gaps through policy and practice is crucial.

The emergence of Methodism in Southern Africa was made feasible by missionaries, predominantly from Britain. Nevertheless, its efficacy has been scrutinized due to its connection with the colonial endeavour. This prompts inquiries about the function of their endeavours in colonial ideologies and power dynamics. Therefore, thoroughly examining this historical context is imperative to comprehend the intricacies and repercussions of the missionary heritage within the MCSA. It is crucial to fathom how their actions were intertwined with broader colonial ideologies and power dynamics to grasp their relationship with colonialism in Southern Africa fully.

In tandem with the above view, establishing schools, hospitals, and Churches was done with the pretext of civilization from a Western perspective. At the same time, scholars of African studies contest that civilization is an African architecture (Fyle, 1999: 1; Barton, 1929: 303). Civilisation by the likes of Grey (Gump, 1998: 90) is laced with the reality that development is sometimes influenced by socio-political factors that are more about the developer than the developed.

It is crucial to contemplate the significant role played by the missionaries who brought the Church to Africa, especially when considering human progress. This introspection is necessary to prevent the idealisation of modernisation and development without recognising the complexities involved. Scholars and the Church have engaged in a practical discourse, commonly called Elliot Charles' pragmatic debate (Swart, 2003: 405), to examine these intricacies. The MCSA has been included in this critical analysis.

The MCSA has since 1958 had its pragmatic debate by boldly resolving in a fragmented society, that it seeks to be one and undivided (MCSA, 1958: 65). Some of these debates have even resulted in policies like the Mission Charter as amended in 2021 that has made five distinctive calls that include; deepened spirituality, justice and service, evangelism and Church growth, Christian formation and education as well as the empowerment and development (MCSA, 2022: 3).

Even with these noble intentions, a critical examination is needed to look closely at this developmental agenda. The MCSA elegance in policy formulation translates to lived experiences (West, 2015: 80) must be examined, mainly if Development is defined as empowering and equipping people rather than just doing things for them (Korten, 1987: 145). On the other hand, this development of people cannot be without a crystal focus on gender. Even amongst human beings, women's lack of and sheer neglect does not close the loop on human development (Haddad, 2003: 423).

For the MCSA to be a development agency, the bias as a Church is also on the theologies that underpin this development. The point of contact for gender, theology, and development is a critical intersectionality. One component has intrinsic bearing on the other, either by enabling or stifling it. These variables are the focus of this research.

Over the years, the MCSA has thoroughly reviewed its past decisions and deemed it necessary to revisit them. This is not an indication that the Church lacks innovation

but rather a recognition that the depth and breadth of these resolutions have not been adequately acknowledged. Consequently, the MCSA re-examined these resolutions, much like its approach to the Journey to the New Land (MCSA, 1995). However, it is crucial to acknowledge the time that has elapsed between policy development, implementation, and the review process.

These resolutions are indicative of the journey the Church has had over the years since the 1958 resolution of a "one and undivided Church" (MCSA, 1958: 65). The need to Empower and Develop the previously deprived people for their dignity and to give them new purpose is a progression from the 1958 statement. This study explores this journey to examine the contribution made by the MCSA in the discourse of development, not just as pronouncements but also as implementers of their own policies through the literature review.

This discourse is not without theologies being born out of the conversations the MCSA has had within. The influence of these theologies has a bearing on the nature and style of development embraced by the MCSA. Scholars like David Korten have explored these natures and types of development. The third-generation development model (Korten, 1987: 148) is an attempt to analyse development. Ignatius Swart will later study this work, bringing in the fourth-generation development strategy in the 1980s and 1990s (Swart, 2006: 133). These generations of development have also been part of the MCSA's discourse on development. This study's theoretical framework will hinge on this theory by David Korten as examined by Ignatius Swart. Beverly Haddad engages the voice of gender development, completing the third element of intersectionality.

As a measuring rod through the literature review, the emergence of the Mission Groups in 1907 has been studied as the development agenda in the MCSA is primarily driven by these Mission Groups. Although this emergence was around issues of prayer and service in 1907 (Mkhwanazi, 2002: 29), such service was around the development of humanity. The agenda of the MCSA has not been set without the women setting their agenda in the manner women deemed necessary. Over the years, these women have done extensive work as an approach to development and empowerment.

The Bible Women and Women's Auxiliary (Attwell, P., Attwell, P. and Methodist Church of Southern Africa Women's Auxiliary, 1997: 3) have demonstrated the valuable

contributions of women in the MCSA, breaking down societal norms and fostering sustainable progress (Haddad, 2003: 428). Despite limited resources, these women have persevered in their collective efforts and mutual support, setting a new theological discourse on resources for sustainable development. Before establishing the Women's Manyano (WM), Black women within the MCSA were already engaged in development work through the Bible Women, who received backing from the Women's Auxiliary.

Arguably, David Korten's third-generation development strategies for sustainable development cannot simply be imposed from external sources (Korten, 1987: 146). So, true sustainability requires development to be led by those who are being developed. This necessitates addressing past inequalities and reducing the deficit caused by underdevelopment. By doing so, development investment will not always require vast resources. This approach empowers individuals to take control of their future, as Haddad (2003: 428) also argues that development is people-centred (Korten, 1987: 147).

The intersection of theology and gender, coupled with theory and praxis (Swart, 2006: 12), development is a pivotal issue that demands the attention of the MCSA. Exploring this intersectionality can bring forth the voices within the MCSA and foster meaningful discussions. The MCSA has deliberately developed this intersectionality, a thoughtful process that has evolved. Nevertheless, a noticeable discrepancy exists between the MCSA's voice and actions. Additionally, the 1958 statement of a "one and undivided Church" (MCSA, 1958) may be an exposing limitation as the MCSA will for many years fail to embrace diversity until the introduction of the Mission Groups and the call for obedience (MCSA, 2023), both will, to some degree, enrich the MCSA's life. Even these Mission Groups work in silos doing similar work, which is yet another limitation.

Attempts to change this status quo have been seen in the policies that the MCSA has had over the years, from the women being represented by men to the first Black women's organisation, the Women's Manyano (WM) (Mkhwanazi, 2002: 29), to the election of the female bishops and the two female Presiding Bishops who would later succeed each other (MCSA, 2019: 210). The intentionality has not been without the unintentionality, as for 71 years of the MCSA being a member of the WCC (WCC, 2023), a woman has never led it.

The MCSA has had to bolster its primary policies with secondary policies due to its failure to live up to the initial policies. This bolstering is seen in the women and youth policy directed towards equity in representation in meetings and leadership of the Church (MCSA, 2016: 101, 237). Sustainable development that honours intersectionality requires reinforcement and not relying on policies that have to be implemented by the developing agency, In this case, men within the MCSA, so that a policy holds men accountable.

This deliberate effort of the inclusive church also sees its roots in how the MCSA partners with the local community and gathers resources within the communities where Methodism exists, hence the Mission Groups' community involvement even in how they have structured themselves (MCSA, 2018). This shared ownership of the missional work by the MCSA is explored as the evidence that talks to the theory of David Korten on the second-generation strategy of the local community is being examined. This will help explore the Church's ambitions to live up to its vision of a "Christ-healed Africa for the healing of the nations" (MCSA, 2002: 2).

The intentionality of the MCSA is essential to measure through its prophetic voice that contends with other prophetic voices. Development does not happen in a vacuum but in context (Kumalo, 2005: 1); thus, the MCSA does not exist in a bubble. Other prophetic voices include Abahlali baseMjondolo, the Fees Must Fall, and Rhodes Must Fall Movements. These, in their own right, have stimulated the transformation of society. As part of the Social Movement, the MCSA must also be seen to embrace the principles of being a prophetic voice like the other prophetic movements. The study, therefore, balances the measure against other development players.

Arguably, some Methodists criticise that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) has limited its prophetic voice through its Book of Order and reverted to a monopolistic predictive strategy similar to that of John Wesley. Wesley believed that only the clergy could articulate the doctrines of Methodism (Dreyer, 1986: 63). This approach contradicts the Methodist's intention to be an institution of the priesthood of believers (MCSA, 2016: 12), as even before the 1937 conference, only clergymen represented women (MCSA, 1937: 165). Methodists' gifting and serving have always been determined by collective affirmation, which remains true today. However, rigidity and structure have taken precedence in the quest for governance, which can hinder

the exercise of all gifts unless affirmed by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting (MCSA, 2022: 222).

The contemporary world is grappling with complex issues that mandate informed inquiries grounded in thorough research. The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) endeavours to contribute meaningfully to the discourse by leveraging its already advanced context. To this end, an investigation into the extent of MCSA's impact in advancing the discourse of development through its theological themes, policies, and strategies could potentially serve as a valuable basis for further studies on development.

Problem Statement

The intersection of gender, theology, and development is a complex and multifaceted matter that demands further examination to fully appreciate the significant contributions of MCSA. These elements are interrelated and crucial for fostering sustainable development in diverse communities and regions. As Kimberle Williams Crenshaw (1989: 1242) so aptly demonstrates, the complexity of intersectionality cannot be understated, and it is essential to acknowledge the unique challenges and opportunities that arise at this intersection.

The objective of this study is to underscore the vital role of MCSA in advancing sustainable development at the intersection of gender, theology, and development. MCSA's efforts have positively impacted various communities and regions, making this study a crucial contribution to the ongoing efforts to promote sustainable development. By examining the interconnections between these factors, we aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the importance of gender, theology, and development in promoting sustainable development.

The study will draw on a range of data sources, including existing research, reports, and archival documents, to provide an in-depth analysis of the contributions made by MCSA. Additionally, we will engage with key stakeholders, including members of MCSA and other relevant organizations, to gain a more nuanced understanding of the issues at hand.

Overall, this study seeks to provide a detailed and descriptive account of the importance of gender, theology, and development in promoting sustainable development, with a particular emphasis on the crucial role played by MCSA in this process. Through this analysis, we hope to contribute to the ongoing efforts to promote sustainable development and improve the lives of people in diverse communities and regions. The researcher specifically examined the role of women in this intersection, acknowledging that other areas related to gender and development, such as the LGBTQIA+ community within the MCSA, may present challenges. However, the focus on women as a foundation for gendering development provides a solid framework for navigating this contested terrain, particularly within the context of patriarchal theologies prevalent in African ecclesiology as they are in society in general (Haddad, 2003: 438).

Not only has MCSA not yet given prominence to LGBTQIA+ except to acknowledge this population (MCSA, 2016: 227), but it has, since its formation in Southern Africa, struggled to embrace women in general. This is problematic because of the incongruity between the prolific work and the pragmatic debates of the MCSA.

The research attempts to overtly juxtapose gender, theology, and development through the lenses of women as a critical aspect in the intersection. The National Development Plan (NDP) makes it clear that women in society are not living the lives they would aspire towards (National Planning Commission, 2012: 38). Women generally form the majority of the population if they are grossly disadvantaged in society, even with marginalised groups like the LGBTQIA+ women would still be in the majority of the deprived and underprivileged. Development then does need to be gendered (Haddad, 2003: 248)

Haddad (2003: 229) observed that cultural and social constructs are predominantly linked to an individual's sexuality. Before 1937, the MCSA perpetuated the notion that women were meant for the kitchen and excluded them from decision-making processes. This resulted in women being unable to voice their concerns and have them addressed, as only men were permitted to represent them (Mkhwanazi, 2002: 29). This research will delve into this facet and examine how the MCSA's reforms have propelled sustainable development forward through the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development.

Theology plays a crucial role in the intersectionality of gender and development, as it serves as the foundation for shaping policies and decisions within the MCSA. Despite this, the practical implications of theological doctrines often clash with the challenges presented by gender and development. This can create conflicts that impact social constructs and economic models within sustainable development (Haddad, 2007: 122). While traditional theologies are still relevant, this research focuses on the theologies that have contributed to the development of the MCSA.

Specifically, this study explores the impact of Development and Economic Empowerment on the intersection of gender, theology, and development. These theologies mark the territory that MCSA has claimed through resistance, protest, and reconstruction as they critically back and enhance classical theologies. This follows the idea that the theology of empowerment is practical and stems from the Doctrine of Christian Anthropology – all human beings are made in the Image of God (Haddad, 2003: 430). Therefore, the development theology is about dignity, especially where indignity has been the order of the day, even through the introduction of development by the missionaries who brought Methodism to South Africa (MCSA, 2023).

The missionary work, as good as it was intended, has been laced with dominance and superiority complex tendencies, as seen through the statement of Grey, whose intention was to dominate Africans (Gump, 1998: 89).

The epistemology of development in the Global South is a critical aspect of this study. Ignatius Swart's work on David Korten's fourth-generation development strategy (Swart, 2006) and Beverly Haddad's gendered development theory (Haddad, 2003) form the foundation of this research. Swart and Haddad, scholars from the Global South, bring invaluable insights into the experiences of the Southern African people.

The Methodist literature, on the other hand, suggests that the church adopts an intentional approach to developing theologies and policies that drive development in the MCSA. This study delves into the Mission Groups' endeavours to create gender-responsive policies and foster development, focusing on mobilising social movements as part of the fourth-generation strategy. Furthermore, the study investigates whether the MCSA can be more deliberate in its approach to this strategy, mainly since the Methodist identity embodies a movement for healing and transformation. Given this background to the research, the following questions are a window and a compass to

exploring the contribution made by the MCSA in the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development using the literature of the Mission Groups and MCSA on Development and Economic Empowerment.

Key Research Question

What is the Methodist Church of Southern Africa's contribution to gender, theology, and development related to Development and Economic Empowerment?

Considering the main research question, the following sub-questions are posed:

1. How has the mission of the MCSA been enhanced by the policies of Development and Economics as these relate to the literature of the MCSA and the Mission Groups?
2. Are there guidelines for the people called Methodists to help them better implement this mission imperative of Development and Economic Empowerment?
3. How has the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development impacted the agency of the MCSA as a development player?

The questions posed in this study are critical in developing a comprehensive argument that assesses the policies and theologies of the MCSA. Through this inquiry, the first aim is to uncover how these policies and beliefs can be implemented to achieve genuinely sustainable development and how they align with other strategies identified in the field.

Moreover, this study has the potential to inspire further research that addresses any gaps or limitations identified. By reflecting on the policies and theologies present in the MCSA, the study can lay the foundation for a more nuanced and practical approach to sustainable development.

Through thoroughly examining the Mission Groups and MCSA's literature related to Development and Economic Empowerment, the research can demonstrate the MCSA's contribution to intersectionality and explore how this policy aligns with Korten's fourth-generation strategies for NGOs. This study has the potential to unlock new insights and approaches, enabling researchers and MCSA to make meaningful progress toward more sustainable development (Swart, 2006: 133).

The second objective of the research is to look at the theologies that the MCSA has given birth to over time. These theologies are not just statements of faith but statements of the work that needs to be done. This is an essential tension for the MCSA to hold for sustainable development, that of theory and praxis (Swart, 2003: 12). Without this tension being kept in check, the MCSA could quickly become a theorist rather than a practitioner.

Third, the MCSA, as a practitioner of development and contributor to development theologies, must demonstrate the ability to influence development threads in Southern Africa. This is more critical due to the birth of Methodism among people experiencing poverty and vulnerability (Dreyer, 1986: 64). This positionality of Methodism has played itself out in the pragmatic debates within the MCSA. As a practitioner, the MCSA's impact has even been to the extent of how their efforts have been towards a people-centred sustainable development, especially in Southern Africa. This third-world region has been marred by development that has undermined the very people that were being developed, hence apartheid and colonisation.

Outline of Chapters

There are four main chapters for this research. They flow from the literature used to the tripartite theorist approach, which anchors the discussion around the problem statement. The discussion on the methodology engages with the data collected and then concludes by making specific observations about the research. The theoretical framework provides the analytical tools for the analysis (Cederlund, 2018: 196). All the cited works are referenced using the Harvard referencing style.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Over the years, the MCSA has embarked on a deliberate journey to review and revise the life of the Church. This has led to development policies and theologies questioning the status quo. This is on the backdrop of the socio-political dynamics of Southern Africa and the emergence of the development work done by the missionaries. This journey begins to question the motives of the missionaries and the response thereof by MCSA as a development player whose involvement is also global through the World Council of Churches. The gendering of this work also takes root as women define their destiny, contesting the cultural dynamics of the era. This pragmatic debate forms the basis for this study to show the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The reach literature of the MCSA and the Mission Groups offers a wealth of binoculars to examine the MCSA's journey over the years. This discourse is mapped out from the 1937 minutes of the Conference to the 2023 Presiding Bishop's Conference Address. The lustrous resolutions of this period stimulate the appetite for the policies the MCSA has come up with that need to be measured against the implementation strategies. The merger of theory and praxis is a critical intersectionality of the study itself. Having a lustrous theory as a development practitioner without the refulgent empirical evidence of translating theory into praxis makes no sense.

These theologies and theories are critical to also test against the gendered voices of scholars like Haddad. By doing this, the further proof of the need for theologies to be born from below (Haddad, 2016: 3), once again emphasised by Haddad, makes the argument coherent and of utmost importance if development is to be sustainable.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

Using a tripartite approach for the theoretical framework, David Korten, a development specialist, anchors the research on tested development theories. This is then balanced with Beverly Haddad as a gender specialist in development. Both these are engaged through the theological discourse of Ignatius Swart.

David Korten has analysed development into four generations of strategic involvement in development. The theorist for the research is Ignatius Swart, who has developed further the work of David Korten on the fourth-generation development strategy. This theory helps explore the work done by the MCSA and measure such work against the established principles of gendered development by Beverly Haddad. The balancing of various scholars is drawn mainly from the scholars from the Global South as a matter of principle, inspired by Kumalo on the importance of transformative development shaped by the context (Kumalo, 2005: 1).

Beverly Haddad's analysis of the fourth-generation development strategy (Haddad, 2007: 121-124) from an academic activist indicates that development is not a neutral matter but is at the centre of previously disadvantaged women (Haddad, 2003: 427). This lens helps look at development from the perspective of the immediate needs and what the local community can do to sustain their development. Some policies are explored through this lens on how the MCSA as an institution has endeavoured to

influence change within the Church and outside of the Church. The Mobilization of other stakeholders will be permissible through this lens.

These grant the categorisation of the MCSA's contribution, especially concerning the Mission Groups' work on Development and Economic Empowerment.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The research uses a qualitative approach through a literature review. Drawing data from the Mission Groups of the MCSA as the prominent implementors of development within the MCSA locates the study with the theologies, policies, and work in the development discourse. This location of the study offers fertile ground for the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development to be adequately explored in a focused manner. The literature of the Mission Groups and the MCSA has been used to assist the researcher in hearing the voices of ordinary people and balancing the researcher's positionality. These Mission Groups are the Methodist Women's Prayer and Service Union (MWPS&U), also known as the Women's Manyano. The study also looks at the work of the Methodist Young Women's Prayer and Service Union (MYWP&SU), also known as the Young Women's Manyano. Then there is the Young Men's Guild (YMG), also known as Amadodana. The youth has the Wesley Guild. As a proclamation institution, the study also looks at the Local Preachers Association. All these belong under the Mission Unit's umbrella as a Mission work leader in the MCSA. To a greater extent, they all serve a similar purpose of advancing God's Mission (Missio Dei) through the Mission of the Church (Missio Ecclesiae) by God's people for God's people in the world.

These mission groups are the most prominent and have been actively involved since inception. They represent the work of the MCSA as well as the drivers of Mission.

The position of the researcher is not left without scrutiny in this study. This assists with balancing the voice of the researcher and that of the researched world. (Olejinik. Ed, 2021: 15). This balancing act keeps the study objective guided by the literature of the MCSA and its Mission Groups.

The researcher will thus examine this work from the documents available on the Methodist website, Mission Groups, and Units of the MCSA. This literature review will assist in exploring the contribution of the MCSA in the intersectionality of gender,

theology, and development through the Mission Groups using data collection and analytical techniques to interpret this work.

Chapter 5: Results and Analysis

The analysis of the collected data is mirrored against the theoretical framework. The literature review and data are relevant voices of the MCSA to give a fair and objective analysis. This chapter looks at the successes of MCSA in understanding each Mission Group's contribution and the gaps thereof. These gaps will assist with further research. It is in this chapter that the weaving together of the understanding of the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development by the scholars, the ambitions of the MCSA through their policies and theologies, and how this is translated into practical work presented by the Mission Groups using their minutes and founding documents enriches the paper.

Conclusion

The research unequivocally concludes that the MCSA has made notable contributions to the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development. While the study points out some gaps that require further exploration, viewing these shortcomings as failures would be unfair. Instead, they offer a fertile ground for the MCSA to explore untapped possibilities as a development practitioner. The literature review and existing theories of development, particularly those of David Korten as examined by Ignatius Swart, and gendered development seen through the lenses of Beverly Haddad provide robust support for this assertion.

Despite the MCSA primarily leaning towards the first two generations of development strategies, namely welfare and relief and the local community, it does not prioritise the third and fourth-generation development strategies. As such, the study findings highlight several factors that could aid further research. There is no doubt that the MCSA has the potential to make even more significant strides in contributing to the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development, provided that the organisation takes a more proactive approach and explores the untapped possibilities the study has identified.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the strides made by the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) in becoming a Church that addresses the realities of its members and the members of the communities in which Methodism exists. I will give background to the work that has led to the transformative work by the MCSA.

The chapter raises some pertinent theologies developed over the years from the era of the theology of protest and resistance to the theology of reconstruction. These are expressed in the conference resolutions, congresses, and charters.

The chapter will also explore the partnerships the MCSA has formed over the years in doing mission and the resources the MCSA has built.

The chapter will also look at the critical role played by women in the discourse of theology and development.

All this will illustrate the contribution made by the MCSA in the intersection of theology, gender, and development through the literature review on Development and Economic Empowerment.

Historical Background

The MCSA, guided by the Wesleyan principles of doing good and presence where the Methodists are most needed, led to the church responding to society's ills (MCSA, 2016: 25). This social responsibility meant the Church would be prophetic. The prophetic social responsibility is contained in the 1958 responsibility of a "one and undivided Church" (MCSA, 1958: 65). This 1958 Conference resolution of a one and undivided church was a protest together with the people against the divisive laws of apartheid expressing a theology of protest.

This intersectionality of theology and development helped to agitate the status quo, which was even more critical for the MCSA. It may not have been a forceful prophetic message. Still, it certainly influenced South Africa's future as the government made transformative calls that were in line with the prophetic message of the MCSA (MCSA, 1995). This is the "soft culture" Swart refers to about the mobilisation of social movement (Swart, 2006: 230).

Notably, the MCSA implemented Korten's third-generation strategy of involving local communities in their approach (Korten, 1987: 148). The Journey to the New Land marked a shift from a theology of protest and resistance to a theology of construction. However, Korten did not address the tension between internal and external local communities, a critical issue in sustainable development discourse.

The MCSA practices community development as a local community, and this conflict is worth reflecting on. For example, the MCSA could not remain neutral on gender issues within the church, as Haddad argues that such neutrality would betray the pursuit of meaningful development (Haddad, 2003: 430). By sharpening every-member-ministry's (MCSA, 2016: 83) theological discourse, development within the MCSA became practical advocacy in a society plagued by patriarchy.

Evidently, women in the MCSA have not just supported each other but have also gone to the vulnerable communities in various formations, including individuals like Mrs Edith Mgabhi and Mrs Ester Mqoboli, women who would later be in leadership positions like Rev Purity Malinga, who became the first female Bishop, Ms Lindeni Madlala the first and sadly thus far the only female Lay President to be elected and now recently the induction of the second female Presiding Bishop of the MCSA, Rev Pumla Nzimande. This indicates that women are not a homogenous group because of genital differences, but women are social agents of change and transformation (Haddad, 2003: 430). Instead of gender being a hindrance to development, it became a critical component of the MCSA's advancement in the intersectionality of gender, theology, and development. To this end the warning signs of the importance of carefully examining the intersectionality of gender and development remains critical as women are often left behind (Crenshaw, 2013: 1242).

In addition, the divides of the colonial agenda of making black Africans secondary to their white counterparts would be challenged by this journey of reconstruction. Human development would no longer be about emotional spirituality without the spirituality of dignity of all of God's people. The less empowered in a church that declares itself as one and undivided had to be at the helm of the agenda of the Church, hence the Mission Pillar of Human Development and Economic Empowerment (MCSA, 2002: 2). So, the Mission Charter would become a powerful guiding document for the MCSA.

MCSA Mission Charter

As noted earlier, the internal and external influences of the MCSA are critical components of the purpose of existence. Consequently, the MCSA stepped up to become a global player in development. The MCSA would thus challenge the Global North's development strategies through modernisation (Haddad, 2003: 431). The Mission Charter is about the development of the people by the people. These people, to a more significant extent, involve and include women.

The Mission Charter was more than just a statement of faith for the Methodists; it was a compass for development, guiding the Church's direction for years to come. With its reference to Proverbs 29:18 and the emphasis on "passion," this statement of conferencing inspired the Methodists and became a tool for the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development. It was a majestic vision, divinely inspired, that the Church needed to own as a Mount Sinai moment.

Just as God insisted on making new stone tablets and chiselling the Law after the first tablets were broken, the Mission Charter also provided an essential tool for guiding the Church's development after the 1958 statement seemingly vanished into the books and not the church's life. It upheld God's vision for sustainable development among humanity, ensuring that theologies, gendering, and development strategies aligned with the Church's direction. The Mission Charter was a critical tool, like the Sinai Tablet, that God used to guide people. It was not just for the generation in Mthatha but for all future generations.

Upholding God's vision demanded not only maintenance but also implementation. The annexure to verse 18 emphasises the vitality of passion, as it was written, "Where there is no passion, the vision dies." Passion is the manifestation of a strong belief in something. Therefore, the MCSA's Mission Charter was not merely a statement concerning the present moment but a declaration of the future, marking a distinction from the past and offering hope for a different future.

The Mission Charter challenged the long-standing theories of development propagated by the First World community, which suggested that development occurs through modernisation, where men were the exclusive players and women caught up later (Haddad, 2003: 431). The Charter guided those who carry hope for future generations to fulfil God's vision. This is the same notion of shared knowledge by

Simangaliso Kumalo who warns of the dangers of indoctrinated approach to education as opposed to participatory approach. This shared knowledge is critical even as to the mission charter calls for in listening to the people. (Kumalo, S.R. 2005: 2)

Each generation would be responsible for identifying ways to propagate this majestic vision, which God's people have passionately embraced. The Acts 2:17 Church was born, as foretold in Joel 2:28 prophecy, which reads, "And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." God imparts to each community member an exclusive passion for the vision to persist. Through their Mission Groups, the Methodist people honoured this passion, and the Women's Manyano continued to be called to serve with passion and prayer (MCSA, 2018: 111). This is indeed a shared responsibility for development and a collective response to Development by the MCSA.

On the other hand, the Methodist Young Women's Prayer and Service Union would feel called for transformational efforts that empower through skills development, talent promotion, and provision of safe spaces for advocacy (MCSA, 2018: 155). The Women's Auxilliary within the Methodist Church, especially in the White context of the Methodist Church focuses on the extension of the Kingdom of God through the power of the Holy Spirit (MCSA, 2018: 91). The existence of the Women's Association championed by the Coloured communities within the Methodist Church amongst other aims similar to the Women's Manyano and Women's Auxiliary this group would also focus on the justice, service, and reconciliation (MCSA, 2018: 70).

This indicated that gender diversity within the MCSA would be part of keeping this vision alive. Gender then became a critical intersection in theology and development. Thus, this Mission Charter would be a statement of faith in a God who has called all people called Methodists to own and carry forward God's Mission so that *Missio Dei* (God's Mission) becomes *Missio Ecclesiae* (Church's Mission). This *Missio Ecclesiae* is the intersectionality of degrading power of gender lenses that only elevate women and the liberating power that involves women for their own destiny (Crenshaw, 2013: 1249).

Such ownership is declared in Matthew 20:19-20, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy

Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Once again, the Mount Sani Tablet motif was declared by Jesus in this passage. The tablets now would not be of stones but people’s lives. People would not read the Law but would practice it. The passion of the Methodist people would thus need to embody the teachings of Christ as they make more disciples. This translated the Mission of God into the Mission of the Church. This Mission Charter would thus embody the work God has given to all the Methodist people.

Once again, the intersection of gender, theology, and development became essential for the MCSA to explore. The embodiment of this work was the work in the people of God for the people of God. The MCSA, in understanding this vision that now would become their platform from which to do God’s work, is illustrated in the four calls of the Mission Charter (MCSA, 2004).

The Mission Charter of the MCSA made calls for the MCSA to commit to Christ, God’s mission, and diversity (MCSA, 2004). Methodists would, in the first place, “carry forward God’s mission.” This aligned with the sense that this Mission Charter was a tool to walk with God, guided by God for God’s purposes. Such purposes would be about things and the people God wanted to transform. Looking at the four calls, it became clear that people will be at the heart of God working with people and now through the people called Methodists. Development, therefore, for the MCSA was people-centred.

This made the Mission Charter a statement of faithfulness and obedience to God’s call. The healing of Africa for the healing of the nations would happen best when the people of Africa are healed. The presence of the MCSA in six Southern African countries was essential as an agent of healing and transformation. Transformation was a critical component of the development of human beings (Haddad, 2003: 431). This was due to the recognition that transformation has blind spots, and therefore, policy-making must cater to this (Harper, C. et al. (eds), 2018: 147). The MCSA’s bundling up of Human Development and Economic Empowerment is a critical theological intersection with development that recognised this blind spot theory.

In addition to the healing component, the second call emphasised the transformation of people as the renewal in Christ was being achieved. In other words, people’s conditions of living needed to change. It was not something futuristic to the extent of

being unreachable. In this sense, transformation became '*trans*' as a prefix denoting movement to the other side, across, or beyond. This meant there was a formation that needed to take people beyond their current circumstances. It was a process that made life on the other side of the current experiences a reality. This made the Mission Charter a formative statement that influenced change and different ways of formation.

This diversity existed within the MCSA, to begin with. The young, old, men, women, rich, poor, and different races would need to be part of this transformative agenda of God's vision to the Methodist people in Southern Africa.

With its ability to guide Methodists in understanding their identity and the necessary actions to take, the Mission Charter was a crucial post-conference tool for the community. This tool empowered Methodists to express their hopes for a better world and take an active role in realising this vision by utilising their powerful resources to promote healing and transformation. Additionally, the Mission Charter promoted the intersectionality of gender, theology, and development, making it essential for the Southern African Methodist community. Using the Mission Charter, Methodists could make a meaningful impact in the discourse of the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development in shaping and re-shaping the status quo.

A Mission-Driven Church Journeying to the New Land

Precipitated by the changing political landscape of South Africa as the political parties were being unbanned and a new dispensation imminent, the MCSA asked a critical question of transformational development (MCSA, 1995) as a crucial theology in the intersectionality of gender and development. This would be a trans-formation - the crossing to the other side. This was a critical question to ask as a response and for the Church to influence the agenda of such a shift, the '*trans*' in the life of South Africans and Southern Africa. Without asking this question, the Church would have become redundant and irrelevant to many.

Southern Africa, being a religious region, has historically placed great value on the influence of the Church in shaping politics and society. The relationship between the State and the Church was examined closely by the MCSA, which posed a critical question. When the State introduced the Group Areas Act in 1936, the Church was slow to respond, but in 1958, it declared the MCSA a "One and Undivided Church." Through the Journey to the New Land, the Church responded promptly and

contributed to South Africa's future. This forward-thinking process was later acknowledged in 2004 and 2005 when the MCSA's commitment to serving as a compass for Southern Africa was guided by Proverbs 29:18.

In this instance, the Methodist Church was developing a second trajectory of being a source of influence. The first was the influence that resulted from the theology of protest and resistance with the 1958 Conference declaring the unity of the Church. The second would be the theology of reconstruction and development. This was termed the Journey to the New Land between 1992 and 1995 with six clear calls (MCSA, 1995) of how the MCSA can be a key player not only in developing theology but also in tangible ways in the changing society in the six calls of Journey to the New Land (MCSA, 1995).

These calls indicated how the church itself was in the process of renewal. This theology of renewal developed by the Journey to the New Land required a closer look at the identity of the MCSA. These six calls were shaping the church's life so that the impact of who the church is became expressed in the image of the church and in the realities of communities that needed renewal. They were calls for self-critique so that society would be impacted differently in changing the nature of doing church. It would be prudent, for instance, for a spirituality that domesticates and confines God to no longer be the order of the day. This meant theology must inquire and nudge simultaneously as people think and commit to new ways of looking at life.

The domestication of women, even within the MCSA, would no longer be the order of the day. The Journey to the New Land would unleash a power of capacity that had been underutilised, ignored and pushed to the periphery. Bishop Purity Malinga would be the only woman among the male-dominated group of Bishops. Lindeni Madlala would occupy an office a man had occupied (MCSA, 2009: 220). This, in fact, must be seen as a quick transition towards transformation as she became the second Lay President after establishing this office. The spirituality of priesthood of all believers (MCSA, 2016: 12) as a Methodist witness was now coming to fruition. The MCSA was not only making policies but was also living by such principles. The policies were now informing and shaping development, including gender as a critical intersectionality.

The church was being called to model living together, both men and women, as all made in the Image of God. This intersectionality of gender was elevating the Christian

anthropology, both men and women made in the same image and thus equal partners in advancing the will and plan of God. The 'all' in the first call was the progression from the 1958 resolution: the church is one and undivided. Irrespective of race, gender, background, or whatever differences may have existed and allowed to separate the people was not going to be allowed to continue. 'All' the church's people would work towards the same goal of deepened spirituality. Neither was the church going to maintain any of the self-serving desires, be it of particular groups or the MCSA, but for the church to be missional in its approach by not being inward-looking but outward-looking. A missional church would not serve its purposes and desires but those who are in need.

This would also be in line with the Methodist Rules of the Helper, number 11, "You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore, spend and be spent in this work. And always go not only to those who want you but to those who want you most." (MCSA, 2016: 182). A mission-driven church goes where the church is needed the most. A church that was needed the most would not be a static church. It would be a dynamic church that responded to the needs as they arose. Its agenda was not set in the meetings but by what was happening so that the meetings addressed the needs. The church was alert so that it did not suffer from rigidity to law but was influenced by the people's circumstances for theology, gender, and development to intersect well. The MCSA evolved as the situations evolved, and the church adapted accordingly.

The MCSA has been able to do this as it reflected on the changing landscape, and the needs of the society informed the policies that guided and directed the church's work. This was the birth process of a theology of development born from reality. Such theology embodies the reality of the people so that the church exists with the people for the people. This is precisely how the Kairos Document was also born from a theology from below (Haddad, 2016: 3). The theology from below is not imaginative or presumptuous. The theology of the Journey to the Newland was, thus, contextual and talked to the relevant issues the church needed to address for the MCSA to contribute to gender, theology, and development as a mission-driven Church.

As an interpretation of the Journey to the New Land, the 2004 gathering would make clear the need to be contextual, "Let us participate in God's mission in ways that are appropriate to our local contexts and in partnership with the wider church and

community.” (MCSA, 2004). The appropriateness of participating in God’s mission would mean strategies that addressed the needs of the local context. This local context mission approach would thus suggest that the Methodist Church had no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to doing the mission. Development appropriate to the local context would not brush over the realities of the local context but would need to look at the challenges carefully.

The decisions on doing God’s mission would be left to the local church. This was the decentralisation of mission work. Mission, in this sense, made development not to be detached. Instead, development became close not only to the people but could easily mean development by the people themselves as a way of reconstructing their realities. This approach encouraged ownership of the development process rather than creating dependency. The women in the MCSA have developed their own strategies to reconstruct the realities of the women in the MCSA through the Manyano Movement. The 1907 establishment of the first black women’s Manyano and the election of the first Executive of the Women’s Manyano in 1937 (MCSA, 1937: 233) was a landmark for reconstructive development policies by the MCSA.

The MCSA in 2004 was developing a people-centred theology of development premised on agency rather than statements. The primary aim was to create empowerment spaces for transformative development. Empowering people through equipping them was not just about transferring skills but also the intentional relinquishing of power so that people experiencing poverty and exclusion could decide their destiny (Du Toit, N.B. 2016: 5).

Power and dignity are interwoven (Du Toit N.B., 2016: 5). The Church’s role in the days of apartheid was clear on how to use ‘people power’ to mobilise communities to stand up against unjust laws. This was a theology of resistance that gave people the power to challenge the powers that be. This also gave assurance that God is on the side of the poor. This was massive power to the powerless to know that the Almighty God is struggling together with them. It balanced the scale favouring the vulnerable by empowering them even though they don’t have the power (Du Toit N.B., 2016: 5).

This empowerment goes beyond just the spiritual but encompasses social, economic, and political components (Du Toit N.B., 2016: 5). This was critical to development in the post-colonial era. It was crucial because all these aspects talked about the

completeness of a human being. The Imago Dei was acknowledged not only by the laws here but also through the elements of life that gave dignity. This also dealt with the top-bottom (Du Toit N.B., 2016: 6) approach to development to allow those who needed development to contribute to the cause of their empowerment, the bottom-up approach of theology and policies being born from below (Haddad, 2016: 3). The Journey to the New Land, thus realised the need for empowering and equipping by looking at how resourced the MCSA is.

This empowerment for the MCSA embodied the troubling fact about the intersectionality as the power dynamics of the already privileged and the underprivileged could not be ignored (Crenshaw, 2013:1250). The underprivileged Black women needed to be given space to develop themselves and their communities, hence the establishment in 1907 for prayer and service. It was not going to be just a spiritual endeavour, but a developmental agenda through service.

Theologising as MCSA's Transformational Development Strategy

Theology for the MCSA has not been a scholarly approach only but has been rooted in the ordinary lives of the people as a theology form below (Haddad, 2016: 3). This has been a critical move by the MCSA in managing the dynamics of the Missionaries bringing a fluid approach to development through religion (MCSA, 2023). This meant that theologies of resistance would automatically set the agenda of the life of the Church.

This was seen through the networks the women had formed between the Bible Women and the Women's Auxilary (Gaitskell, 2000: 284). Women were supporting other women. The women's ownership of the development work met the resistance to a men-only approach to faith and development. Already, this was making development in the MCSA people-to-people centred (Korten, 1987: 154). This time gender would not be influenced by race, but gender confronted the ills of the society by women of different races coming together. A theology of synergy that would lead to hope was being born from below as women were working together sharing best practices and resources.

This people-to-people-centred development is the theologising on the MCSA women's lived theology of anthropology that recognised all human beings made in the Image of God. This Imago Dei would not be left to the elite theologians, but it would be a

practical statement of faith by the deprived and undermined women. Not only were women resisting the divisive patriarchy, but they were also protesting against it.

This protest was a public display of not just disregarding the prominent practices of the MCSA at the time but was also a public discourse through ownership of development. It was about breaking the cycle of the status quo (Haddad, 2003: 403). This would soon lead to the theology of self-actualisation as the black women also wanted their rightful share of the cake to dignified humanity.

The self-actualisation was not just going to be about the person of the black woman, but the potential thereof. The dependency syndrome was endorsing a fourth-tier humanity from the elevated manhood to superior white women and then a clear sub-division of the third-tier of black people. Women, in general, were treated like sub-human species. Development was determined by colour and gender. Women were always suffering the most. This notion has been supported by the global need to develop and empower women as integral to all the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (Women, n.d.). This was not because there has been digression in the agenda of developing women; there has been a lack to none.

The 1937 decision to welcome the women leaders as delegates to meetings (MCSA, 1937: 233) was not just a step in the right direction but was marking a theology of belonging. This was not just belonging to the MCSA, but also to where decisions were made. But, even more critical, the belonging was the women's affairs in the hands of other women. This would drive development this time as the vulnerable were crafting their destiny and no longer dependent on the oppressive men.

It is clear from this gendered development that the economic emancipation of women was already on the cards. There was no point in being an unresourced decision-maker (Haddad, 2003: 429) if the theology of reconstruction was to be sustainable. When the Women's Manyano were electing their leadership, they included a Treasurer, not as a ceremonial position, but to look after the women's purse.

This theology of reconstruction through economic emancipation happens well when there is the theology of sharing (Villa-Vicencio, 1992:2). This sharing for the MCSA contributed to the healing and transformation agenda through its liberating factor as a shared resource among the poor black women and with the partners of the poor like the Women's Auxiliary in changing the status quo (De Gruchy, J. W. et al., 1994: 186).

This would then set the new paradigm of doing God's work that demanded "double location" (De Gruchy, J. W. et al., 1994: 187), theologising for the MCSA. The think tank structures needed strengthening as the implementing structures. The conferencing coupled with the Mission Groups was that double location, theologising for the development so that the MCSA could be contextual.

This conferencing shook the church from its slumber of secularising the church through policies that were weakening the positionality of the MCSA in society. On the other hand, the emergence of the Mission Groups strengthened the MCSA's presence and repositioning. The 1958 declaration and the 1907 resolution culminating in the 1937 resolution for women to be part of the decision-making structures were classic examples of this double location theologising.

The top-down policy theology was being merged with the bottom-up contextual theology. This balanced the nuance of theologising as the theology from below was more concerned with the ordinary aspects of life when the birds-eye view captured the general aspects of life. What would it mean to be a one and undivided church in a divided society not only by the laws of the land but also the economics of the land that reinforced the laws without policing seemingly became a critical question for the MCSA?

It was prudent for the MCSA to develop the theology of accountability. Given the literature review, this is the critical moment of the Journey to the New Land and Obedience 81. The MCSA was in conversation with the self. Development requires the agents of transformation to be in conversation with self so that the theory and praxis are held in tandem as one informs the other so that the socio-economic structures can be addressed to bring about theologies that question policies and enable thinking of the practical steps to be taken, in this instance development that was sensitive to gender.

Gendered Approach to Development by the MCSA

Theology of reconstruction and development (Villa-Vicencio, 1992: 29) that responds to neo-colonialism takes a pragmatic approach. This approach encourages partnerships between development agencies and recipients. The third call, "The rediscovery of every member ministry or the priesthood of all believers" (MCSA, 1995; MCSA, 2016: 12), encouraged the Church to realise that its most significant resource

is its members. This would lead to better ownership of God's mission and democratising development. Korten shares the same view and further illustrates that a centralised approach hinders development due to self-enrichment focus, corruption, and politically motivated bias to protect power rather than developing people (Korten, D., 1987: 147). This local community strategy was critical for the intersection of gender, theology, and development, as it enabled people to implement sustainable development policies, processes, and activities in the MCSA.

Sustainable development that is people-centred is not just about people knowing how to do development for themselves but encourages them to ask the fundamental question “why” the development in the first place (Du Toit, 2016: 3). Such a question solidifies the work that needs to be done as it asks of the questions charity could not have asked. In this pragmatic approach, ownership of development by the people is critical. The Mission Charter was the why question for the MCSA. Why was MCSA, not one and undivided church? There was a need for deepened Spirituality. Why was there no sign of the deepened spirituality? There was a need for human development and economic empowerment. The “why” led to identifying the gaps.

The MCSA approach to development that allows women to be defined not by religion, but their realities was the step in the right direction given the limiting power of religion, especailay towards women. In fact, Sietisho assets that this power of religion is primarily degrading as it condemns than liberates (Sietisho, 2017: 164). A new model therefore is required to correct this. For the Methodist Church, this would be the priesthood of believers.

The priesthood of believers as a policy of the MCSA (MCSA, 2016: 12) emphasised that everybody was a critical player in ensuring sustainable development. This is Romans 12 church; the unit is diverse– unity in diversity. Even with the quest for unity, gender justice must always be upheld and not compromised (Phiri, 2019: 490). No wonder the critical emphasis was that in the binary of God’s justice and Social justice, focusing on ‘being’ (Nadar, S. and Reddy, S., 2015: 592-593) was more critical than discipleship. This approach encouraged complimenting each other rather than competing with one another. It emphasised putting value in each individual rather than eliminating them, hence the MCSA’s priest-hood of believers and the synergy among the Mission Groups.

With this emphasis, the community became a formidable resource for development. This changed development from being charitable communities to developing communities. The Journey to the New Land emphasised this approach to development by recognising the gifts of every member. This every-member ministry made no distinction between the members. Issues of gender and age, which were often barriers to participation in God's work, were being challenged by this call to do God's mission.

This is why the Methodist Church could, for the first time, affirm the leadership gifts in women by electing the first female Bishop, Rev Purity Malinga (MCSA, 2019: 210), who later on became the first female Presiding Bishop of the MCSA (MCSA, 2019: 210). In the following years, more women would be elected as Bishops; the next Presiding Bishop taking over from Bishop Malinga is Rev Pumla Nzimande, tasked with leading the MCSA. The Reverends Charmaine Morgan was in Namibia District, Sondlile Nkwanyana in the Highveld and eSwatini District, Faith Whitby in the Central District, and Yvette Moses in the Cape of Good Hope. Rev Charmaine Morgan would have been the first female Secretary of the Conference earlier. Gender was no longer going to be discussed as an item in the agenda, but gender determined the agenda of the Church. Instead of gender being the subject of the MCSA, every member made gender a means towards sustainable development.

One may ask why it was important for the MCSA to continue with the liberation theology during a reconstruction and development journey. Seemingly, the precursor to development is not always in the structured policies and theological education but in the social transformation itself (Nadar, S. and Reddy, S., 2015: 592). This refusal to accept this precursory stimulus allowed the context to inform the theology. The MCSA had, like all other Churches, allowed women to be part of the Church as an expression of their faith in God.

Their voice was suitable for praying and singing to the extent that the members of the Women's Manyano were often known as the mothers of prayer (Omama bomthandazo) and the Young Women's Manyano as the young women of praise (Intombi zokuvuma). The serving was more of a homogenous affair. Women served other women. The Journey to the New Land turned this paradigm and gave women a voice to be part of the decision-making and to serve like any other member in the attempts to advance God's Mission – God's justice.

The wave of women fully participating in the life of the Church was also seen not only in the clergy; the election of the first female, sadly the last thus far Lay President or Connexional Lay Leader, Ms. Lindeni Madlala (MCSA, 2009), was a bold step in the every member ministry in the MCSA. Many other female Lay Leaders at the District level of the MCSA have not been dampened by the lack of women occupying the highest office of the lay people leading the MCSA. Gender has since become an integral part of development within the MCSA. Now, the intersectionality of gender and theology meant that God's justice was merged with Social justice - development.

After all, women have always played a critical role. The formation of the Women's Manyano in 1907 in the Dundee area (Mkhwanazi, 2002: 29) marked a turning point in many areas of the church. These women were and continue to be determined to serve and pray. Their prayer was a lived experience as they translated it to service. As their name suggested, these women, the Methodist Women's Prayer and Service Union (MWPS&U), known as the Women's Manyano over the years, recognised a need within the community, prayed for it, and went out to meet it. Their work became an added means of grace for many people within the MCSA and the local communities. These women had started localising God's Mission long before the Journey to the New Land.

It was no wonder that this work was acknowledged in the Methodist Book of Order and was represented at Synod (MCSA, 2016: 74) and Conference (MCSA, 2016: 54). These are the highest decision-making structures within the MCSA as directed by the Circuit Quarterly Meetings (CQM) who are the most elevated decision-making structure in the Local Church (MCSA, 2016: 73). The Women's Manyano was also represented in the Circuit Quarterly Meetings (MCSA, 2016: 74). Women were not just looking at the menu, they were designing it, cooking the meal in the kitchen, and serving the dish like all the other players in the development agenda. They were the engineers of the work God wanted to see done; this was not a privilege but a right for the women in the MCSA.

The impact of the service by women in the Methodist Church was also seen through the Bible Women who have brought "transformative diakonia" (Phiri, 2019: 489). These women have been trained to care for the local communities, people experiencing poverty, and the vulnerable. The Bible Women served faithfully not as

slaves but as the ones who found fulfilment in the change their work brought to communities and families. This diakonia brought justice and dignity. It was not about ticking the box but journeying with the vulnerable.

During the early years of the existence of these women, only women supported their work through the Women's Auxillary (Gaitskell, 2000: 238), a Whites-only group of women. This meant limited resources, but once again, the ownership of the work could not be stifled by the lack of resources. Mrs Edith Mgabhi, with only E30, would visit 22 kraals ministering to both young and old (Gaitskell, 2000: 284). This proved every member ministry's Journey to the New Land call was possible. The how mentality did not drive Mrs Mgabhi, but the why mentality. Her appointment was not made by the official structures of the MCSA but by the Women's Manyano in 1924 in recognition of her work in the Transvaal (Gaitskell, 2000: 283). On the other hand, in the Cape Province, the Women's Auxiliary supported Mrs Ester Mqoboli in 1926 (Attwell, P., Attwell, P., and MCSA Women's Auxiliary, 1997: 3). Women were standing up for women, and women were making a big difference in society even back then. Women have driven development, especially in poor and vulnerable communities.

The interesting point made by Sietisho about the WM contributing to the narrative of women being helpers and not creators of paradigms (Sietisho, 2017: 167) has to a greater extent been challenged by the strides the women themselves have made over the years. The planting of food gardens in the recent years as a program by the women for their communities challenges this view by Sietisho. The journey that was walked by the likes of Edith Mgabhi and Ester Mqoboli has always sought to be revolutionary to the housewife motif. Men may have propagated this view, but it is a view that women have disputed through their actions.

Invariably, the actions of the women have given access not only to people who needed development but also those who could drive the development agenda because they were the best to theologise. They theologised not for understanding concepts but for addressing concepts of development. This made these people an excellent resource in the intersection of theology and development as they were "activist theologians" (Haddad, 2016: 3). Thus, the most significant resource would not be money; instead, it would be people themselves, the marginalised, and the vulnerable people themselves. When the theology of reconstruction and development met the dedication

of people to champion development, such intersectionality resulted in sustainable, accessible, and people-centred development (Korten, 1987: 154).

A People-Centred Development: Human Development through Economic Empowerment

The vulnerable people of the previously disadvantaged communities have always been a glaring contrast to the legacy of the apartheid system in South Africa and elsewhere in Southern Africa, where the resources have been disproportionately distributed (Organization, n.d.: 2). Resources have always favoured the Whites, with few black people benefiting (DEWCOM, 2019: 5). This is even glaring in terms of the brick-and-mortar resources between the black and white communities. By implication, according to the DEWCOM table on pension contributions, the then White Churches, which were the most affluent, were always well-resourced in comparison with the Black Township and even worse in the Rural villages (DEWCOM, 2019: 4). On the one hand, the solution could be to equally divide the resources among the Methodist Churches in Southern Africa as a radical approach to balancing the scales.

The starting point would not be the same; therefore, the intended outcomes would be different. The problem is not the resources at hand but the resources that can be made available after the equal distribution. Those with no resources of their own to continue contributing can never catch up with those who have more than them as individuals. So, the solution here was not to give people fish but to teach them to fish. The biggest problem, even with learning to fish, is fishing in waters without fish. Theory and praxis do not result in the same expertise. In the quest to reconstruct communities with all the best intentions, the MCSA has, over the years, faced the reality of enabling an environment of sustainable development.

Once encountering a young person in a beautiful T-shirt in front written, "Jesus is coming..." As he walked past on the back, it was written, "... please look busy!" There is a difference between preparing for Jesus and pretending to be preparing. Both could be seen as doing something, but to what end? The Church could not afford the "... look busy!" motif. In the reality of poverty, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, patriotism, illiteracy, the dawn of democracy, discrepancy on stipends, and many other challenges humanity has faced in Southern Africa, the MCSA needed a clear strategy to bring

about transformative models of developing humanity and creating an economic environment that brings the fulness of life.

These social ills were identified before 2004 (WCC, 1996), like the impact of HIV/AIDS when the Mission Congress met in Mthatha. HIV/AIDS continued to threaten people's lives through opportunistic diseases like Tuberculosis (TB) (UN, 1998: 4). The economic slump has now created a slump in human relations through gender-based violence as part of the crime that has escalated to marshal proportions (Govender, 2023: 1). Corruption jaws have left tooth-raked (Statista, n.d.); and undoubtedly this affects the dignity for many of the people. With these ever-growing ills, it was important for the MCSA to have a pillar of doing a mission that focuses on the development of humanity and changing their circumstances, hence the Human Development and Economic Empowerment Mission Pillar.

With the six calls from the Journey to the New Land, the MCSA 2005, out of the Mission Congress in Mthatha, adopted the Mission Imperatives (MCSA, 2005). The MCSA was responding to the Mission Charter and the Journey to the New Land. They were a summary of the Six Calls of the Journey to the New Land and a manifesto of the Mission Congress. They were the platform of the work to be done by the MCSA. Even on their own, they were not mutually exclusive. They existed together to complement each other. They sought to touch people's lives from various angles: spiritually, ethically, economically, and socially.

These different aspects of life were helpful in the formation of a human being to shape a life-giving society. The spirituality of the people called Methodists was the one that shaped loving societies. This sprouted from John Wesley's Rule of Life as Methodists are called not to do harm by doing good and attending to God's ordinances (MCSA, 2016: 25). This spirituality enabled life as people interact. It was a spirituality of love as Jesus would ask his disciples to "love one another." (John 13:34; 15:12). This encouraged fellowship and invited others to such fellowship, hence focusing on Evangelism and Church Growth. People who lived together in a loving fellowship uphold principles of justice because justice was translated into acts of love and kindness so that Justice and Service become the order of the day. This theology of justice for all and service to all by all, including vulnerable women and children, was critical in the intersectionality of gender, theology, and development.

The Mission Pillar of Human Development and Economic Empowerment can be seen as an interpretation of the Early Church economic models that should be used to assist with development paradigms. The Acts 2 narrative of people coming together during Pentecost is an economic model that supports socialism and breaks the stereotypes of privatised economies. The coming together was not without the bringing together of resources so that the ownership of resources was corporate instead of being privatised (Lindsley, 2012: 1). How Acts 2 colligates social economic issues exposed how the Early Church also struggled with the kingdom economic principles as seen from the Act 5:1 with Ananias and Sapphira withholding some of the money for themselves as profit perhaps (Lindsley, 2012: 3). The MCSA Mission Pillar advocated for socialism rather than the Acts 5 capitalism tendencies. Such human development and economic empowerment were much needed in society.

Clearly, then, people in society were stripped of their dignity by the harsh economic conditions they lived under. The dignity was stripped away by the socio-political dynamics that had not addressed the social ills, especially the poor and the previously disadvantaged segment of the population. In addition, the fundamentalism in understanding human life and preferences stripped people's dignity.

Therefore, people's dignity was stripped away by the systems that saw and used others as objects for the gains of the few in the economic framework and the leadership arena. All these could not be addressed only through the spoken word alone. There were tangible ways of bringing the gospel to life for it to bring life. As a resourced church with people, the MCSA has developed a Mission Pillar that enabled this practical proclamation of humanity in ways that bring dignity. One of these ways is to empower people economically.

A church made up of the poor could not suddenly be wealthy economically. A one and undivided church in such a fragmented society shall surely suffer from similar tendencies. All these challenges required the development of humanity that could challenge and offer an alternative that could become the antidote to these realities. And so, Human development became critical.

As part of the Human Development and Economic Empowerment pillar, the MCSA has started funds like the Millennium Mission Fund. This was aimed at raising millions of rands to enable the mission work of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. The

Methodist Church has raised R15 000 000 since 1999. This money would later assist with food security during the COVID-19 pandemic (Unit, 2022). The funds were raised through the Methodist people who contributed to this economic vision that would empower the Methodist Church to minister meaningfully. People were asked to contribute R100 and above as much as they could afford (Unit, 2022). It was a scheme that enabled generosity and unlocked resources that would be much needed by the church later. In the quest to combat the ills in society and develop and empower human beings economically, the MCSA has since established various funds administered by the Mission Unit (MCSA, n.d.: 39).

These funds have enabled the MCSA to be transformative in South Africa and the six countries of its Conference. These countries include South Africa, Botswana, eSwatini, Mozambique, Lesotho, and Namibia. In doing this work, the MCSA adopted a pragmatic approach to development; the church partnered with various organisations worldwide. These include The Methodist British Conference, Methodist Zimbabwean Conference, Angola, and Methodist German Conference, to mention a few (MCSA, n.d.: 39-42). These partnerships are about money and shared skills like exchanging choirs and members.

A German Conference Methodist Church choir visited Calvary Methodist Church, Midrand. The volunteer later served in the Mission Unit, resided in the Roodepoort Circuit, and shared her musical skills. Music for Methodism formed an integral part of the life of the Church outside of worship. Gatherings were more meaningful when there was music. Music for Methodism in Southern Africa became the defining moment for any gathering. Music set the tone for what was to follow. The type of music could determine the mood of the occasion. This partnership was not just about music; it was about a culture of singing and expression through music. A society that fought the injustices through chanting and dancing was like the old Israel, "How can we sing the song of Zion in a strange land?" – music determined the phase in life as part of the development of humanity for the MCSA. The Black community of the Methodist Church would burst into song by Tiyo Soga, Lizalis' idinga lakho (fulfil your promise), no wonder (Msila, n.d.) indicated that "to sing is not to sing, but a protest in today's Africa."

Conclusion

The MCSA has since 1958 taken steps to be part of a struggling society. The struggles of the community were reflected in the life of the Church. The journey that society embarked on was either responded to or aimed at being influenced by the MCSA. These realities have affected the Mission of the MCSA. The Conference of 1958 declared that the church was one and undivided during the divisive laws of apartheid in South Africa.

When the political landscape was changing, the MCSA had a vision of influencing the changing socio-political landscape and conversed on the Journey to the New Land from 1992 to 1995. This conversation would culminate in the Church's more directed and precise voice through the Mission Charter as an outcome of the Mission Congress 2004. The six calls of the Journey to the New Land would be adopted in this Mission Congress to form what would be later known as the Methodist Mission Imperatives in the MCSA.

These Mission Imperatives, also known as the Mission Pillars, would be a tool to ensure resources and programs address societal deficits. The MCSA's policy would also alter the landscape as gender issues were not just issues. Still, gender became a means to address society's ills, hence the election of Rev Purity Malinga as the first woman Bishop and the first Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church. Other Bishops like Charmaine Morgan, Sondlile Nkwanyana, Faith Whitby, Yvette Moses, Nompithizelo Sibhidla, Mamoalusi Mothupi, and Maria Mucamba-Mahota would follow (MCSA, 2023: 3).

The Missional focus would allow the Methodist Church to rely on the very members of the Church through the principle of every member ministry crafting a theology of ownership. This majestic work by the MCSA would be held by the Methodists in Southern Africa and by partnerships formed with other Methodist conferences. These partnerships would assist with the established funds that would be a resource for practical ways to be a church that develops programs for Human Development and Economic Empowerment.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

Introduction

The theoretical framework was based on the work of three scholars. First, the result of Bev Haddad on the intersection of gender and faith is used. Second, Ignatius Swart's churches and development debate foreground the church's role in development. Third was using David Korten as the basis of the theory of progressive and multi-faceted development with fourth-generation development strategies (Korten, 1987). Ignatius Swart on *The Churches and the Development Debate: Perspectives on a Fourth Generation Approach* (Swart, 2006) helped to bring in the theological discourse on fourth-generation development strategies.

The literature reviews establish a strong basis for exploring women's impact on the fourth-generation development strategy. Nadine Bowers Du Toit's work on decolonizing development and religion's role in it emphasizes the importance of Black Consciousness and a Black Theology of Liberation in repositioning Faith-Based Organizations in the South African context (Bowers Du Toit, 2018: 33). Black women have demonstrated a positive trend towards decolonizing development, with local communities setting their own agendas instead of relying on external agencies, based on their years of work and data collection.

Haddad, in other churches, stresses that women represent the most significant segment of societal statistics, making a gender-based approach to development essential (Haddad, 2003: 248). This approach ensures that women are not relegated to passive roles, particularly concerning issues that affect their livelihoods. By prioritizing people over economic interests, this people-centered approach to development is effective.

David Korten's seminal work on development could not be overlooked when reflecting on this topic. In the development discourse, Korten explored the tension between people and resources (Korten, 1987: 145). His work could be briefly summarised through the following diagram:

Table 1. *Three generations of NGO development program strategies*

	Generation		
	First	Second	Third
Defining features	Relief & welfare	Small-scale self-reliant local development	Sustainable systems development
Problem definition	Shortages of goods and services	Local inertia	Institutional and policy constraints
Time frame	Immediate	Project life	Indefinite long-term
Spatial scope	Individual or family	Neighborhood or village	Region or nation
Chief actors	NGO	NGO + beneficiary organizations	All public and private institutions that define the relevant system
Development education	Starving children	Community self-help initiatives	Failures in inter-dependent systems
Management orientation	Logistics management	Project management	Strategic management

Table 1 - (Korten 1987: 148)

The approach to development detailed in the preceding text was not necessarily incremental or progressive; instead, it involved developing over time based on factors that warrant such development.

This notion will be in line with Sarojini Nadar's development approach through the womanist lenses that it must provide justice (Nadar, 2003: 51). The justice is practiced through the efforts of the undermined and underprivileged.

In South Africa, development, particularly in the aftermath of Apartheid, was driven by the involvement of ordinary people who theologised around liberation concepts through the Kairos movement (Haddad, 2016: 2). This approach to development was considered more sustainable and fostered a sense of ownership among people. It was a way of life rather than just a concept for a select few.

The ecumenical movement played a significant role in empowering people to take charge of their own development. The Manyano movement, which was not limited to the Methodist Church, had also spread to other denominations and should continue to explore theories of development (Haddad, 2003: 429). These theories of development

gave birth to theologies and policies that sustain development by the pioneers of these theories. The women in the church were the pioneers of the theories of development that challenged patriarchy in society and the church. If this is not the case, then the Church would continue to support the status quo of the society on patriarchy (Haddad, 2003: 429).

Sarojini Nadar's scholarly analysis of the Book of Esther in her 2003 work highlights the intricate nature of the text, which emphasizes the presence of a multitude of perspectives. Similarly, the Methodist Church of Southern Africa's (MCSA) engagement with a diverse set of stakeholders in the development agenda reveals a complex network of interconnected layers. This intricate interplay underscores the lack of uniformity within the MCSA as a development agency, as it operates in a constantly evolving environment.

The MCSA's approach to development is characterized by a nuanced and multifaceted strategy tailored to the specific needs and challenges of the communities it serves. The MCSA's development initiatives involve working collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, local communities, and international organizations. This approach enables the MCSA to leverage the strengths and resources of its partners to achieve its development goals effectively.

In essence, the MCSA's development efforts are driven by a deep commitment to social justice and human rights, and are guided by the principles of fairness, inclusivity, and respect for diversity. Through its work, the MCSA strives to create a more just and equitable society, where all individuals have access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive.

In the article "Churches and Development," Haddad (2007: 121-124) presented a compelling argument regarding the approaches to development. The author discussed David Korten's "third generation approach" and Ignatius Swart's "Fourth generation approach," which was referred to as the "soft culture" (Swart 2006: 230). Haddad identified the four levels of development practice: Welfare and Relief, Local Community, Policy and Institution, and Mobilisation of Social Movements.

Haddad's analysis provided a basis for the theoretical framework of Ignatius Swart's approach. This commentary has been chosen because it effectively illustrates Swart's

emphasis on the four generations and highlights the role of intersectionality in development.

The proposed theoretical framework can significantly contribute to understanding development practices. The concept of the four generations provides a comprehensive perspective on the different approaches to development, which could be used to inform policy and practice. The intersectionality of development, as emphasised by Swart, provided an engendered perspective that is essential for effective development practice. In the article "Churches and Development," Haddad (2007: 121-124) presented a compelling argument regarding the approaches to development. The author discussed David Korten's "third generation approach" and Ignatius Swart's "fourth generation approach," which was referred to as the "soft culture" (Swart 2006: 230). Haddad identified the four levels of development practice: Welfare and Relief, Local Community, Policy and Institution, and Mobilisation of Social Movements.

Haddad's analysis provided a basis for the theoretical framework of Ignatius Swart's approach. This commentary has been chosen because it effectively illustrates Swart's emphasis on the four generations and highlights the role of intersectionality in development.

The Four Quadrants of Micro to Macro Development

Achieving development goals requires a comprehensive approach that considers multiple factors instead of relying only on a single system. The micro-analysis quadrant highlights the importance of paying close attention to small, immediate details that can make a big difference in the long run. For instance, providing welfare and relief is a crucial requirement to promote development, especially for marginalized groups like women (Haddad, 2003: 430) . In particular, marginalized groups often lack access to basic necessities, such as education and healthcare, which can hinder their ability to thrive.

These needs require urgent attention and cannot be put on hold until a comprehensive framework is established. Swift intervention is needed to alleviate suffering and provide relief to those who need it most. Such intervention can give hope to those who might feel helpless and can contribute to overall healing and well-being. By employing micro strategies, we can address the immediate needs of marginalized groups and

contribute to the realization of the MCSA vision for transformation and healing. Ultimately, this approach can help create a more equitable and just society.

In situations where immediate intervention is necessary, it can address concerns regarding an individual's dignity despite its lack of sustainability. Demonstrating that there is a way out of suffering encourages individuals to remain optimistic. Charitable acts can provide an antidote to the despair that often accompanies extreme hardship, instilling a sense of hope and anticipation for what may lie ahead. The Mission Groups, in conjunction with the Department of Development and Social Responsibilities (DDSR) of the Young Men's Guild (YMG), the Christian Citizenship Secretary (CCS) of the Young Women's Manyano, and the Women's Manyano, have made significant strides towards achieving this goal. Moreover, the Community Development Convenor of the Wesley Guild has been instrumental in promoting this work (Guild, 2023).

This dignity is also driven by the measures to reverse the dilapidating effects of the patriarchal policies that degraded women as less competent human beings. The best way to reverse these is not only to decide on these policies but to be seen as reversing them in the manner in which the deprived are given opportunities. Agriculture is one of these relief and welfare strategies. Haddad notes that productivity in subsistence farming dropped when women were left behind and not trained on the new trends of farming (Haddad, 2003: 432). Growing up in the Rural Eastern Cape, women were deweeding the farms, increasing the harvest yield. The non-elevation of women to become professional farmers has contributed to the food security challenges. Development, therefore, cannot happen without the gender lens.

The macro analysis, on the other hand, helps by bringing the sustainable approach through the four generations. This is illustrated using the Korten's table (Korten 1987: 148)

Table 2: Strategies of NGO action in development: Korten's addition of the fourth generation (Korten 1990:117):

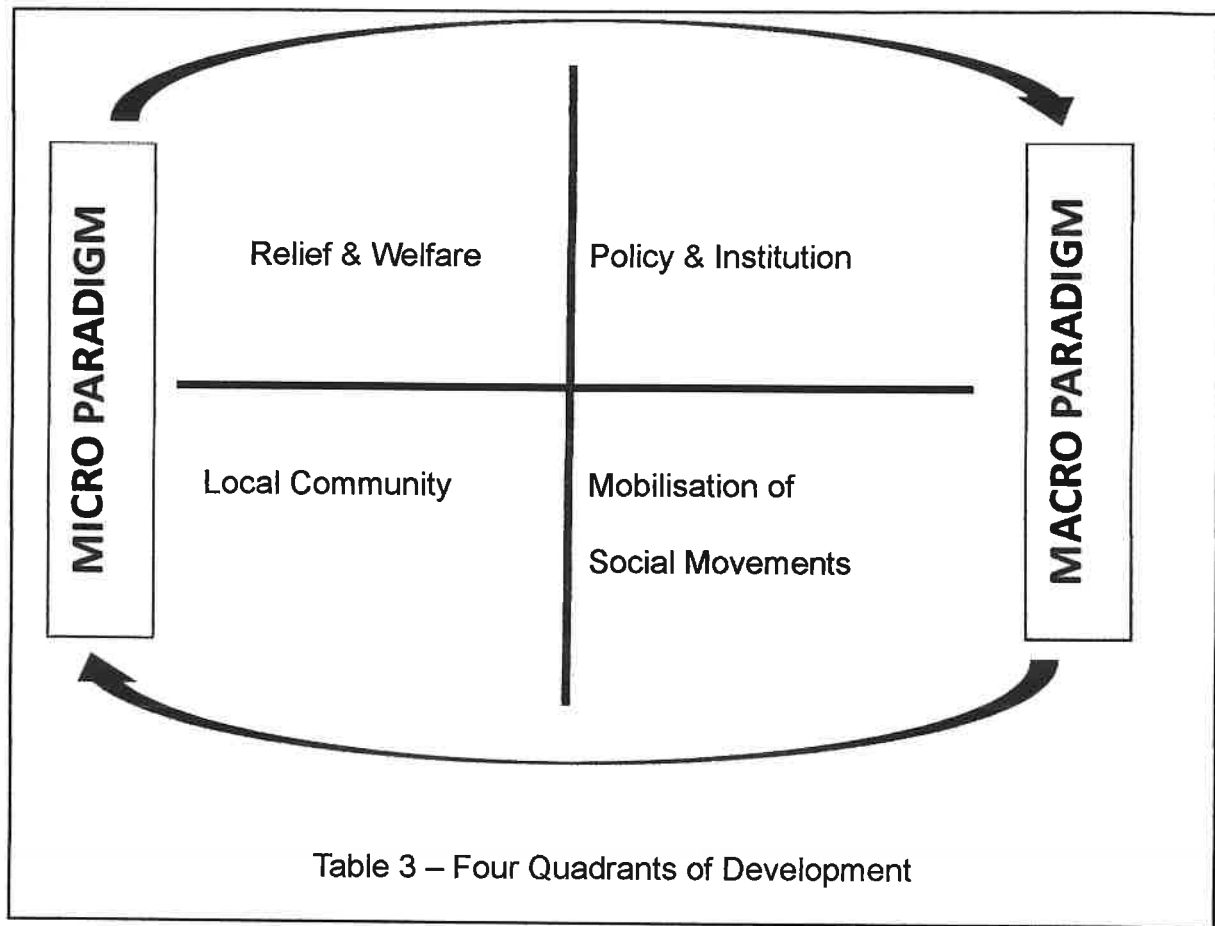
	Generation			
	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Defining features	<i>relief & welfare</i>	<i>community development</i>	<i>sustainable systems development</i>	<i>people's movements</i>
Problem definition	shortage	local inertia	institutional and policy constraints	inadequate mobilising vision
Time frame	immediate	project life	ten to twenty years	indefinite future
Scope	individual or family	neighbour-hood or village	region or nation	national or global
Chief actors	NGO	NGO plus community	all relevant public and private institutions	loosely defined networks of people and organisations
NGO role	doer	mobiliser	catalyst	activist/educator
Management orientation	logistics management	project management	strategic management	coalescing and energising self-managing networks
Development education	starving children	community self-help	constraining policies and institutions	spaceship earth



Table 2 – Fourth Generation Development

Extract from (Swart, 2006: 133)

Table 3 below illustrates that it is also possible for these quadrants to inform each other. Relief and welfare may well result in the mobilisation of social movements and, thus, policy change. As much as the local community can affect the policy change, that could result in relief and welfare.



These quadrants must work in tandem. One complements the other and is a much-needed intervention within the development framework. The theology of charity as a development strategy must involve the local people or the people being developed has proven ineffective (Korten, 1987: 155). In 2008, when the first wave of xenophobic attacks reared its ugly head in the Johannesburg area of Ivory Park, the Calvary Methodist Church was on the front lines of offering humanitarian aid (YMG, 2008). Church members collected clothes, food, and other items of basic needs. The welfare and relief efforts simultaneously mobilised the local community and social movement for a paradigm shift.

This distribution would not have been possible without the leaders of the various communities already identified. Even when people are displaced, they still have their leaders. Just because they are replaced does not mean they are not organised. To overlook the readily available structure is to undermine the people one tries to assist as a resource strategy (Korten, 1987: 155). This has been evident even with the shack fires in Alexandra, where the Methodist Church has been involved annually. Social

structures must be respected and recognised as an access point to development (Church, 2013).

The MCSA has, over the years, been developing policies and structures of governance for development. All the Mission Groups of the MCSA have Constitutions that govern their operations (MCSA, 2018). These, to a greater extent, were similar in nature and way of doing things. The language may differ in titles of the people in the offices of development like the DDSR, CCS, or Com Dev for the Young Men's Guild, Young Women's Manyano, Women's Manyano, and Wesley Guild, respectively (MCSA, 2018), all these were structures that identified the need, mobilised resources, influenced change in paradigms. This enforced the theory of development that both micro and macro development strategies were given space as voices (Korten, 1987: 156).

The MCSA has recognised the need to be structured in doing development. This structure and similarity allowed the various Mission Groups to work together. Such synergy was needed, for instance, on issues of advocacy like Gender-Based Violence (GBV). The Mission Groups in the Gauteng area have worked together in fighting GBV and Femicide in Soweto (Manyano, 2012; Manyano, 2009).

This interwovenness of these quadrants is what the MCSA needed to mobilise welfare and the local community, influence policies, and mobilise support for Social Movements. For example, when the MCSA led together with the South African Council of Churches when Femicide had become highly prevalent, it gave the voice of the Church prominence. The Church needed to be able to gain access beyond its membership.

The methodology of African Feminist Theology by Sarojini Nadar is a helpful nourishment to this study as this begins the discourse with the lived experiences of women and then opening up classrooms for the voices to be heard (Nadar S, 2015: 597). These voices are not just voices of lived experiences, but are also voices of justice that is underpinned with hope. At the core of development is justice.

Sarojini Nadar's African Feminist Theology is a seminal work that offers a unique and valuable perspective to the field of feminist theology. By placing the lived experiences of African women at the forefront, Nadar creates a space for their voices to be heard and recognized in academic settings (Nadar S, 2015: 597). This approach not only

brings to light the unique challenges and struggles faced by African women but also provides a platform for their voices to be heard and their perspectives to be taken into account. One of the most important aspects of Nadar's work is her emphasis on justice, which she sees as a crucial component of progress as ecclesiology meets the demands of ethics (Nadar, S. and Reddy, S., 2015: 592). By speaking out about their own experiences and advocating for justice, African women are able to challenge traditional power structures and effect meaningful change in their communities. In this way, Nadar's work serves not only as a scholarly contribution to the field of feminist theology but also as a powerful tool for social and political transformation.

Welfare and Relief by MCSA Women as Agents of Development

Works of charity have been the agenda of church life since the dawn of industrialisation (Swart 2006: 17). The Acts of the Apostles take this notion even further, stating that development has always been at the heart of the followers of Christ. "They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need" (Acts 2: 47). Development is not something that can be left to the corporation or any other entity without the involvement of the people themselves. Involving the people is to be intentional about the ones who have been left on the margins of society (Haddad, 2003: 429).

It is not a question of abundance but a question of sharing. When the first Bible Women in the MCSA shared their time and resources and gathered resources for the poor, it was not from a place of abundance but of concern and empathy. The little they received from the Women's Auxiliary was all they had to share with the suffering families on the farms (Gaitskell, 2000: 284).

The Methodist Bible Women were driven by their faith when they performed acts of kindness and empathy. This level of determination required a significant amount of time, effort, and resources, as well as a willingness to adopt a vicarious lifestyle, as explained by Swart (2006: 17). This meant being able to understand and feel the same emotions as the people they were helping, by immersing themselves in their experiences and conditions. Helping people experiencing poverty often meant sacrificing comfort and focusing on the higher needs of those in need. The dire conditions of others motivated them to work towards a better future.

The MCSA has been instrumental in bringing about positive changes and hope for the future through transformation. The Bible Women continued to live a vicarious lifestyle even today, aligning with the Women In Development (WID) principles (Haddad, 2003: 433). This empathetic way of living was a cornerstone of the MCSA's involvement in micro-development, particularly in welfare and relief. Welfare was a concept that brought about the completeness of a human being. It recognised the lack not only of materialistic possessions but the lack of other critical areas of a human being. This was in accordance with the World Health Organization's definition of health (WHO, 2023). To a greater extent, for the MCSA, this was a response to the very policy of healing and transformation.

According to Phillips and Ver Hasselt, health is broader than just a medical concept (Phillips, D. and Verhasselt, Y. eds., 2002: 1965). It stands to reason, therefore, that health is all that makes humans have meaningful lives at various levels of their being. The fundamental question asked by Phillips and Verhasselt on the link between health and urbanisation broadens the concept of health (Phillips, D. and Verhasselt, Y. eds., 2002: 1958). Urbanisation can take away the fundamentals of being human with the busyness that affects the social settings. Invariably, busyness takes even away the fundamental question, "How are you." In an African context, this is a fundamental question of being as one relates to the other for the fullness of humanity, resulting in unhealthy humanity. The MCSA's contribution to sustainable development required this question, as it was prompted in 2004 to ask this question by responding to the societal changes that required the theology of reconstruction.

These complex dimensions of being human help with attaining a meaningful life. The African response also gels with this idea of broadening the healthy state of humanity as it is never individualised but collective. 'We are' for the 'you' is not an individual but one that informs one's being, one's life at home, society, social circles, and any other dimensions of interaction. This was the case when the MCSA women in Mozambique manufactured and distributed sanitary pads (MCSA, 2022: 294) and advanced hygienic issues regarding women's health. These women were fulfilling the triple developmental role of women as they reproduced, produced, and managed community affairs (Haddad, 2003: 433-434). They were not productive only through procreation but in terms of items that bring about dignity.

This made welfare and relief a matter of involvement (Swart, 2006: 18). Welfare brings relief beyond physical and human interaction. The isolation brought about by modernisation and industrialisation can be healed by the gatherings in churches and places of recreation. This isolation can even be attributed to labour migration as the demographics changed (Hass, 2020:5).

Women were isolated from their husbands and fathers, and there was a shift in the demographics in the rural villages. It had become an intentional development for women to interact in the Manyano movement and offer support in various ways for the households to be sustainable. In the Third World, these gatherings can be best provided through the Church's activities. For example, as general knowledge in South Africa, for the longest of times, women and men who were gardeners in the suburban areas would find it therapeutic to meet over weekends and interact before they returned to the domestic confines of their masters and madams (Mkhwanazi, 2002: 32).

Southern Africa has not only been affected by modernisation and industrialisation, but the legacy of colonisation has been evident in the development trajectory in Southern Africa as the interaction between the colonisers and the indigenous women of Africa began to drive the paradigms of WID through the Manyano's (Haddad, 2003: 445). This begs the exploration of the apparent lack in the global south that has not been measured against the evident wealth in resources. The lack has been measured against what the global north was doing and not what the global south has with the enormous resources that could drive the development. The lagging behind in development has been translated to the lack thereof. Yet, the manyano's are an incredible resource to drive development; in their own right, the manyano's are WID.

For instance, when missionaries started introducing the concept of Christianity, it was not in terms of what the Africans believed about God. Still, the difference to theirs meant that Africans were heathens and, therefore, needed to be brought into the fold. Such imposition meant Africans lacked and were in need (Smith, 2017). This was from a perceived spiritual poverty to a general lack. This problem came with development that did not liberate but was focused on modernisation (Gutiérrez 1974:25–26).

Over the years, the African women in the MCSA had to revise their constitution around the use of alcohol, as the barring of women from partaking in any alcohol involving

matters also meant removing them from their family's traditional rituals and ceremonies. This was seen as a reversal of human dignity in the African households. As Haddad pointed out, faith is a significant influence in the WID; this faith for the indigenous African women does not begin and end with the interpretations of faith by the missionaries (Haddad, 2003: 445). Ancestry has always been a big part of faith in Africa, as all the rituals that go with such deep-rooted beliefs have been.

This notion of imposed development in Southern Africa was typical of the observation made by Ignatius Swart (2006: 11) that ecumenical development cannot be meaningful without studying the context first. The historical narrative is critical for any development. Welfare that mirrors the attitudes of the charitable makes development even less benevolent. It lacks compassion. Generosity as a micro development strategy must not be just about dishing out what one has but ensuring that it empowers those lagging where others are.

It could thus be deduced that generosity that did not consider the ones being developed was disempowering and could easily lead to dependency. Such generosity emphasised the mentality of scarcity rather than challenging it. The "umjikelo," a fundraising concept by the Mission Groups in the MCSA, fell within the principles of development as money and spirituality as matters of faith intersect all the time (Haddad, 2003: 446) with the MCSA Mission groups. This umjikelo was the women stepping out of the scarcity mentality to a new, collectively lived reality of abundance.

Welfare and charity could thus deal with the mentality of scarcity when they do not only rescue but seek to point people to the possibilities. The possibilities, for instance, of partnerships with Non-Ecumenical Organizations and NGOs, are pointed out by Ignatius Swart (2006: 91). The partnership with Young Minds Academy of Freedom Park by the YWM (Manyano, 2023) was a step in the direction of identifying other stakeholders in development. Such a multistakeholder development approach became a stimulus for change. Communities needed such stimulus to point them to something beyond their immediate experiences. It opened people up to see beyond their despondency. It is not always that people don't have the potential, but they may be so absorbed in the present challenges that each day is the same as yesterday.

Such a mentality of indifference could easily lead to complacency. The acceptance of the status quo could mean enabling it further. Welfare unlocks the door to hope and a

new way of living. This is what the Kairos Document did; it sponsored ideas for new theologies to emerge (Haddad, 2016: 3). These were theologies of development from oppression to liberation for the MCSA. In this instance, the welfare does not have to be monetary. Welfare that relieves is also about the change of paradigms. These paradigms are not just for the people being developed but even for those in development. Policies can be influenced, and social movements can be mobilised through these paradigm shifts.

This paradigm change was what the Journey to the New Land, sponsored by the people, called for (MCSA, 1995). It would set the Methodists on a path from the theologies of resistance to theologies of reconciliation and reconstruction. This meant unlocking resources from the wealthy White Methodist churches to the poor Black Methodist churches. This would broaden the work done by the Bible Women and the Women's Auxiliary not only as an isolated but as a structured and deliberate effort. The MCSA would be placing development in the hands of the people for it to be people-centred.

Welfare, thus, could spark a wave of structured development. When welfare was taken seriously beyond just the money, it led to the development of helpful philosophies that help advance human lives and livelihood. People needed to live, and how people lived was critical. Analysing social conditions in which people live is essential if the fullness of humanity is to be realised and contribute to theology and development (Villa-Vicencio, 1992: 40). The MCSA's Mission on Development and Economic Empowerment required such analysis.

Welfare brings relief to the harsh living conditions. It is a critical building block to human development. John 5:8 "Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." Narrative is more than just physical healing; it is also psychological, a critical dimension for being fully human. This deals with the paradigm of dependency. John 5:7 says, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred." The mission work of the MCSA, to a greater extent, was more about what the Church can do than the contribution the developed can make. This could easily create the development of dysfunctionality syndrome.

And yet, the psychological effect of sponsored ideas helped move from despair to courage. It takes courage to rise from dependency and hopelessness and embrace a

new attitude of self-reliance. Welfare, thus, becomes a catalyst for this paradigm shift. Development begins by believing things can change. The YMG attempt to address the Early Unintended Pregnancies (EUP) (YMG, 2022) was a step of faith in development. In this regard, believing in change was not just a dream but a reality grounded in the possibility of knowing there was an alternative to life.

This welfare does not happen haphazardly but is born from the systemic analysis that things have gone wrong and how they should be (Swart 2006: 57). Welfare is the openness to authentic analysis, not pretence or turning a blind eye. It is the involvement as a deliberate choice. This choice is also about acting on behalf of the other. Welfare champions deliberately enter spaces that belong to others and bring what belongs to other spaces. This is what makes the sharing of ideas and resources possible. The mission groups' attempts to do mission work outside of the church was such a transfer of resources, as seen through the work done by the (LPA, 2020).

This welfare then allows growth in individuals as well as communally. As people own the idea, they will, in turn, own their destiny and pursue their dreams and aspirations. This is the confidence referred to earlier on. It is a catalyst for growth and must be harnessed and supported well for it to yield the necessary results, hence the involvement of the local community.

This cannot be far from the second charity and welfare development generation marked by the involvement of the Church (Swart 2006: 20). The Church community with a shared vision has enabled this community to develop strategies to share resources and statements of faith and instil hope. This generosity of words and treasures, as seen through the work of the various Mission Groups of the MCSA, was an essential set of ingredients that welfare can create in societies by those who live with them.

However, Part of the challenge was that some of these ideas could be imported and bring about enrichment and encroachment if they are not handled with respect for what one's development is meant for. Even churches, with their noble work, are not innocent in their endeavours (Swart 2006: 20). The erosion of culture by the development players is a critical concern that cannot be overlooked. Welfare has to be done with respect and care for what is otherwise; even what is known as modernisation quickly becomes colonisation. It takes away the fibre of society and replaces it with the thread

of the developers. People being developed, even with charity, must be respected for who they are.

It is for this reason, then, that the “social activity of charity (‘praxis’) and the prevailing theological discourse (‘theory’) of the churches” (Swart 2006: 21) needed to be held in tandem even with the existing tug of war between what people think and what people need. The movement from women being represented by men in meetings to women representing themselves is the practice of the belief that all human beings are made in the Image of God.

The charity has been, to an extent, used as a cleansing ritual by those who have so that the guilt of amassing wealth at the expense of others is taken away without even analysing what others need versus what they want. It must not be about the charitable; welfare is about the needs of those with less. The Women’s Auxiliary, as noble as it sounds, lacked involvement except by giving money. No imparting of skills was evident. This could be seen as a cleansing ritual. If this tension is addressed, then development players and the developed can work together instead of imposing development to be imposed. This makes development to be about consciousness (Swart 2006: 21), the awareness and alertness not to the needs only, but to the humanity, and the people as well so that the ‘how are you’ question easily eroded by urbanisation is protected.

Perhaps the Jesus model of transforming people’s conditions is critical even with the generation of welfare development. This is the dialogue between the one in need and the one fulfilling the requirement. This can be seen in the healing of the blind man. Not because Jesus did not see the market and how the need can be met, but recognising the blind man’s need to see does not take away the man’s dignity and humanity. Jesus then entered into a dialogue with the one in need, “What do you want me to do for you?” (Mark 10:51).

This narrative revolved around the intricate concept of dignity, which is a multifaceted and nuanced notion that is best understood through active and attentive listening. The example of Jesus provided an excellent illustration of this idea, as he demonstrated his exceptional listening skills when a blind man sought autonomy. In the realm of welfare, it is essential to recognize the individual beyond their circumstances, which is a principle that stems from African philosophy, specifically the concept of

'ubuntu/botho' (Setiloane 1986: 26). This philosophy places great emphasis on respect and dignity, 'seriti', and it is critical to implement this principle in welfare development to avoid conflicting motives and actions. Therefore, it is paramount that theory and practice complement each other to achieve the best possible outcomes. This African anthropology challenges the Western concepts of dignity and provides fresh insights for novel development frameworks, highlighting the importance of considering different cultural perspectives when developing welfare programs. (Sietisho, 2017: 164).

When this consistent flow between the wishes to develop and the actions is not maintained, developmental paternalism becomes the order of the day (Swart 2006: 24). The power dynamics between the developer and the developed cannot be overlooked. With their well-crafted theologies, churches can leave those whose theology is not yet well-developed feeling inferior. The developer supremacy must be kept in check. Lack leads to vulnerability and gullibility.

This innocence in acceptance is what leads to colonisation. Those in need will not only accept the gift but also the culture of the giver. This is evident in the MCSA, which also followed the English culture. According to their Constitutions, the Mission Groups do not Africanize the dress code (MCSA, 2018). The giver will not hesitate to reinforce the cultural change with gifts but with the elevation of the culture of the charitable. This paradigm of charity helps the developed and the developed players. The missionary approach to development in Africa has been highly notorious for this motif of paternalism. The control is not over the resources but becomes an overreach to the people. Welfare must liberate and not suppress and oppress. It must free people to be human and not just seen as objects. It is important to consider people with development even when in need. The need to merge the development theories with the practical steps is thus critical to sustainable development.

Local Community as MCSA Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Ignatius Swart makes an interesting point by noting a gap between the thinkers of development and the doers of development (Swart 2006: 57). Theory and praxis need to be held in tension rather than for the one to exist without the other. This is to the extent of the theology debate converging with the ecclesiastical developmental paradigms (Swart 2006: 57). This convergence is critical in the development debate

as development is not an abstract but a premise for transformation. Haddad indicates that women need to be vocal about their struggles even amid ignorance by the perpetrators of injustice (Haddad, 2003: 447). The translation of MCSA conference resolutions to practical development agenda programs made development ecclesiastic. This may not have changed everything, but the fundamental awareness it brought was enough to change the course of history and the state of humanity.

This convergence was an effort that could not be held by an individual or in isolation. The Church has recognised this concerted effort through the pragmatic approach to development. The MCSA has not just embarked on the development agenda as an individual Mission Group; there has been a concerted effort through collaboration (Manyano, 2012). This model has proven to be helpful even outside of the church circles. For instance, development in Norway was accelerated by recognising that the local people are religious, and therefore, FBOs were brought under the same umbrella called DIGNI to facilitate sustainable development (Oden, R. Ed, 2016: 35).

The bringing together of the FBOs was a recognition of the indigenous leadership. Each community has leaders that they not only recognise but that they can identify with. The WM, when electing their leadership from the members of the Manyano, was to encourage the identification of women's issues that could be facilitated by those who have the same experience as other women (Mkhwanazi, 2002: 29). This shows that the dignity of women Seitisho and Siwila are emphasizing as an antidote to the Victorian paradigms of womanhood could be reformed and transformed by the women of the MCSA (Sietisho, 2017: 169). People who rose from the same ashes are symbols of hope. Development has thus not just been about bringing things in but also a paradigm shift. To see people emerge as leaders from within the community brought hope and instilled confidence.

The confidence was not just in the person but in what the person brought. In the informal settlement of Ivory Park, where one of the Methodist Primary Schools is, the Nehemiah Primary School, the community was provided with household taps. Instead of this being embraced by the community, it soon turned out to be a source of resentment for the community as children could no longer play together when fetching water (Circuit, 2017). They were now playing on the streets; risking being knocked down by the cars. The community tap had to be replaced by the recreational facility

with swings and other play equipment. Even though people needed water in their households, that development interfered with the community's life. It is critical to do development with the community rather than just for the community to be people-centred and sustainable. Kumalo's point about transformative development as both participatory as well as continuously reviewed becomes critical for sustainable development (Kumalo, 2006: 249).

People from the community understand the plight better and the values of the community. Development must be sustainable to sustain the community (Manyano, 2012). Development that undermines the community is a problematic development that will soon not be appreciated as it does not respect the customs and values of the community. The Kairos Document got to be owned by communities because the people were represented by their voices that they could trust and believe. The tension between praxis and theory can thus be held through the prophetic social transformation born from "below" (Haddad 2006: 3).

This prophecy from below gives birth to theologies that lead to transformation as micro-level advocacy (Haddad, 2003: 446) takes place. Such prophecy and theologies are not an academic exercise of interpreting the times of development for social transformation but also analysing these times, honouring what God would like to see done. For instance, a modernisation that undermines humanity, like child labour (Lubaale, 2011: 15), is not Godly as it undermines the perspective of the Old Testament on who the children are and whose they are. "Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him." (Psalm 127: 3). Heritage is to be protected and preserved. Heritage is about the passing on that which has always been held dear. No wonder Jesus would exclaim, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." (Mark 10:16).

Not only are the children a heritage, but they also belong in the kingdom. The kingdom is a place of justice where the vulnerable are protected and not taken advantage of. The Psalmist is clear on this justice: even fatherless people belong and find fathers. "Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked" (Psalm 82:3-4). The development of children by the Wesley Guild with equipment that stimulates them is a development strategy that is about justice for the underprivileged

(Guild, 2023). Development that is done by the community itself is more than just development; it is also justice.

Development that honours justice is not just an event. It does not just start and end like all events do. It is a journey that Haddad calls for by examining current practices to always influence change (Haddad, 2003: 447). Part of the limitation of NGOs is that they move on. They come and go. Church, on the other hand, is in the community and is the community; although the MCSA is in the community, the efforts are more event-oriented than ongoing. Church makes development sustainable.

NGOs tend to fulfil their mandate of development within their scope of action. While specialised development is required, there is a need to diversify (Korten, 1987: 147). Due to limited resources, most NGOs are highly focused (Manji, F. and O'Coill, C, 2002: 569). Few NGOs are broad-based and can support any developmental work within a specific community. In most cases, the policy for NGOs is clearly and narrowly defined as a purpose of existence for that particular NGO. This can be seen with epidemics and pandemics. Even in the health development sector, NGOs specialise in either or. HIV/AIDS has been the main focus for many years, and in the process, TB has been forgotten. It was in 2017 that the faith-based organisations were again involved in the SANAC programs. The MCSA itself has specific programs on HIV/AIDS (Unit, 2022) and only in 2017 did it get involved with TB as I became the representative of the MCSA at SANAC.

Until the involvement of the local community as part of the pragmatic debate on development, there can be no significant ownership of the developmental work (Swart 2006: 59). The ownership creates not only moments of development but sustainable moments of development. The transfer of leadership structure cascading to the local church was an attempt by the MCSA to decentralise ownership of the development agenda (MCSA, 2018). Leaders for the development agenda would have been born within the community. This meant there was no void in leadership once the NGO had moved out of the community. The ownership extended from the present into the future. This made development to be eschatological. The end was designed in the present times. Ownership of the development fuses the future and the now and creates an achievable journey. The attainability of such a future can be best facilitated by those who would like to see themselves in such a predictable future.

This predictability as part of the eschaton is mainly driven by the fact that people themselves are the pilgrims from their plight to the unfolding hope. When hope is not parachuted, it is a lived reality and an embodied experience. Developers' dreams and hopes need to be handed over to the ones who will live in the envisaged future. This makes development to be people-centred (Swart 2006: 103-106).

These dreams and hopes about the envisaged future are best defined by the preventative (Swart 2006: 63) measures taken by the developers. Development is more than just relief; it must also prevent relief. Empowerment as a driver of development can bring in the vision of a different future that is marked with fewer ills of the past (Haddad, 2003: 436). It must advance livelihood and enable what Jesus said he has come for, life in abundance (John 10:10). Following this line of thought indicates that developers are like shepherds. They don't chase after but prepare for. The MCSA Mission Groups, on the other hand, seemed to be responding rather than creating a paradigm (Guild, 2023; Manyano, 2023; LPA, 2020). The preparation for the motif is about the future that is different from the past and prevents the past from reoccurring. It is thus about breaking the cycle of need and bringing a new phase of appreciating life.

This preparation is not just preparing for the people, but also preparing for the future with the people. It is a collective effort together with the people being developed or whose circumstances are being developed. Preparing for a better or changed future is better done with people's circumstances rather than the people themselves. Development must not corrode the essence of who people are as if they never were before the development program was initiated (Haddad, 2003: 447). Development must hold the dignity of humanity by enabling an environment that advances humanity rather than tempering people's humanity by involving the local community.

MCSA's Importance of Policy Shifts and Institutional Accountability

Development may be dormant at the local level due to isolation from resources (Swart 2006: 102), requiring facilitation beyond the local community where the resources, insights, and policies are being made and implemented (Swart 2006: 102). Development, in its broader sense, then requires a pragmatic approach that involves players elsewhere rather than the local community. This third-generation system of development involves a lot of influence rather than just doing development itself. The

willingness to agitate the powers that be by the marginalised is key to unlocking this influence (Haddad, 2003: 440). The MCSA's local church model of development unlocked bottlenecks for development (MCSA, 1995). It acknowledged that it may not be even that people do not know what needs to be done for their circumstances to change, but that they do not have the means.

The biggest effort by this third-generation system is the type of involvement of NGOs who influence other players in development. This makes development to be a system rather than a unit. The people in the local community, the NGOs who implement development, as well as policymakers all play a critical role in the development discourse. As seen in the MCSA policies that spoke to internal and external affairs of the same nature as the gendering of policies broadened development from micro to macro (MCSA, 1995). It challenged the systems that had caused injustices and retarded development. They unbundled these systems by challenging the status quo to make the systems unstable as the policies that used to be the pillars of injustices were shaken by questioning and reviewing existing policies.

This partnership evaluates and redefines the principles that drive development (Swart 2006: 108). It may well be that the diversification of programs, resources, and areas of focus for development can be an answer to sustainable development. The diversified work done by the Mission Groups supports this notion (Guild, 2023; LPA, 2020; Manyano, 2023; Manyano, 2023; YMG, 2023). The same old solutions may not necessarily apply to every development initiative. The contextualisation of development then became critical as each local Mission Group addressed local issues (MCSA, 2018). Policies that are not adaptable can stifle development. Initially, it was mentioned that people-centred development should honour humanity and not corrode it. Contextual development is the one that honours people with their traditions, values, and principles instead of imposing new ones that eventually take away who the people are. To this end, development must be sensitive to who people are even through policies that underpin development.

The World Bank and other international players in development need to adapt according to the context. It was discovered after the Tsunami disaster of 2004 that in religious countries, the first development that enabled further development in communities was to rebuild places of worship and religion (Oden, 2016). Not only is

Swart's interpretation of Korten's work on the "broadly based integrative approach to rural development that avoids the creation of economic enclaves" (Swart 2006: 108) helpful for what can be interpreted as anti-silo development, but it also enables development to reach areas that would not necessarily receive it. This is the gift that the MCSA offered with its decentralised mission efforts through the Mission Group (MCSA, 2018). This incarnational development, as it transcended locality and influenced the areas of original thought, was what embodied the context and matched it with the desired effort for sustainable development.

Centralised development can easily lead to over-burdening resources as it could lead to migration of families to where they see there is development. For instance, the lack of focus on rural development in South Africa burdens urban resources as families flock to modernised areas and offer a better quality of life. This is not without challenges, as the basic infrastructure is overwhelmed. This is not just a rural-urban migration but can also be urban to urban migration. An example of this is how people in the urban areas move from the informal settlements to the CBD in search of better opportunities. The kwaMzilikazi area in Johannesburg is a case to be mentioned. The inner city streets have now become overwhelmed by people who seek opportunities. The sewage is spilling; the waste is everywhere. The City of Johannesburg's environmental services were never designed for the influx. The lack of incarnational development in the informal settlements has led to migration into the inner city.

The MCSA itself has suffered the same. The then-developed areas, because of the mining industry, have now become ghost towns with fewer and fewer resources. Carltonville in the North-Western mining belt of Gauteng has suffered the same fate (YMG, 2008). When policies did not change and left the places only as mining and not taking into account that there are communities that have been developed through mining, then when mining ceased to be the main source of income, the communities suffered a fate of need and struggling. This has reversed the gains of development as it has not been sustainable. It was an economic development that was driven by the profits, not the people. It is yet, another proof of the brutality of neo-colonialism, where the markets determine the interests of the development agency (Laeven, 2014: 5) and not the interests of the people needing development.

There is also the Marikana example, in which the Church had to be involved in counselling families when the mining policy did not support the families who were enabling mining as they dug platinum but had no decent housing. Policies that do not recognise humanity are not helpful to the development discourse, and instead reverse the gains of development. It is for this reason that NGOs need to influence these policies and, at times, reverse them (Swart 2006: 107) so that the policies also recognise humanity (Haddad, 2003: 446).

This reversal is not only about scrapping policies but also about tracing back the gaps that the policies have created along the way. The policies that are not gender sensitive, for instance, need to be reviewed, and the reversal of the damage caused by their bias becomes critical, as seen in the Women's Statement of the MCSA reversing the patriarchal representativity in meetings by introducing 40% of women representation (MCSA, 2016: 237). Patriarchal development in a world that is mostly made up of women and children does not lead to sustainable development. There was a need for the policies of the past that only advance the development of men to be reversed and allow women to be part of the agenda for equitable development to lead to sustainable development. This does not mean forgetting about men, but it is about men going back to lift the women they have left behind. This could mean creating opportunities for women. This could mean slowing down the advancement of men and accelerating the development of women. In this instance, development must be equitable.

Equitable development, at times, must be driven by the ones who are not part of the agenda. The ordination of women into Ordained Ministries and giving women the right to lead communities is an important agenda, even by women, to encourage others to take their rightful place in the building of the kingdom of God. The Methodist Church policy on 40:40:20, which is the ratio of representativity of men: women: youth in leadership was the reversal policy that negated the gift of women and youth (MCSA, 2016: 101, 237). For the longest time, even that which was supposed to be inclusive had been hijacked by the gentlemen's club. This was in the face of women being more in the Church and playing a significant role in the life of the church (Haddad, 2003: 428).

This equity, at times, needs to be legislated for it to be implemented. The legislation offers an alternative model of development. This alternative model must be conceptualised (Swart 2006: 110). Legislation conceptualises helpful models that must be constantly reviewed for them to be revised (Haddad, 2003: 446). It enforces a new way of thinking and doing things. This new way of thinking is what reverses the damage caused by the legislation and practices of the past.

This reversal through conceptualisation is empowering to those who have been disempowered, like the MCSA policy on the mandatory representation of youth in meetings (MCSA, 2016: 101). It opened up opportunities for them and set them up to facilitate their destiny on their terms, pace, and vigour. Development, as earlier indicated, must liberate. Policies then can facilitate this freedom to own the agenda of development. This in itself is empowering and people-centred. What it also does is it makes development to allow even the ones being developed to be contributors and not consumers of development. It builds confidence, thereby making development sustainable and attainable through this mobilisation of development players.

Mobilisation of Social Movement as MCSA's Oscillation Between Micro-Macro Development

The three-generation models of development point to some gaps and limitations, especially as communities and life have evolved. This is the same gap that Haddad says must be bridged all the time through micro-level advocacy in our local communities for it to be macro-advocacy at a global scale (Haddad, 2003: 446). Development needs to recognise this evolution and respond to the needs of humanity in present times just as the MCSA realised this through the Journey to the New Land (MCSA, 1995) and Mission Charter (MCSA, 2004).

The generation of sole leaders for communities has come to an end as a model worldwide. Movements with faceless leaders have emerged around the world. Leaders within the movements have emerged not because they started the movement but because they have become the prominent voices within the movement. The fees must fall is a classic case for this. Even the Soweto uprising was born from a collective concern and leaders emerged from such a collective. The fees must fall, emphasised the focus on social movement driving change and transformation. This has also been identified by Korten as a critical generation for development (Swart 2006: 132).

This fourth-generation strategy can be summed up as all stakeholders in the development discourse need to be held accountable. This accountability involves and holds together all the other three-generation strategies of development. It often involves communication (Swart 2006: 132, Haddad 2003: 446) of what is, ought to be, and how it can be. It is the most powerful and influential model of catalytic stimulus for transformation. It involves ordinary people and creates a voice where none would have been given opportunities. Besides the internal processes of the MCSA, there was great difficulty to find evidence on holding the global players accountable. This is an indictment to an institution that stands for justice.

MCSA did not need to be politically correct but raised pertinent issues that questioned the status quo. At times development is stifled by the sustaining of the status quo (Haddad, 2003: 428). These voices of accountability are the catalytic effect of the social movement so that the areas of injustice that have been overlooked can suddenly receive attention to unlock the transformation journey. Beyond the people-centred development, the social movement brings in the value-centred approach to development (Swart 2006: 132). This value is not what the developer values but what the people themselves in the local community value. Once again, it honours humanity.

The MCSA could learn from the movement of Abahlali Basemjondolo that voices from within the deprived communities are critical to bringing about dignity (West, 2015: 84). A broken society cannot be fixed by people from outside. Such an approach would be selective in addressing the plight of the people. In their quest for dignity, a civil movement born out of the frustration of lack of dignity with poor service delivery called Abahlali Basemjondolo was born in KwaZulu Natal. These were ordinary people who shared the same frustration of systematic neglect (West 2015: 86). No longer were they going to wait for the empty promises by the politicians they had voted for. No longer would they wait for the next election to receive attention. They created a space for them to be heard.

The theology of development must help create spaces for the voices that would not necessarily be heard in society making development prophetic as well. This space is not created because it already exists, but because it does not exist, it must be created, especially amongst the marginalised (Haddad, 2003: 429). The Men's conferences by the YMG are much-needed spaces for the paradigm shift (YMG, 2019). So then, a

theology of development also develops itself into spaces that were never there. The Kairos Document was an attempt to create a space for people to reflect on their struggles. Abahlali Basemjondolo did the same. The difference is that this is not a document but a community, a movement instead. The local struggles demanded that a face be given to the prophetic voice. But there can be no face without boldness or courage. At times, the Church can be that face and a voice for the voiceless.

It took an individual to steer the community to the realisation of their narrative of the struggle for dignity. This is done fascinatingly; it moves from Jesus Christ to Nelson Mandela to the people. This is a powerful movement that personifies the struggle. The first faces are those who stood for justice and dignity to the faces who are fighting for justice and dignity. The theology of development must be personified for it to make sense and give a narrative that resonates with the people. Such personification gives rise to certain values that become the ethical standards for the struggle. The speech by Zikode to Abahlali Basemjondolo is setting standards for the movement. "The first Nelson Mandela was Jesus Christ. The second was Nelson Rholihlahla Mandela. The third Nelson Mandela are the poor people of the world." (West, G.O., 2015: 90). The existence of the Mission Groups, though, falls short of being this voice even at a collective level. The MCSA could learn being this prophetic voice from other movements of development.

There is resilience in the speech; even after the jail term, people are still resolute and not deterred by the intimidation. The intimidation Jesus suffered never deterred him from speaking truth to power. The social movement draws lessons from the icons of liberation and where there are no icons, the people themselves become the missing voice. The role of these movements, as seen in Table 2 with the fourth generation, is that they become networks of activism and education. The MCSA held the untapped potential to do this work as a respectable voice in Society.

The MCSA showed the potential to raise sharp issues that are rather avoided. They could bring awareness to these issues that could lead to the review and change of policy beyond the MCSA. It could ignite a fire within dormant NGOs that no longer serve the purposes for which they were established by preparing individuals to face reality and thus becoming the custodians of the work that needs to be done. The social movement can thus serve as a means of revival (Haddad, 2003: 430). Abahlali

Basemjondolo, for instance, was moving from the theology of resistance to a theology of reconstruction of a society that has been left behind in decay as the rest of the world around them was being developed. Hence, systematic neglect needing to be challenged and weakened for a system of justice to emerge.

Sometimes, this neglect was because of the refashioning of the old forms of doing life. It was the rebranding of the same content and giving it a new look, as observed by Prinola Govenden in post-apartheid South Africa (Govenden, 2002: 101). The parallels that can be drawn from what has happened to South Africa with the minority groups running the show are just rebranded from White elitists to Black elitists. The content of the script is the same - let us make life better for us and forget about the rest. The social movement, on the other hand, makes a bold statement, "Here we are" (West, 2015: 85). When the system is ignorant, the social movement becomes a reminder. The MCSA is growingly becoming perceived as a church for the elite. This is contrary to the view that it is a space for both poor and rich seeking to do God's will (Dreyer, 1986: 64). The review of the policies that are radical and challenging of the status is much needed in the MCSA.

This is not an overnight approach, but it does take time. One of the distinctive factors of the fourth-generation movement is that time is not defined by the hands of the clock but by the values that have either been violated or shunned. This is a strong point for the existence of the MCSA. That is why the gap between theory and praxis is so important. The Mission Groups have such profound constitutions that call for transformation, and yet their programs were just events and not prolonged the involvement of the MCSA in development. The MCSA needed to realise that this is not just a long-term project, but it has no time bounds (Swart, 2006: 133) until transformation is attained, making it almost infinitive. It required activism that recognised the tiring demands of development and yet was not tired to urgently bring about reforms that would expedite transformation.

The Social movement can snowball as a consequence. The social movement in South Africa has been marked by the emergence of movements like OUTA (Organization Undoing Tax Abuse), Section 27 (catalysts for social justice), and others that have not been regional but have looked at issues both nationally and regionally. The flexibility of these enables the global effect of the Social Movement. They do not even confine

themselves to one area of injustice but are broad-based. They are also able to join hands and fight injustice together. The stagnant philosophy of the MCSA that was only internal made the MCSA to be inward-looking and not snowballing to merge with other organisations or inspire others to emerge as players.

Churches like the MCSA have the same ability to develop theologies of convergence rather than divergence. The Kairos Movement through the Kairos Document was a theology of convergence by the Ecumenical Movement. This is an added advantage for the Body of Christ and needs to be harnessed. It gives credibility to the voice and the need alike. Because the Church is a credible institution in Society, when the Ecumenical Church stands together on an issue, then it becomes the voice of reason.

The South African Council of Churches in 2015, in its action plan for the South Africa We Pray For Campaign, had a voice of convergence from its leaders to the member Churches and the country at large. The resounding call was that of the fight against corruption. Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, Chair of the SACC National Church Leaders Forum, Presiding Bishop Ziphokile Siwa, President of the South African Council of Churches, and Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana, General Secretary, S. A. Council of Churches all said the same thing that would become the catalyst for a closer reflection on the state of affairs on the state that is to serve the nation (SACC, 2016). This is an indication of the role the Social Movement can play in shaping society. There would then follow the State Capture Commission of Enquiry because of the reflection the voice of the Church had called for.

Conclusion

The theory of the fourth-generation strategy is a helpful theoretical framework for studying the trends of development over some time (Swart, 2006: 191). These trends are equally important as they address different aspects of development at various times. They sharpen the need to diversify the approach to effect sustainability when doing development. The voices of women as part of gendering development must be held together with these theories (Haddad, 2003: 432).

Sustainable development encourages ownership but also empowers and recognises the potential of the community. There are times when development can be shaped through policy changes when the marginalised, and mostly women, in this case, have

to be included in the policies that drive development. The effect of policies can be a catalyst for a change of paradigms that enable development. This model is immediate to long-term and requires the involvement of various stakeholders, including the lawmakers and the policies of development agents. It requires perseverance even by the ones marginalised as development players tend to move on.

The rise of an era of social movements has created a voice that would have been left to individuals. This model also helps to raise awareness on issues that have been left behind, and yet others still suffer hugely from those ignorances. This is people standing up for themselves when the systems that are in place for development no longer serve their purpose but instead neglect the very purpose of existence.

In all these models of development, the Body of Christ has a role to play and can diversify her approach to development and also join hands with other NGOs as catalysts for change and transformation.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter elucidates the comprehensive methodology and research design, ensuring the meticulous adherence to prescribed procedures in addressing the research question. The delineated steps encompass theorising analytical processes that streamline data collection and measure it against the framework of the study in order to formulate findings (Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D., 2017: 208). This ties in with the mixed tripartite theoretical framework of scholarship, MCSA literature and data collected from the minutes of the various Mission Groups of the MCSA.

The chosen research approaches were expounded upon, delineating the theoretical frameworks, epistemological foundations, and methodological orientations that underpinned the study (Yin, 2003). This was done by allowing the three scholars Korten as a development scholar, Swart as a theologian and Haddad as an activist intellectual on gender to be engaged. The noticeable pluralism and ambiguity of the context (Tracy, 1996: 4) were mitigated through this process by using the African Scholas like Sietisho, Haddad and Bowers Du Tiot.

The meticulous process of participant selection was explicated, encompassing the criteria employed, the rationale behind the inclusion and exclusion of specific individuals, and the strategies employed to ensure diverse and representative samples (Kothari, 2014: 7). These participants were the Mission Groups who were the embodiment of the mission strategy of the MCSA. They were given a voice through their literature of minutes and constitutions. The methodology used by Walker and Walker by allowing the Black women to be both the subject and the audience (Walker A., and Walker R. 2021) enriched the research as the gendered approach gave the MCSA women the same status of being both the subject and the audience as well.

The inherent limitations and potential biases of the study were acknowledged and elucidated, encompassing the constraints that may impact the generalizability, reliability, or validity of the findings (Kumar, R. and Smith, A. M., 2012: 25). A comprehensive evaluation of the study's limitations ensured a balanced interpretation of the results.

Positionality

This study has opted for positionality because the researcher is a fellow Methodist and thus required the adoption of the principles of “Insider Doctrine” (Secules, S, McCall, C, Mejia, JA, et al., 2021: 20). As an insider in various ways the researcher belonged to the same culture and held the same values, principles, beliefs, and even more so as a Minister, the researcher held certain power dynamics of perspectives about Methodism. It was advantageous to be an insider because the shared experiences were not foreign. In the final analysis, there was an understanding of some of the nuances of the presented analysis of the researched world of the MCSA.

This “reflexivity” (Berger, 2015: 2) was important for the researcher to acknowledge not only as a limitation but as a trigger point for the biases having been part of a constructed world. One is thus forced to not construct it again. All that is required to do is to find tools to interpret such a world. This will help in becoming objective in the analysis. The research itself is helping to develop knowledge beyond the researcher’s knowledge, thereby expanding the horizon on which one stands through, which one is helped not only to look at but also stand together with others and see the world with their eyes as well. This will help with the limited view and allow to broaden the researcher’s limited perspectives about the researched world of the MCSA.

This was also known as the “constructivist” (Merriam Sharan B., 2002: 4) approach to analysis. It will help not to completely impose the researcher’s thoughts as a Methodist so that one is not subjective and therefore prejudices the lived reality of the collective MCSA. My positionality, therefore, as a Methodist Minister, will be kept in check by what the voices of other Methodists raise. Although there will be an interpretation of this collective voice, the constructivist method of qualitative research will assist in remaining objective about the world not only with one’s own eyes but with the eyes of those who have lived the reality before, with and without a researcher.

The advantage of the researcher’s positionality as a fellow Methodist was that it gave access to the understanding of development by the other Methodists who were confident that one shared the same sentiments, values, and challenges on development (Berger, 2015: 3). These shared values were important as the Mission Groups had nothing to hide to the researcher as a fellow Methodist. This confirmed or challenged the interpretations of the researched world and helped with the analysis of

the MCSA as an agent of development. This enhances the Kumalo methodology of evaluating development through the participatory approach (Kumalo, 2006: 249)

In order not to overreachingly impose a personalised interpretation of the researched world to which one also belonged, there was a need to "bracket" (Secules, S, McCall, C, Mejia, JA, et al., 2021: 21) oneself as a matter of principle in the Insider Doctrinal process of researching. This bracketing happened best when the narratives of others were allowed to emerge in the research and analysis. This narrative helped elevate the voice of the people called Methodists over time as they interpreted their world and, therefore, drew conclusions from the literature of the MCSA and balance this with the views of.

The other leg of this qualitative research was the critical theory that enhanced objectivity. There was the use of the participatory model of researching (Merriam Sharan B., 2002: 4). Through this, one was able to enter the discourse of development by the MCSA being ushered by other Methodists. This was even more so because of the principles that governed the relationship between one as a researcher and the participants, especially as both belonged to the same Methodist Church. The researcher's positionality could easily become that of dominance in opinion. Therefore, there was a need to neutralise the researcher's views by engaging other voices. This methodology honours Crenshaw's view of intersectionality as the vulnerable powerlessness collides with the overreaching dominant power when dealing with justice and transformation (Crenshaw, 1991: 1252). The researcher therefore was always aware of this intersectionality.

The research process was depicted as a dynamic and iterative spiral, acknowledging that it is neither strictly linear nor circular. This depiction emphasised the continuous and cyclical nature of the research process, with each iteration informing subsequent stages, allowed for refinement, reflection, and the exploration of new insights. The spiral model encapsulated the iterative nature of data collection, analysis, and interpretation, ultimately leading to a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the research phenomenon (Punch, 2005). This referred to in the study as the helter-skelter approach in the research, allowed the dynamic analysis to be maintained.

Limitations

Additionally, the researcher remained mindful of potential limitations and biases throughout the research process. This included critically reflecting on the research design, data collection methods, and analysis techniques to identify and address any potential sources of bias. By actively engaging in self-reflection and seeking input from peers and experts in the field, the researcher aimed to enhance the overall rigour and credibility of the study. The researcher, being a Methodist member, inherently held biases on the phenomenon under investigation.

In summary, the research employed a range of methodological approaches, including bracketing, to minimise biases and ensure credibility. By drawing on classical studies and employing rigorous methodologies, the research aimed to contribute to the existing knowledge on the intersectionality of theology, gender and development and provided valuable insights into the phenomenon.

Qualitative Approach

The researchers used a qualitative approach actively engaged with the context and social realities of the research participants, seeking to uncover the complexities and nuances of their experiences (Burke, N.J., Joseph, G., Pasick, R.J. and Barker, J.C., 2009: 5). So, this approach was particularly useful in exploring topics that were subjective, context-dependent, or required an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and social phenomena (White, 2011: 3). They provided a deeper understanding of the lived experiences, social interactions, and cultural dynamics underlying the research topic, contributing to the development of theories, policies, and practices that were grounded in the realities of individuals and communities. The collected data through the MCSA literature observed these principles and allowed the context to be always honoured than undermined.

Narrative inquiry

The key elements of a narrative inquiry in this research included a synthesis of principles listed below.

The storytelling narrative inquiry used in this study centred around the collection and analysis of stories. The Researcher gathered narratives through written accounts of the Mission Groups through their minutes or other forms of storytelling, allowing

participants to share their experiences in their own words (Earthy, S. and Cronin, A., 2008).

There is also the meaning-making narrative in the study aimed to uncover the meaning and significance of individuals' stories. The researchers analysed the narratives to identify themes, patterns, and underlying meanings that emerged from the participants' accounts (White, 2011: 2).

The use of the contextual understanding narrative inquiry recognised the importance of understanding the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which stories are situated. This analysis in the study helped with the diachronic and synchronic dimensions (Amit, 2009: 272) of the theology and policies of the MCSA, as these narratives evolved over time since the establishment of the Women's Manyano in 1907. Such exploration assisted with how the development context of MCSA as an embodied experience by the Mission Groups shapes and influences the practices and narratives of development.

As illustrated in the positionality, the application of reflexivity is acknowledged in the study of the researcher's own biases, assumptions, and subjectivities. This is a critical reflection on the researcher's role in the research process and how the researcher's perspectives may have impacted the interpretation of the narratives (Berger, 2015: 2).

The co-construction of knowledge narrative inquiry of the study acknowledged that knowledge was co-constructed between the researcher and the participant (Efron, M., McMurry, M. and Pignagnoli, V., 2019: 333). The study, therefore, actively involved participants in the research process and collaborated with them to interpret and make sense of their stories through a rhetorical engagement. This assisted in the study's findings and conclusions on the contribution made by the MCSA to the intersectionality of theology, gender, and development.

Overall, narrative inquiry provided a framework for exploring and understanding the unique experiences of individuals through the power of storytelling. It offered a way to uncover the complexities, meanings, and personal interpretations embedded within narratives, contributing to a deeper understanding of human experiences.

Data Collection

For this research to be participatory (Kumalo, 2006: 249), there was a need to collect enough data. Kaczmarek, Olejnik, & Springer (2013; Olejnik. ed, 2021:14) indicate that for research to lead to sustainable development, the researcher has to delve into the embodied experiences of the people on the ground. This could not be done just from the desktop analysis but from the minutes of the Mission Groups that represent the people who could bring forth their everyday experiences of their context. This made the outcome to be as organic as the input was not irrelevant data but was grounded in the lived realities.

The Mission Groups who do a lot of development work in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa were thus given a fair and independent opportunity through their literature in minutes and constitutions to share their honest journey as an analysis of the work of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. These Mission Groups were the ones that mostly drove the Mission work of the MCSA. Methodist Women's Prayer and Service Union (MWPS&U), also known as the Women's Manyano, was a highly resourceful group of women who identified needs around local communities. This model tied in well with David Korten's third-generation development model of a people-centred approach (Korten, 1987: 144).

The other groups were identified for the following reasons. The Methodist Young Women's Prayer and Service Union (MYWP&SU), also known as the Young Women's Manyano, was a group that looked particularly into the needs of the young women, girls, and boys who were known as the Junior Manyano. The MYWP&SU mostly did the relief work as part of the first generation of development with charity and welfare. The Young Men's Guild (YMG), also known as Amadodana, could easily become pragmatic in their approach to development as they partnered with businesses to transform lives that were ravaged by poverty.

Wesley Guild, on the one hand, was a movement of young people who were passionate about spiritual formation and community development through programs that shaped young people to be catalysts for change and transformation. The Local Preachers, on the other hand, were interpreters of Scripture. This group tended to be in touch with people whose lives needed to be transformed, and there, the LPA

explored ideas about life that led to the development of individuals who formed a community that aspired to be transformed.

This study has used qualitative research as a method of inquiry. Qualitative research is defined as a methodological approach that aims to understand and interpret phenomena in their natural settings through the exploration of subjective experiences, meanings, and social interactions (Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T., Baker, S., Waterfield, J., Bartlam, B., Burroughs, H. and Jinks, C., 2018: 1895). It is characterised by an inductive and interpretive orientation, focusing on the depth and richness of human experiences rather than quantifiable measurements. This is in line with the objectives of the study measuring the efforts of the Methodist people rather than just the work they have done. The experiences of the women, for instance, have been captured in the minutes of Synods and Conferences.

These groups have become the voice of the muted voices in this research. They will bring the realities of the people they serve. This approach helped to gain insights into the people who are seen as recipients of development and helped to analyse to what extent is development people-centred in the Methodist Church.

These Mission Groups also helped in meeting the helpful requirements of the empirical multivoicedness research (Aveling, E.-L., Gillespie, A., & Cornish, F., 2015: 671). The multi-voices in the minutes of the Mission Groups allowed for diverse paradigms on the understanding of concepts as well as the discourse of development. Each person brought their perspective that enriched the understanding of the work done and how that work has been understood by the Mission Groups in their reporting through their minutes. These varying paradigms are not confusion but a lived interpretation of the embodied realities of the past, either as passed on or as experiences are being interpreted by the participants.

This interpretation of the experiences created an audience to listen to as one entered the foreign world, and it allowed access to how the people of the researched world have interpreted their world. This passed-on experience became a tool for analysis and a gift of hindsight. It enabled the researcher to look back together with the participants and examine the virtual world that was once a reality for the researched past.

Conclusion

The methodology was empirical qualitative research. It drew a narrative approach from various voices through the Mission Groups. This helped with the researcher's positionality as a fellow Methodist to allow other voices to emerge within the research. This literature of the Mission Groups was a voice of the world of the many who were represented by groups as the legitimate leaders of these groups. All the groups represented in this research were agents of development in their own right. The Mission Groups were not only part of the researched world but also contributed to the construction of the MCSA world of development.

Chapter 5: Discussion on the Contribution made by MCSA

Introduction

This Chapter seeks to illustrate the contribution made by the MCSA in the intersectionality of theology, gender and development using the Mission Groups as a measuring rod of their understanding through theory and praxis of the Mission Pillar of Human Development and Economic Empowerment.

The chapter will also show the MCSA's shortcomings in doing development despite the grand policies from the literature review of the MCSA for the MCSA to be a well-rounded contributor using the fourth-generation development strategy theory. Therefore, the positionality of the MCSA is discussed in relation to the four quadrants of sustainable development.

Positionality of the Mission Groups in Relation to the Fourth-generation Strategy

It can be pointed out that the positionality of the MCSA is both a strength and a weakness. The strength lies in the fact that the literature review exposes the need for the MCSA to review its own policies. It is this review that made the MCSA a contributor to the emergence of theologies of reconstruction long before reconstruction was an idea in Southern Africa. This boldness strengthened the position of the MCSA as a player in development. This must have contributed to the early membership with the WCC in 1948 (WCC, 2023).

The spreading of the WM throughout Southern Africa and the emergence thereafter of the various Mission Groups is what gave the MCSA the leverage to place the agenda of the MCSA on development in the local community. This would decentralise power (Mkhwanazi, 2002: 29) in the MCSA. Men would not just rule the empire, but women would rightfully take their place, making development people-centred as a principle for sustainable development (Swart, 2006: 57). This makes the intersectionality of development even gendered by the MCSA as gender became a critical component of the life of the church as women took leadership roles (MCSA, 2019: 210).

The positionality of women as people of fervent prayer would nudge them to translate verbal prayer into practical prayer. A theology of God's movement with the people of God was strengthened and born out of this as Black women in the MCSA believed that

God was in movement in the world through their efforts, and thus worshipping a missional God (Mkhwanazi, 2002: 36).

The union, therefore, is not just amongst the women but with God as well. This is an expression of the balance between theory and praxis that every development player needs to hold (Swart, 2003: 12). Service would, thus, be born out of this theology of union as the women move with God to the places where God is needed the most, after all the Rules of a Helper demand this trajectory of moving to where the helper is needed the most (MCSA, 2016: 182) as an implementation of the MCSA policy.

Sustainable development is welfare and relief that is also about understanding and transforming the context (Haddad, 2007: 122). The WM are also instrumental in elevating the theology of love and thus would position themselves as a compassionate group. The MCSA would thus not just do things and tick the box but make a bold and prophetic statement of love in an unloving world. This commitment to compassion is then expressed in the programs of the WM, and this matches the Korten aspect of welfare and relief as a strategy for sustainable development (Korten, 1987: 148).

"The purpose of the WM group is to try and manage economic resources which are (memory aspect) in Godly manner (MCSA, 2018: 84). The efforts of the Mission Groups of the MCSA in employing resources ought to be an effort to drive healing and transformation as an effort to do God's work as a Society and not a Church or Sect (Dreyer, 1986: 66). When measured against the very practice of their use of resources, the same cannot be true. They spend more money on meetings than they do on development (Manyano, 2009). More than being a development agency, the MCSA seems to have fallen into maintenance mode. These meetings would last, at the most, for four days and cost about a million rands at times. This is a grave failure in upholding the policies that would enable sustainable development.

Understanding the positionality of other Mission Groups is critical in evaluating the Methodist Church of Southern Africa's (MCSA) contribution to development discourse. The MCSA's resources are essential to development programs, especially for a church that declared itself a united and divided church in 1958. As a God-driven Mission Agency, resources must honour God and promote compassion through service. This compassion, not just sympathy, but empathy, empowering and leading to self-reliance, which both are essential for sustainable development. David Korten's people-centred

development emphasises the importance of developing people for sustainable development (Korten, 1987: 147). The MCSA's quest to develop people is a significant contribution to sustainable development, making it a leader in promoting compassion and self-reliance.

The paradigm shift ideas make development systematic for the MCSA as systems are also challenged on their status quo (Haddad, 2003: 229). This systematic approach, not just in terms of sequence, but rather in terms of systems that needed to be challenged, has enabled the MCSA to review its own policies around the vulnerable groups within the MCSA, like women and youth. These reforms have been critical for the MCSA as both women and youth form part of the engine that drives tangible and practical efforts of the Mission Groups have the responsibility to empower and develop other members within the MCSA, to begin with, and then the rest of society (MCSA, 2018: 84).

If development is to be sustainable, the intersectionality of gender and development is critical. Women are better positioned to be sensitive to the needs of other women and youth towards other youth. There is an added rider for the YWM who intentionally see themselves as contributors to human development through skills development. It is an empowering role by the YWM, as seen in their efforts in Mozambique (MCSA, 2022: 294). This entrepreneurial approach is critical to the MCSA living up to its bold vision of healing and transformation, thus the policy of social cohesion serves as a strategy for sustainable development.

The positionality of MCSA does not land well on the principle of the fourth-generation strategy of sustainable development through the mobilisation of social movement. Although the MCSA is a movement itself, there is a lack of empirical evidence on the efforts done by the MCSA. The prominence is towards the third generation with welfare, local community and policy change (Korten, 1987: 147).

The Gendered Policies of the Mission Groups

Although gender equality and women's empowerment became buzz phrases in policy formulation around 1908 (Andrea Cornwall & Althea-Maria Rivas, 2015: 396), the MCSA, maybe not as intentionally so, began this work in 1907. When the union or movement was established, the representatives of women at conferences were males in the name of Revds. J. G. H. Xaba, S. Msimang and E Msimang (Mkhwanazi, 2002:

29). Although women were an entity on their own, they could not represent themselves until their first conference in 1907 when it was decided that they would have their leadership in the names of Mrs Martha Mthembu - President, Mrs Mirriam Mthimkhulu - VicePresident, Mrs Talita Mngoma - Secretary, Mrs Sanna Cele - Assistant Secretary and Mrs Joanna Malinga as treasurer (MCSA, 1937: 233). The voice of women would no longer be secondary or even be interpreted voice, but it was primary as women represented and spoke for themselves.

This elevation of the voice of the women in speaking about their own affairs ties in with the general policy of the MCSA on the recognition of women, as seen in the recent policies that recognise women, is a theology of justice. The MCSA is intentional about women being involved in the life of the Church and given an equal voice as the men by giving them 40% representativity even in the leadership of the Church (MCSA, 2016: 237). Up until women in the MCSA no longer just occupy seats in meetings but are the drivers of meetings by chairing the meetings, the voice will remain muted by the dominant men.

The birth of the WM was a revolutionary statement by the Black women in the MCSA. This was not only an affirmative step, but it was a moment of self-realisation by the black women from dependency on the white Women's Auxiliary (Attwell, P., Attwell, P. and Methodist Church of Southern Africa Women's Auxiliary, 1997: 4). This would be a theology of resistance by the black women who could not worship with their white counterparts and yet recognising the need for them as black women to contribute to the development discourse.

The MCSA has not been without self-actualisation as the potential of the MCSA is being displayed through the efforts of the Women's Manyano even at the height of COVID-19 in 2021 shows that they contributed to the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Fund held by the Mission Unit (MCSA, 2022: 292) by not waiting for the funds to come from elsewhere, but they made the funds available. Such self-actualisation makes the MCSA a social movement for Welfare and Relief from a needs-based perspective.

The two-pronged impact of the YWM project of making sanitary pads in Mozambique (MCSA, 2022: 294) contributes to the dignity of women, as it also contributes

economically. This is a game-changer in making development accessible through the accessibility of much-needed resources.

The use of conferencing by the Women's Fellowship Group (WFG) translates the mission about God to become the mission about God's people (MCSA, 2022: 301). This is a pragmatic approach to development with the partnership between the Mission Group and the Local Church, which is an integral part of a people-centred approach to sustainable development as the local community is involved.

Impressively, the MCSA, through the YMG, has embarked on the theology of healing and transformation through attempts to combat Early and Unintended Pregnancies (EUP) (MCSA, 2022: 305). This theology can also be tightly linked to the theology of justice; as men need to be healed from their selfish and destructive behaviours for women to be healed of the victim posture they are often subjected to by men (Haddad, 2003: 433). Women take a huge brunt with EUPs; they are often abandoned by the men who impregnate them and are forced to raise these children as single parents. This also overburdens the grandparents, who are forced to look after the child whose mother needed to go back to school.

Advocacy by the YMG has not necessarily been met with the same measure for rehabilitation. Policy change for development needs to lead to a paradigm shift. The MCSA has battled to be a formidable force for healing and transformation. This proves that the fourth-generation strategy is a long-term strategy.

Development for the MCSA can also be viewed as adaptative instead of being rigid. This has been through the efforts of the Wesley Guild championing digital and virtual worship during the COVID-19 years (MCSA, 2022: 200-201). It is an indictment, though, that this policy now remains in the books of the MCSA, and worship has gone back to the pre-digitalization of the church. The MCSA is not keeping up with the global trends of doing life.

It may thus be concluded that the gendered policies of the MCSA through the work of the Mission have contributed to theologies that intersected development.

Contribution by the MCSA Mission Groups to Welfare and Relief Development

At this point, it is critical to examine and explore the work done by the Mission Groups in Welfare and Relief Development as the first-generation strategy for sustainable

development (Korten, 1987: 147). The presence of the Methodist Church in almost every village, certainly every town in Southern Africa, makes the MCSA to be a frontline agent whenever there is a crisis.

This work is not only done as and when the need arises, but the MCSA is both intentional and systematic (Swart, 2006: 56) about this work. The MCSA Mission Groups carry to a larger extent this decentralised approach to sustainable development. The Welfare and Relief work done by the MCSA is engineered and facilitated by these groups who localise development (MCSA, 2018: 120, 165).

True to the MCSA Mission Congress calls in 2005, there is a deliberate effort to ensure mission work is at the heart of what the Methodists do through the work of the Mission Groups working together and, at times, partnering with other organisations (YMG, 2008), (Guild, 2023), (Manyano, 2009) making the MCSA not a secluded church, but a church that is with the people in their ordinary life circumstances.

Just like the “why” Du Toit question the MCSA asks the question 5 W’s (why, where, what, when, who) and “H” (how) (MCSA, 2018: 43) probing questions to make the development contextual, relevant and sustainable

Whilst this is the case, the welfare and relief by the MCSA are more internalised, driven and owned by the very members of the Mission Groups. In order for the MCSA to contribute well to sustainable development, there needs to be a more deliberate effort towards people-centred development that is owned by the developed and not the developers alone.

As an imperative of sustainable development, the local community strategy must take into account the availability of resources, including other agencies, as a macro approach to development (Korten, 1987: 151). The concerted efforts between the Mission Groups and the agencies in Kwa-Zulu Natal during the March 2021 floods is an attempt at sustainable development by the MCSA through the strategy of the local community.

In as much as these efforts are not just programs to tick boxes, they are a symbol of commitment by the Methodists in ensuring the transformation of people’s circumstances. The MCSA has not played a critical role in developing theologies of protest and reconstruction, except for the internal discomforts within the MCSA. This

is critical because these efforts are the reason people remain hopeful in their moments of vulnerability. This relief is not only in terms of the circumstances that have warranted such relief and welfare, but the relief is also psychological as it translates welfare to people's dignity.

The healing of the mind is a much-needed development strategy, as is the healing of the body (WHO, 2023). Relief and welfare, in this instance, is beyond charity as in giving, but it helps in the development of a human being, as seen in the efforts by the YMG with Men's Conferences (YMG, 2008) that sponsor ideas of respecting women as an Anthropological theological discourse.

The story of the blind man in John 9:1-34 is a story of how one's dignity can be restored for those around that person can also have their dignity restored. Then Pharisees attributed the blindness to not just the blind man, but the whole family being cursed and punished. The liberation of the blind man becomes the new history for the family. This is the truth the Pharisees are struggling with. Their condemning of the blind man condemns the whole family, whereas the liberating healing of Jesus liberates the whole family. Relief, in this instance, from the bondage of sin suddenly becomes the welfare and well-being of the whole family. No more are they sinners, but their sin has now been forgiven. These are the liberating effects of acts of kindness that become a gift to others as well.

The members of the LPA have been instrumental in the restoration of life to its normality after Covid-19. Talks were held around agricultural opportunities for people who had lost their jobs. This initiative would have sustained the families beyond just the month-to-month salary sustainability that is dependent on a monthly employment basis. The MCSA Development is liberating by sponsoring ideas. Ignatius Swart points out that the systematic approach to development that recognises the wrongs that have happened leads to sustainable development (Swart, 2006: 57). This is an integral part of relief and welfare that helps with the sponsoring of ideas and also helps with the psychological development of an individual.

The contribution made by the Women's Manyano to the ECD is not just about the child who is at school (Manyano, 2009). When a meal is served at school, the benefits of that meal are not only felt by the child but the whole family as the child is healthy and

therefore less visits to the doctor. These relief and welfare efforts are a gigantic step to restoring human dignity far beyond the recipients of charity.

The MCSA, through the Mission Groups, upholds the glory of God and the Lordship of Christ, referred to by Jerry Pillay as “Sola Gloria and Sola Christus” as critical for social justice (Pillay, 2022: 3). As illustrated above, acts of kindness to an individual have far-reaching effects on a group. The infectious nature of relief and welfare, makes it to be corporate even when it had started with an individual.

The story of the Lordship of Christ as presented by John through the Samaritan woman whose life is touched to the extent of her going out to preach the Good News of a transforming Christ is another example of how an individual's transformation can create a wave of development elsewhere (John 4:5-30). Where relief and welfare are deliberate, its impact becomes corporate. MCSA's efforts of relief and welfare also have this ripple effect that makes one incident set the tone for the rest of the people around that individual. It is this same Lordship the MCSA has adopted as a policy as Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church and directs the activities of faith within the MCSA through the power of the Holy Spirit (MCSA, 2016).

The MCSA and the Local Community

Frederick Dreyer makes an interesting observation about Methodism as not fitting well in being a sect nor a church for that matter. Hence, it being a movement (Dreyer, 1986: 63). He notes that a sect is a brotherly (sisterly) coming together with no worship or strict governance and is progressive. On the other hand, the church is quite rigid, with distinct worship, and quite conservative. Methodism does not fit a particular mould, but instead, the dualism of these marks Methodism. The rigidity of the Mission Groups with so many rules to keep, on the other hand, defies this principle of Methodism, making it more of a Church (MCSA, 2018).

Movements, by nature, have a social character in them. They evolve and affect evolution. The Abahlali baseMjondolo Case Study shows how movements are born out of a need and create a need for change. Methodism, in its own right, has been part of this evolution and has affected evolution. From 1958, Methodism in South Africa evolved into a movement of rebellion as it defied the laws of the country and declared that Methodists are one and undivided (MCSA, 1958: 65).

This evolution would then be evident in the policies and theologies of acting against the Group Areas Act of 1936 and declared its obedience to the call God had made in 1958 and promised to live and act in unity and fight for justice for all. "Therefore, we promise before Almighty God and each other that we will henceforth live and work to bring into reality the concept of an undivided Church and a free and just Southern Africa." (MCSA, 2023). This promise made by the 800 Methodists was to begin a wave of paradigms that would mean a different way of interacting with society. The emphasis was not only going to be on Methodists but also the Southern Africa.

There are partnerships that the Methodist Church has had as part of its pragmatic approach to development. These have included Local Authorities like the marches to or from the Police Stations on issues of GBV. The YMG, in their EUP programs, has partnered with men from various sectors (YMG, 2008). The YWM sanitary project in Mozambique (MCSA, 2022: 294) attests to this intentionality to transform society.

The YMG in the Central District has identified young members of the Mission Group to share the work they do outside of the Church as a way of impacting society. This has led to young people accessing places of rehabilitation to inspire other young people that they too can live differently (YMG, 2023). Local Churches have been involved in Prisons like Lueewkop Prison and young men journeying with the inmates who want to change their ways of living. Circuits now have access to schools that were once closed to the access by the Church. Due to the evidence of the need for the Church to bring a different system of values, this has become possible. To this effect, policy has been subtly altered through the partnership the Church has had with Public institutions.

The Wesley Guild (WG) has partnered with various schools in Gauteng and North West, where they have donated school shoes to learners in need, painted walls, and donated computers (Guild, 2023). This work has far-reaching implications in bringing about dignity. It is the welfare that enriches the well-being of individuals and families of the recipients. Their theme, "hands on deck in their work in North West Province is an indication that relief and welfare is not something that is done remotely or just dumps resources, but for it to be meaningful, it must be incarnational as well. Presence in the area of need is critical. It makes relief and welfare strategy to be about the people

by the people. This people-to-people narrative (Korten, 1987: 157) instils the value of connectedness through proximity. It has been noticeable, though, that this work is not structured to either snowball or evolve into any other secondary effort. The tick-box approach by the Mission Groups does not sustain development. It is a theatrical approach of creating a development stage and then leaving the stage with the spectators unable to do anything on their own.

The LPA has used technology during Covid-19 to address the scourge of GBV. Members of the LPA took to the virtual platform to lament and discussed how to change society (LPA, 2020). This also fits well with the mobilisation strategy, as the Zoom discussions were joined by people who are not LPA members. These talks were done by men who are the greatest perpetrators of GBV. Development also requires those who are contributors to the lack of justice to be the ones who break the cycle of violence.

Mobilisation of Social Movement by the MCSA

This development strategy of mobilising Social Movement can be equated to being prophetic. It is not only the preaching but also actions that make the preaching more prevalent after the sermon has been preached. It is a manner in which others are inspired to live as the Word would direct. Whilst the Methodist Church is big on preaching, it shall seem as if the Mission Groups rely on partnerships rather than mobilising other organisations for change. The Mission Unit in 2020 mobilised for Local Ecumenical Action Networks (LEANs) (Unit, 2023), and there is no evidence of this work in any of the Mission Groups.

Food security can be identified as the contribution made by the MCSA through the Mission Groups. Such mobilisation could not have been done by the MCSA alone, hence the partnership with the Department of Agriculture with the YMG (YMG, 2008), and YWM partnering with Rev Nomathamsanqa Rweqane to raise R72000 (MCSA, 2002: 295). The shared skills in the fourth-generation strategy are a critical component to make development sustainable.

Sustainable development is not just about those being developed; it must also be about the principles upheld by the developers for development to hold integrity; otherwise, Grey's (Gump, 1998: 89) notion continues to plague dishonest motives of

development. The Presiding Bishop has noted with concern the costs of conferencing by the MCSA in the year 2023 that were over R1.3m (MCSA, 2023) because of the use of hotels. This is inconsistent with the mobilisation principles through the MCSA policy on the use of alcohol and gambling (MCSA, 2016: 229, 238). The word of mouth and the decision to use the very institutions that thrive on alcohol is a betrayal of the principle of theory and praxis (Swart, 2003: 12) in sustainable development

The comprehensive approach to development is critical if its development is to take into cognisance the context and content to produce a different context to that which was first observed and experienced (Kumalo, 2005: 1). The work done by the Wesley Guild in the space of Early Childhood Development (ECD) does not show sustainability except a once off event (Guild, 2023).

Development needs to be transformative by the stakeholders not working in silos and, thus, trumping the common good. There is a need for the MCSA to build collective and collaborative ecosystems in development (Kuenkel, P. et al., 2021: 208). This collaborative ecosystem of development agencies is what validates a voice that could have been ignored since it is a respected voice in Society.

This minimal contribution by the MCSA is acknowledged by the YMG (YMG, 2008). This is a critical step to sharpening development. The more gaps that exist in development and are left unattended, the more the development becomes less sustainable, as also identified by the Mission Unit (Unit, 2022). Various desks exist in the Mission Unit. The work of Human Development and Economic Empowerment is left to the Justice and Service Desk. This is a very broad-spectrum approach that does not narrowly zoom into the development agenda. Policies and theologies should be born out of this desk. Other desks should be feeding into this Pillar for them to test their ability to implement the developmental work in their desks.

Conclusion

It is noticeable that the MCSA has made significant efforts in positioning herself as a player in development through progressive policies that have developed theologies of reconstruction of contexts and justice (Villa-Vicencio, 1992: 9). The critical theory and praxis approach to development has sometimes been challenging for the MCSA as

seen in the resources management begging the question of the capacity of the church to adequately drive the agenda of development or to leave it to the secular world (Villa-Vicencio, 1992: 23). The MCSA though to a greater extent has responded to this question by being the third-generation development strategy subscriber.

Chapter 6: Findings and Conclusion

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) is committed to improving the quality of life in Southern Africa through a range of development efforts. In response to the patriarchal approaches taken by missionaries, the Women's Manyano was established; however, these methods have failed to produce lasting development within the community. Nonetheless, the MCSA has been a leader in the field of development, predating academic discussions on the topic of the 1970s. Since 1958, the MCSA has implemented the pragmatic debate approach, proposed by Elliot Charles in the 1970s (Swart, 2003: 405) to challenge societal divisions and promote unity.

This approach has proven effective in bringing about positive change and development in Southern Africa. The MCSA has been able to achieve this by working closely with local communities and stakeholders and by utilising a range of innovative and sustainable development strategies. Overall, the MCSA's commitment to development and its use of evidence-based approaches continue to make a significant impact in Southern Africa.

As emphasised by Swart (2003: 405) in his theory of fourth-generation strategy, the pragmatic debates that have taken place within the MCSA have played a pivotal role in shaping the progressive policies that have contributed to the gendered development within the Church just as theorised by Haddad (2003: 436). These debates have not only helped to enhance the gendered development approaches of the MCSA but have also laid the groundwork for future policies that will continue to support gender equality within the organisation.

It is worth noting that these debates predated the principles of the Kairos Document, as Haddad (2016: 3) has observed that development happens best when it is born from below. The MCSA has been birthing policies and theologies from below since 1907. This is the potential the MCSA cannot afford to overlook. However, despite the positive developments that have taken place within the MCSA, these policies have not yet influenced policies outside the church. This could be attributed to the fact that the pragmatic debates have been overlooked by the MCSA leadership. Had the pragmatic debate not been overlooked, it would have been possible to achieve a broader impact on policies beyond the MCSA.

In addition to the pragmatic debates, the MCSA has also undertaken a critical examination of theologies, which has led to the formulation of needs-based development, as per Haddad's (2003: 429) observations. This form of development is more pertinent to the people, making it more people-centred, as Korten (1987: 147) has noted in his theory of third-generation strategies. The needs-based and local community development is predicated on the questioning of policies that position the MCSA on the third-generation development strategies as no further than the third-generation development strategist. These strategies emphasise the importance of engaging with the welfare and relief, local community and empowering, as well as the policy changes within the MCSA to enable the developed people to take ownership of their development processes.

In order to become a significant player in human development and economic empowerment through sustainable development, the MCSA must adopt a more concerted and intentional approach to the fourth-generation development strategy, even more so as a movement for healing and transformation. It is important to note that there is a lack of evidence in this area, which emphasises the need for the MCSA to take a more proactive approach.

The Mission Groups have identified gaps within society, and strategies have been formulated to influence change around the issue of GBV and unemployment, for example. This has enabled co-ownership and the involvement of the Local Community. Though these gaps have only been plugged by the MCSA, the plug is often pulled out when the MCSA focuses on another issue affecting the sustainability of development, leaving the previous contextual issues flaring up again.

In conclusion, the MCSA is a player in the development discourse through the theological themes of resistance, reconstruction, empowerment, gender, and development that are not just resolutions but are practical steps towards sustainable development. The resolution of 1907 to establish Women's Manyano (Mkhwanazi, 2002: 29) is holding theory and praxis together. This praxis has everything to do with the context (Du Toit, 2016) on several fronts, including the theologies of the day that need to be questioned. The theologies of the MCSA have been a questioning process of the status quo to unlock the unexplored potential, like the election thereof of the two female Presiding Bishops.

It may be further concluded that the Mission Groups of the MCSA have assisted the MCSA in meeting the requirements of the second-generation strategy of sustainable development by extending the micro development through the elaborate Welfare and Relief strategy (Korten, 1987: 147) of the MCSA to a more people-centred approach. This disseminates the responsibility, making the development a more practical approach that talks to the local context (Haddad, 2003: 423).

All in all, the MCSA has a significant contribution to the intersectionality of theology, gender and development, albeit there is room for improvement on the fourth-generation strategy of sustainable development (Swart, 2006: 132) to better contribute to the global trends of development if it is to live up to the vision of a healed Africa for the healing of the nations.

Further study may be needed to explore what limitations there are in the MCSA to live up to its pragmatic vision to be a significant player as a fourth-generation development strategist. This study may further equip the MCSA to review the policies they have made and unearth theologies beyond the reconstruction, especially in a world plagued with economic meltdown and post-COVID-19 pandemic.

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