

## Personal Evangelism and Church Growth: A Case Study of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nairobi County, Kenya

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### Abstract

One of the Christian groups tasked with bringing the gospel to every corner of the globe is the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church. Through a variety of evangelical strategies, it has expanded since its founding. One strategy for sharing the message and ensuring church growth is personal evangelism. The purpose of this study was to determine whether personal evangelism had significantly increased the number of members at the SDA Church in Dagoretti South Sub-County, Nairobi County, Kenya. Three objectives served as the study's guidelines: The first step is to determine the doctrinal and biblical foundation for personal evangelism within the SDA Church. Second, evaluate the SDA Church's evangelism strategies to achieve numerical growth. Thirdly, to examine what makes personal evangelism in the SDA Church difficult. Donald McGavran's Church Growth Theory (1970) was deemed a suitable theory for this investigation to demonstrate the connection between individual evangelism and numerical church growth. 1,401 respondents were the study's target group. Using a basic random selection technique and purposive sampling, 302 respondents, including 3 pastors, 6 elders, and 293 church members, were selected from six congregations to make up the sample group. Data was gathered using a descriptive survey design, questionnaires, and interview schedules. With the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), the quantitative data were examined using means, frequencies, and percentages. According to the study, the Great Commission serves as the foundation for the church's theological and biblical evangelism practices. Additionally, the survey discovered that the highest mean was found in service evangelism, which was followed by relational, invitational, testimonial, direct, and intellectual evangelism. Financial difficulties, conflicts among church leaders, poor member training, and the ongoing problem of member retention are some of the significant obstacles that personal evangelism faces. According to the report, the church should teach its members that personal evangelism is a divine calling. Utilizing all available channels for personal evangelism is also necessary to support the church's numerical expansion. It also suggested that funds be set aside for evangelism to support successful individual evangelism. If members are prepared and taught to evangelize, personal evangelism can drive the Church's numerical expansion. Comparing the effects of personal and public evangelism on numerical growth in the SDA Church and other churches warrants more investigation.

**Keywords:** *Evangelism, Church Manual, Central Kenya Conference, General Conference, Numerical Growth, Personal Evangelism, Adventist Church Member*

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## 1. Introduction

Personal evangelism, often referred to as one-on-one evangelism, is the practice of a self-proclaimed Christian sharing the gospel with a single person or a small group of unbelievers through personal interaction (Donaldson, 2000). The great commission enshrines personal evangelism. "Sharing God's word and love, to lead people to recognize that Jesus is their Savior and Lord so that they welcome Him in their lives and above all uniting their lives with God's Church," is how White (2019) defines evangelism. Adjei-Acquah (2010) adds that Jesus spent time teaching His followers one-on-one or in small groups when He was on earth. His disciples then went on to teach others. Consequently, Jesus turned people who had intimate experiences with Him into evangelists. These are the evangelists who helped the church develop tremendously by sharing God's message. Thus, when applied properly, personal evangelism can guarantee the church's numerical expansion.

Wearner (1934) makes a clear and succinct statement about the importance of personal evangelism, stating that one cannot reach a thousand people at once unless they reach one at a time. Furthermore, the world can only ever be brought to Christ on an individual basis, never in its entirety. Furthermore, individuals are neither born nor die as a group. Furthermore, everyone will choose to accept or reject Christ. Wearner's statement highlights the importance of personal evangelism in reaching others and demonstrates how people are saved.

One Christian denomination that upholds the great commission, as stated in Matthew 28:18-20, is the SDA Church. The Millerite Movement, which started in the United States of America (USA) in the years 1830–1845, is where the Church began. The SDA Church was formally established by 1863, and John Byington served as its first president (SDA General Conference, 2002). Through the personal evangelism of the original members and new converts, the Church expanded throughout the world.

The Church has grown over the years as a result of personal evangelism. Every individual became a pioneer, self-directed, and self-supporting in the gospel's dissemination. (Spalding, 1947). Anyone who received the Adventist message would therefore choose their field visit their homes, hang up charts, and spread the "truth."

In the USA, for example, Joseph Bates disseminated the Adventist message by holding meetings in people's tents and homes, according to Spalding (1947). He preached the gospel while traveling from state to state in the US. His primary objective was to passionately share the gospel with others to win them over and help it spread throughout the entire world. Conant (1922) contends that the goal of encouraging believers to go out and evangelize is connected to personal evangelism. "The world will never come to us with the message; we have to go to them with the message," he says. Therefore, it must be unique work for individuals given the circumstances of the case.

The SDA Church's membership started to increase as a result of its evangelical activities. In order to increase the ministry through book evangelism, numerical growth required publishing work. Later, efforts to preach the gospel message started in the fields of health and education. In order to supervise the Church's missionary efforts, it was also necessary to establish a

headquarters office in Battle Creek, Michigan (Mwashinga, 2020). In 1869, South Africa was one of the first nations to be introduced to the Adventist message. In order to effectively conduct personal evangelism, the early missionaries lived among Africans and learned the native African languages and customs. Later on, the missionaries would spread the gospel throughout the continent (Ogouma et al., 2017). In 1906, Arthur Carscallen established the SDA Church on the shores of Lake Victoria in Kenya. Through the personal evangelism of SDA converts from Gendia, the Adventist message was brought to Gusii area. As a central administrative office, the Karura Station in Nairobi was commissioned in 1933 to plant churches and disseminate the gospel throughout the nation. The SDA Church has been one of the fastest-growing Christian churches worldwide since then, and it is present on all six continents, according to Mwashinga (2020).

Therefore, in accordance with the message of the three Angels in Revelation 14:6–12, the SDA Church has a mission: to share the eternal gospel with everyone so that they become disciples (Arrais, 2011). To fulfill the objective of the SDA Church, this is only feasible if church members personally evangelize. Similar to this, each baptized church member has an obligation to fulfill their baptismal vows to spread the gospel in accordance with the guidelines established by the church. This is known as personal evangelism.

According to Burrill (2014), the SDA's message is intended for non-Christians and non-believers. Since many people have not heard or accepted the gospel, the SDA Church's mission does not accurately reflect the situation on the ground. The table below indicates the actual statistics of the SDA's mission of making disciples of all people in the CKC's ecclesiastical area where the researcher carried out the study.

**Table 1: SDA Member Ratio versus Population in CKC**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Churches	1,040	1,064	1,068	1,209	302
Membership	118,047	123,685	132,678	143,778	38,274
Population	3,499,999	3,533,884	5,189,659	5,991,261	5,846,230
Member Ratio vs Population	115	110	112	111	153

Source: General Conference of SDA (2021)

These figures inspired the researcher to look into whether personal evangelism and numerical development in the SDA Church are significantly correlated. According to the SDA Elder's Handbook (2024), committed SDAs anticipate personal evangelism, stressing that it is the sheep, not the shepherd, who expand the flock. In this sense, active participation in church growth and gospel dissemination is required of professing members. According to Parsitau (1995), church growth involves a rise in both the number of churches and their members.

Many studies have been conducted in this field because of the growing trend of the church being expanded through mainstream preaching and popular evangelism. However, little research has been done on the SDA Church's numerical growth through personal evangelism.

One of the ways the Church shares the message is through personal evangelism. For this reason, this study aims to examine the connection between individual evangelism and the SDA Church's numerical expansion in Nairobi County's Dagoretti South.

### **1.1. Problem Statement**

Throughout its history, the SDA Church has placed a strong emphasis on personal evangelism as a means of advancing its goals of gospel dissemination and church expansion. Although it is believed that personal evangelism has a major impact on numerical growth, there isn't enough empirical data to measure this link or pinpoint the precise elements of evangelism that support long-term growth. This disparity prompts a number of queries: Are contemporary methods of personal evangelism sufficiently adapted to a range of cultural and demographic contexts? How successful are these strategies in keeping existing members as well as drawing in new ones? Additionally, is the spiritual and social integration of new members sufficiently addressed by the focus on numerical growth? There are very few SDAs in the research area compared to a high percentage of non-SDA members. Therefore, whether the church members are engaged in personal evangelism is yet unknown. The purpose of this study was to determine whether personal evangelism may increase the number of churches within the SDA Church.

### **1.2 Research Objectives**

The following were the research objectives that guided this study:

- a) Identify the biblical and theological basis for personal evangelism in the SDA church in Nairobi County.
- b) Assess approaches used for personal evangelism by the SDA Church to realize numerical growth in Nairobi County.
- c) Analyze the factors that hinder personal evangelism and numerical growth of the SDA Church in Nairobi County.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Biblical and Theological Basis for Personal Evangelism**

God had created an ideal and perfect world, but it was now broken and in need of saving. The call of Abraham in Genesis 12:1-20 marks the divine turning point that would culminate in the final deliverance of humanity through the New Covenant blood of Calvary. Following His call, God successfully guides His people from death to life. The basis for personal evangelism, therefore, is the love of God. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." This emphasizes God's love, which inspires Christians to share their faith with others. "The love of Christ should be the motive for every act of life," according to White (1892). In response to the redemptive grace that comes through Jesus Christ, personal evangelism is motivated by love. Bosch (1991) asserts that evangelism is a manifestation of God's love for people.

Since sin caused the separation of humanity from God, the Godhead is working towards restoring the lost relationship. This has led to the theology of atonement whereby the Godhead is working together for the salvation of humanity. Jesus Christ became the sacrifice for the salvation of humanity through his death on the cross and His resurrection. Death and resurrection of Christ are central to the message of evangelism. Christians proclaim that through Christ's sacrificial death, humanity can be reconciled to God, providing hope and

salvation. Isaiah 53:5 talks of the Suffering Servant; "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed". Therefore, the heart of the gospel message that Christians are obligated to spread is the act of substitution. Atonement includes the restoration of God's original creation design, the defeat of evil, and the forgiveness of sins. Personal evangelism thus turns into a way of inviting people into the story of God's redemption.

Ellen White, one of the SDA Church's founders, supports the idea that churchgoers have a responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission as postulated in Matthew 28:18-20. "Until the men and women who make up our church membership rally to the work and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers, the work of God in this earth can never be finished," she adds. White (1948). It proves that regardless of gender, race, or social standing, everyone is qualified for God's salvation.

The crucial role that the Holy Spirit plays in evangelism is further highlighted by the SDA's core principles (General Conference of SDAs, 2022). According to Acts 1:8, believers are given the capacity to act as Christ's witnesses by the Holy Spirit. Each individual receives gifts from the Holy Spirit by his desires. Among the gifts are faith, healing, prophecy, proclamation, teaching, administration, compassion, selfless service, reconciliation, and charity for the good of others. In order to prepare members for service, advance the spiritual development of the church, and foster unity in the faith and knowledge of God, the church recognizes that certain members are called by God and given the Spirit to serve in pastoral, evangelistic, and teaching ministries. Churchgoers should remember the action of the Holy Spirit, according to Kim (2000).

These theological and biblical guidelines for personal evangelism serve as the foundation for the SDA Church in Nairobi County. Even with these guidelines in place, the church's membership continues to expand slowly. According to McEdward (2011), the church and its purpose are impacted by the world's rapid changes. As the church grows and develops new ministries and outreach initiatives, he contends that a solid and thorough theological foundation for mission is crucial. If the church wants to prepare adherents of other religions for the Second Coming of Christ, it needs a solid theology of mission that will form the basis of mission (Kuhn, 2016). The SDA church, therefore, needs a theological foundation that is comprehensive enough to deliver an apocalyptic message, inspire love for one another, and lead members to pursue experimental spirituality.

Kim's (2000) study focuses on the biblical strategy of personal evangelism for church expansion. The study does not concentrate on the theology of personal evangelism; rather, it focuses more on providing biblical examples of personal evangelism. By providing the theological and biblical foundation for personal evangelism in the SDA Church, this study added to the body of literature.

## **2.2 Personal Evangelism Methods**

White (1946) advocates using various evangelism techniques for various individuals. To plant the seeds of truth and reap the rewards, she says, "different methods of labor are essential." We also need to learn how to modify our work to fit the needs of the individuals we encounter, wherever they may be. We are to go out and save those who are willing to die. However, we must remember that different approaches must be used to save distinct ones. This is consistent with the Bonsai theory of church growth (Hemphill, 1991), which states that one of the church's



responsibilities is to comprehend the community in which it operates and then determine the most effective way to reach the lost.

There are at least six approaches that ensure the practice of personal evangelism according to Hybels & Mittelberg (1996). These include: testimonial, relational, direct, invitational, service, and intellectual evangelism. This substantiates the teachings of Paul, who noted that every individual has the gift and ability to share and spread the gospel.

People who give personal testimony about how they came to know God and what He has done in their lives are engaging in testimonial evangelism, which is a type of personal evangelism. Testimonies typically focus on difficulties and hardship in the personal lives of close relatives. Some are inspired to pursue redemption, while others are inspired to recognize God's gift and promises (Nsereka & Nwanze, 2021).

According to Moose (2016), "The Four Spiritual Laws" is another name for intellectual evangelism. These spiritual rules are as follows: God loves you; man is sinful and estranged from God; the only remedy for man's sin is Jesus Christ; and each of us must personally embrace and receive Jesus Christ as both God and our Savior. Using logic, engaging in meaningful conversation, and answering inquiries are all components of intellectual evangelism.

One way to characterize relational evangelism is as a form of personal evangelism that involves sharing and evangelizing among friends, family, neighbors, and other people in the social circle. Building relationships and sharing the gospel with people in our social circle are the goals of relational evangelism (MacLaren, 2001).

Invitational evangelism, according to Myers (2022), is a strategy for sharing the gospel by means of invitations. People are essentially invited to participate in bible studies, evangelistic campaigns, retreats, church services, and any other kind of Christian gathering that aims to spread the gospel. Thus, the primary goal of a believer is to encourage others to participate in various church events to win them over to Christianity.

According to Nyagwoka (2017), direct evangelism is a method that involves sharing the gospel in public, much like Peter did during Pentecost in Acts 2:41. Because it emphasizes pursuing individuals in public to become Christians, it is regarded as one of the most effective methods for sharing the gospel. It encourages people to consider their salvation.

Since service evangelism is linked to Christians making sacrifices to address the needs of the community, it can also be regarded as community outreach. This is linked to initiatives like providing community service, helping the homeless and street urchins, and other services that highlight Jesus Christ's teachings on helping those in need (Mathew 25:35–40). In an attempt to reach people's hearts and facilitate the spread of the gospel, these initiatives might be either community-wide or individual (White, 1997).

Social media is quickly changing how people communicate and connect in society. Numerous social media platforms have been crucial in facilitating the smooth dissemination of information across a range of gadgets, including laptops, tablets, cellphones, and pretty much any other device with an internet connection (Mateus, 2017). According to Wise (2014), businesses are using social media more and more to communicate with customers and promote their goods, which increases their success rates. Church members and non-members can join online thanks to platforms like Facebook and YouTube, which allow them to stream live

services. Additionally, the platforms give churchgoers the chance to suggest church programs or share links on social media.

Literature evangelism is another name for Colporteur outreach. This entails the dissemination of print materials, including books, booklets, magazines, newspapers, essays, brochures, leaflets, and the Bible, among many others. The gospel is disseminated through print media by a number of SDA publishing houses. According to White (2018), colporteur ministry is a strategy for sharing the gospel that goes against the spoken word. Njoku (2014) also points out that literature helps evangelism, which is essential for the church's expansion. As a result, literature makes it easy to spread the gospel, which is important for growing the Christian population.

### **2.3 Factors Hindering Personal Evangelism**

Eko and Ekpenyong (2019) categorize internal and external factors that affect the spreading of the gospel into socio-economic, religio-political, cultural, and religious. Demanding schedules and modern lifestyles can also leave little time for individual evangelism. Due to the difficulties in contemporary society, people's hectic schedules make it difficult to seize the right occasions for religious discourse (Dike, 2022). Christians may find it difficult to set aside enough time for spiritual research and growth-oriented conversation due to work, family obligations, and other important concerns. According to Kinoti and Nteere (2021), a strong sense of dedication and enthusiasm are essential to the church's development and expansion.

According to Otieno (2014), the issue of member loss impacts both the General Conference and individual church members. Members become discouraged from going out to evangelize and are reluctant to provide funds that will be used to support evangelization efforts when a significant portion of the congregation leaves the church. They believe that going out to evangelize is a waste of time and money, and that people eventually quit attending church.

Pastor's lifestyle can have a big influence on both church growth and individual evangelism (Abafi, 2020). This is explained by the fact that the pastor serves as the outward symbol of the church's principles and ideals. For both believers and unbelievers, the pastor's lifestyle sets an example of faith; it guarantees credibility, promotes community involvement, and ensures relatability—all of which are important when overcoming obstacles to personal evangelism.

According to Amankwa and Akoto (2022), one of the issues facing the church and its capacity to evangelize is gender and sexuality. These concerns include homosexuality, divorce, gender identity, and marriage. The church is under pressure to change its stance and doctrine from a variety of sources. The church has been under pressure from the government and human rights activists to modify its theological stance on gender and sexuality. Because of this, it is challenging for Christians to engage with people who think they should be accepted or who want the church to change its position so they can receive the gospel.

The SDA church compels polygamists to convert to monogamy before they may apply to join. According to Omotosho (2020), this regulation essentially ignores African ancestry and culture, which condones polygamy. Hörschele (2006) says that these policies must be updated and reexamined in order to take into account the diversity of cultures around the world.

### **2.4 Theoretical Review**

Church Growth Theory by Donald McGavran (1970) is pertinent to this research because it offers a theoretical framework that supports the study's focus on the numerical expansion of

the SDA Church via personal evangelism, which is founded on seven principles that are essential to the church's expansion. The use of evangelistic methods, membership from a single homogeneous unit, a ministry centered on the great commission, the role of pastors in church growth, lay mobilization for evangelism activities, proper structural balance, and a church meeting members' needs and expectations are among the seven tenets of this theory.

### **3. Methodology**

The study used a descriptive survey design, which enabled the description of the current state of the phenomenon as it is by gathering people's beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and habits. The research aimed to collect detailed qualitative and quantitative data using interviews and questionnaires to explain the link between the variables through analyzing, interpreting, and drawing valid conclusions. The study was conducted in Dagoretti South sub-county of Nairobi County in Kenya. 2115 baptized members in Dagoretti sub-county were the study's target population. Systematic random sampling was used, which enabled the study's findings to be generalized to an entire population. The study used Krejci and Morgan's (1970) table of sample size, whereby by population of 1401 required 302 respondent sample size. The researcher also used in-depth interviews and questionnaires to generate data from the sampled respondents. The data collected underwent a series of steps, including cleaning, coding, and entry into a computer for analysis. Following the study's objectives, both qualitative and quantitative data were meticulously analyzed and interpreted. Quantitative data were coded in a standardized format and entered into a computer sheet, with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29. Descriptive statistics, such as means and standard deviations, were utilized to thematically analyze both types of data. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to assess mean differences among various modes of personal evangelism for the quantitative data. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data obtained. From the quantitative data, bar charts, pie charts, tables, percentages, and frequency counts were generated.

### **4. Results and Discussion**

A total of 292 church members out of the required 302 participated in the study to give a response rate of 88.74% which enabled the researcher to analyze the data and make conclusions for the study.

#### **4.1 Biblical and Theological Basis for Personal Evangelism**

Respondents were asked to explain the biblical and theological basis for personal evangelism in the SDA Church. The narratives shed light on the participants' viewpoints, interweaving biblical narratives, theological tenets, and the imperative to engage in personal evangelism. For instance, Elder 4 rooted his rationale for personal evangelism in the scriptural account of Andrew's encounter with Jesus. The respondent recounted, "My basis for personal evangelism is in John 1:35-42 when Andrew met Jesus, who was the Messiah they had been waiting for through the prophecies. After Andrew met Jesus, he went home and told his brother Peter that he had met the Messiah. Through this encounter, they became disciples of Jesus Christ and started working with Jesus Christ, preaching the gospel." (Personal Communication January 15th, 2023).

In a nutshell, this study unveils diverse perspectives, with participants seamlessly integrating biblical narratives and theological principles of the SDA Church to establish a robust foundation for personal evangelism. The findings align with McGavran's theory of Church



Growth, which is centered on the Great Commission and postulates that numerical growth demonstrates obedience to this biblical mandate. He opines that evangelism should be the church's primary mission (McGavran, 1970).

#### **4.2 Approaches used for personal evangelism by the SDA Church to realize numerical growth in Nairobi County**

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to assess the differences in mean rating between the various modes of personal evangelism, which showed statistically significant differences between the different means, as seen in Table 2.

**Table 2: A Comparison of the Extent of Contribution of Various Approaches Used for Personal Evangelism in the SDA Church to Realize Numerical Church Growth (ANOVA)**

	Testimonial evangelism	Intellectual evangelism	Relational evangelism	Invitational evangelism	Direct evangelism	Service evangelism
Mean	4.02	3.61	4.17	4.10	3.77	4.30
Std. Deviation	1.535	1.565	1.526	1.560	1.689	1.473

ANOVA  $F(5, 1824) = 8.4429, p < 0.001$ ;

Tukey HSD Post-hoc Test...

Testimonial vs Intellectual: Diff=-0.4100, 95%CI=-0.7688 to -0.0512,  $p=0.0143$

Intellectual vs Relational: Diff=0.5600, 95%CI=0.2012 to 0.9188,  $p=0.0001$

Intellectual vs Invitational: Diff=0.4900, 95%CI=0.1312 to 0.8488,  $p=0.0014$

Intellectual vs Service: Diff=0.6900, 95%CI=0.3312 to 1.0488,  $p < 0.001$

Relational vs Direct: Diff=-0.4000, 95%CI=-0.7588 to -0.0412,  $p=0.0186$

Direct vs Service: Diff=0.5300, 95%CI=0.1712 to 0.8888,  $p=0.0004$

The quantitative analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to find out the differences in mean ratings among various approaches of personal evangelism, with a specific focus on their respective contributions to numerical church growth. The results, as presented in Table 2, indicate statistically significant distinctions among the means of different evangelism modes.

#### **4.3 Factors That Hinder Personal Evangelism and Numerical Growth of the SDA Church in Nairobi County**

The findings about obstacles to personal evangelism offer a complex picture of the participants' perspectives. When gathering information from the field, the researcher employed a Likert Scale to identify the barriers to personal evangelism. Conflicts within the church, money, equipping church members on personal evangelism, and the impact of church leaders on such efforts were the four main obstacles.

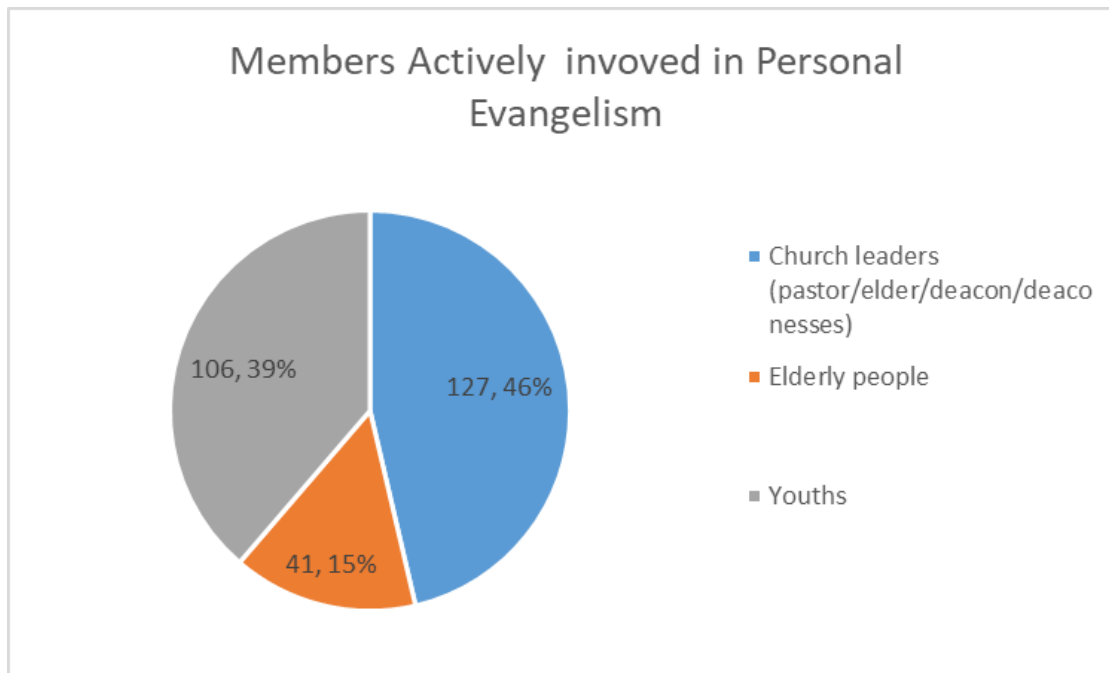
**Table 3: Forums for Training Personal Evangelism**

Forums for training personal evangelism	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Seminar/Workshops	32	22
AFCOE/ALIVE Kenya	20	13
Bible Study	29	19
Sabbath Trainings	23	15
Missions/Crusades	18	11
Personal Ministry Training	31	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>100</b>

From Table 3 above, seminars/workshops held the highest percentage (22%) in terms of training church members for personal evangelism, followed by personal ministry (20%), and bible study (19%). Forums that held the least percentage were: sabbath trainings (15%), Afcoe/Alive Kenya (13%), and mission/crusades (11%). When members are trained and equipped, they find it easier to share the gospel. When they are not equipped, they may be reluctant to share the gospel due to feelings of inadequacy.

Interviewees were asked to name factors that hinder personal evangelism in the SDA Church. Elder 5 and 6 posited that nurture and retention are one of the factors that hinder personal evangelism. Elder 5 stated, *“There is a problem of nurture and retention in the church whereby new converts join the church but later drop out of the church because they lacked someone to nurture them to grow.”* (Personal Communication, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023). Similarly, Elder 6 noted, *“Nurture and retention in the SDA Church are a major problem. You find that we baptize a large number of people who join the church, but after a few months, those who have been baptized stop coming to church, and later become dropouts if they do not attend church for a long period. I think we do rush over presenting the Adventist beliefs to non-Adventists at the expense of presenting the gospel first to them, so that they can understand it well before we begin to teach about Adventism. This affects the numerical growth of the SDA Church.”* (Personal Communication, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023).

**Figure 1: Members actively involved in personal evangelism**



From Figure 1 above, findings revealed that the elderly people 41(15%) are not actively involved in personal evangelism, whereas the youths 106(39%) and church leaders 127(46%) are actively involved in personal evangelism. The findings reveal that, despite personal evangelism being the work of each church member, the most actively involved church members are the church leaders. It must be noted that the number of church leaders in any congregation is small compared to that of church members. This, therefore, means that church members are not committed to personal evangelism.

#### 4.4 Summary of the Findings

This study found that the SDA Church bases its personal evangelism on biblical and theological precepts. The Great Commission given in Matthew 28:18-20 serves as the foundation for their mission. The SDA Church's mission, to create disciples of all people by sharing the everlasting gospel within the framework of the Three Angels' Message of Revelation 14:6-12, also embodies the Great Commission. They hold that the church's mission is to evangelize and equip its members to evangelize in anticipation of Jesus Christ's imminence. The teachings contained in the SDA Church's core doctrines also serve as a direction for personal evangelism. The doctrines include the doctrine of God, which explains how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit work to save humanity; the doctrine of man, which emphasizes how humans were created and how they became separated from God because of their disobedience; the doctrine of salvation, which explains how God plans to redeem humanity through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross; and the doctrine of the church, which requires its members to share the gospel with people all over the world through personal evangelism.

The results revealed that service evangelism had the highest mean, followed by relational, invitational, testimonial, direct, and lastly, intellectual evangelism. This shows that a majority of the respondents believed that service evangelism is the most effective form of personal evangelism compared to other approaches. The analysis also highlighted the variations in

perceived effectiveness of different evangelism modes. Relational evangelism emerged as the highest-rated mode, while Intellectual evangelism was the least-rated. The study comes to the conclusion that the best strategy for personal evangelism is service evangelism since it demonstrates real Christian love via deeds of kindness and aligns with social demands. This suggests that since service evangelism is thought to be the most successful kind of personal evangelism, it ought to be given priority. In communities, deeds of compassion have a profound impact and increase openness to the gospel.

The study found that members face a variety of challenges, including lack of training in personal evangelism, church conflicts, financial limitations, non-commitment of church members, the ongoing problem of member retention, and the impact of church leaders in evangelistic efforts. The church does not have enough money to allow members to engage in personal evangelism, according to the findings. It also showed that personal evangelism is hampered by disputes among church leaders. The study also revealed that churchgoers lacked personal evangelism training. The study also showed that churchgoers were not dedicated to spreading the gospel.

## 6. Conclusion

Finding the scriptural and theological foundation for personal evangelism in the SDA Church in Nairobi County was the study's primary goal. The study proved that the SDA Church's personal evangelism is theologically and biblically grounded. The Great Commission, contained in Matthew 28:18-20 serves as the foundation for the church's mission. The Church Manual, the core doctrines of the SDA Church, and the theological writings of church founders like Ellen White serve as further guiding principles for the church. According to the study, the SDA Church holds that believers are given the ability to testify to unbelievers by the Holy Spirit. The study found that because churchgoers often forget their duty to witness, the SDA Church does not adequately promote these values to them.

The second goal was to evaluate the personal evangelism strategies employed by the SDA Church in Nairobi County to achieve numerical growth. According to the study, relational, inviting, testimonial, direct, and intellectual evangelism are less successful than service evangelism as a type of personal evangelism. It revealed that intellectual evangelism had the lowest rating, whereas relational evangelism was the most highly regarded approach. The study found a clear relationship between individual evangelism and the church's numerical expansion. It also demonstrated the importance of lifestyle evangelism in enhancing relationships with the community. The results also showed that service evangelism, which shows Christian love through deeds of kindness, plays a crucial role in facilitating the church's growth. According to the study, the SDA Church uses a variety of evangelism strategies, including media approaches, social media evangelism, lifestyle evangelism, friendship evangelism, medical missionary, book evangelism, and visitation. According to the report, the SDA Church is not capitalizing on contemporary evangelism techniques, such as social media, which underscores the urgent need for a comprehensive evangelism strategy.

The study's third goal was to examine the barriers to the SDA Church's numerical expansion and personal evangelism in Nairobi County. The study found that issues with church leadership, non-commitment of church members, lack of training for church members, and difficulties with nurturing and retention are the main reasons impeding the growth of the

church's finances. Furthermore, the study found that churchgoers view personal evangelism as a difficult undertaking.

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