

**PROSPECTS FOR CHRISTIAN YOUTHS' PARTICIPATION IN CROSS-CULTURAL MISSION WORK AMONG THE FALI PEOPLE OF MUBI, ADAMAWA, NIGERIA****Authors & Affiliations****LINDA ATUEGBELO OGUNSHOLA**

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To address the observed apathy among youths towards cross-cultural missions, this study examined the prospects for the participation of Fali Christian youths in Mubi, Adamawa, Nigeria, in cross-cultural mission work. The objectives were to discover the current level of participation of Fali Christian youths in cross-cultural missionary work, to identify the motivating and hindering factors that influence their participation, and to identify actions that can promote their participation. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design method with 200 respondents. Positive Youth Development theory was adopted for this study. The findings revealed that the Fali Christian youths have not been participating reasonably in cross-cultural mission work to other tribes; despite efforts in spiritual formation, they are hindered by low levels of education and vocational skills and therefore lack boldness to engage in intercultural interactions; combination of actions that can be strategically pursued among them are facilitation of tertiary and higher education, higher theological and missions training, relevant vocational skills acquisition, funding for these, and establishment of creative access methods of missions-sending. This study contributes to the existing knowledge by providing extensive work on the Fali people and holistic capacity development for youths from indigenous backgrounds.

**Keywords:** Youth participation, Christian youth, cross-cultural missions, Fali people, Nigeria.

**Introduction**

In all spheres of life, continuity cannot be spoken about or envisaged without recourse to the young in age. The categorisation of ages separates children from youths, thus, from birth to seventeen years of age (0 – 17) are children by the Nigerian Constitution. At eighteen years of age, the adult status is assumed in most nations of the world, and expectations of society rise for the individual. The age bracket of eighteen to thirty-five (18 - 35) years is the prime of life for pursuits of goals and achievements (United Nations (UN), 2022; Commonwealth Secretariat (CS), 2025). The vast population of Nigeria (220 million) is largely so because seventy per cent (70%) are aged thirty-five (35) and below. In every aspect of human and societal life, the future lies with the younger and more populous grouping of society, more so in Nigeria, with over ninety (90) million youths between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five (18-35) (Akinyemi, 2023). Therefore, the continuity of taking the Gospel to the regions beyond where it has reached cannot exclude youths in their prime, eighteen to thirty-five (18-35) years of age. To reach the unreached people groups, the solution is to involve the youths in both envisioning and carrying out the mission of reaching “all nations”.

Missions emanates from the Great Commission mandate given by the Lord Jesus Christ to the body of his disciples, and which has constituted the marching orders of the Christian Faith since the Ascension of Christ (Holy Bible, Mathew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:8). When considering mandates, the thought of instruction or command is at the fore of the mind, more so the fact that mandates connote continuity from one generation to another, especially the mandate of the Great Commission (GC) whose end date is till the Lord returns. The scope of mission work in Acts 1:8 covers four types of locations which represent three separate culturally diverse peoples, namely Jerusalem, Judea (same culture), Samaria (different culture), and the uttermost parts of the earth (very different culture)(Parks, 2024). To make disciples of all nations starts from one's home culture but continues to all other cultures, whether they are similar or diverse, hence the need for cross-cultural mission work. Christian missions have always involved movements from one culture to another.

The Fali people are indigenous to the mountain ranges of the Mandara highlands that span the length of the northeast border of Nigeria and the northwest of Cameroon. They are found in Mubi North Local Government Area of Adamawa State, Nigeria. The Fali in 2022 had an estimated population of 233,600(Nigeria Population Commission [NPC], 2022). Major settlements of the Fali are *Vimtim*, *Muchalla*, *Bahuli*, *Mijulu*, *Kirya*, *Pagra*, and *Julvu*. The Falis, though one tribe, have three major diverse dialects, making it difficult to have a uniform Bible translation effort (Joshua Project and Luke Initiative, 2022). The Fali people were highlighted as one of the Unreached People Groups (UPG) in northeast Nigeria in the 1980s(Calvary Ministries Research [CMR], 1992). Christ's Disciples' Missionary Foundation (CDMF), a Nigerian Mission agency, sent cross-cultural missionaries to the Fali tribe in 1985, who began their work on the communities living on the mountain ranges (Ogunshola, 2015). Forty years down the line, it is in line to evaluate the prospects of their ability to continue to extend the borders of the Faith with little outside assistance.

The expectation is that when a particular people group or tribe receive the Gospel and has churches planted among them, they also should take the responsibility to take the same Gospel to nearby or far peoples who have not received it. This is the way the Christian Faith has expanded since the time of the Apostles and the early church(Silberman, 2024). Qua Iboe Missions' work among the Igala tribe in Nigeria was a mission field of the indigenous Qua Iboe members from the Efik tribe(Corbet, 1977; Ikpe, 1987). Many of the Baptist works in parts of Northern Nigeria were the works of Yoruba traders who travelled on business/vocational enterprises(Ezemadu, 2020). Assemblies of God members from the South of Nigeria established the mission of the Church in Kaduna (Crompton, 1979). Scholars have researched general reasons for youth apathy towards cross-cultural mission work(Hull, 2022; Lausanne Movement [LM], 2004). There has been limited engagement of Fali Christian youths in cross-cultural mission work, particularly in the last decade (2014-2024). With ninety (90) UPGs in Nigeria, and nine hundred and ninety-one (991) in Africa yet to be allowed to respond positively to mission works, the task of the Great Commission is far from completion(Nwachukwu, 2020). For continuity of the vision of the church and the Missions agency, the younger generation needs to arise to the intentional expansion of the borders of the mission. Hence, the need to undertake this study to discover the reasons why Fali Christian youths are not ardently pursuing going out for cross-cultural mission work. Continuity of the Great Commission is only possible when youths are actively involved (Christian Theology Research Project [CTRP], 2022).

This study aims to identify the prospects of Christian youths' participation in cross-cultural mission work among the Fali people of Mubi North LGA, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study are:

1. to discover the current level of participation of Fali Christian youths (FCY) in Cross-cultural missionary (CCM) work;
2. to identify the factors affecting Fali Christian youths' participation in Cross-cultural mission work;
3. to identify actionable possibilities that can promote Fali Christian youths' participation in Cross-cultural missions.

The findings and recommendations of this research will provide necessary insights for church and mission organisations towards developing programmes that will enhance youths' abilities for active participation in the Great Commission. The scope of the study is 2014 – 2024, being the decade following the gradual withdrawal of cross-cultural missionaries from the Fali people consequent upon the Boko Haram terrorist activities in the area (BBC, November 5, 2014).

### **Concept of Missionary Work**

The contemporary English word missionary is derived from the Latin word, *missio* which means sending a person out to achieve a purpose or an agreed objective. It is the same root word translated as *apostello* in Greek (Whitehead, 2024). This makes it clear that a missionary operates within the ministry gift of an apostle (Ephesians 4:11-13) where both mean a messenger sent out to fulfill a part of Christ's mission as mandated in the Great Commission (Holy Bible, Mathew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:8). The history of missions began in the book of Acts of the Apostles with journeys taken in obedience to “make disciples of all nations...”, and continued through the persecution ridden era of the early church under the Roman government (AD 30 -300), the Roman church era cum the medieval period (300 - 1500), till the period of the Protestant Reformation (1500 - 1800), to the missionary thrusts of the 1800s to date. Since there are still places and 'nations' (ethnic groups) that have not received the Gospel, the Great Commission mandate is yet unaccomplished, and by inference, the work of missions is continuing (*Missio Nexus*, 2017).

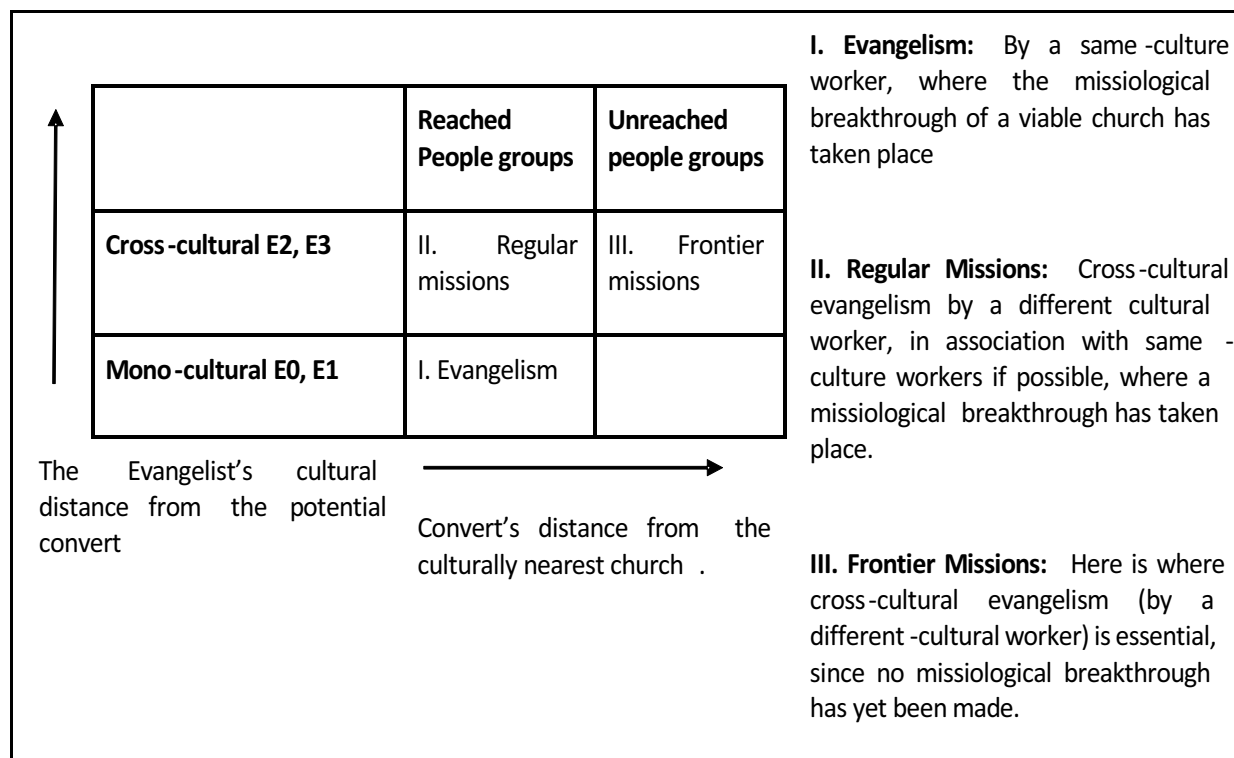
Missionaries go to new lands (Unreached People Groups - UPGs), relate with the people to understand their culture and the best ways to bring the understanding of God's love and salvation to them, teach them, plant churches and perform many duties to improve the lifestyle of the recipients. Successful missionary works always eventually bring holistic developments to the people (Garcia and Thompson, 2023).

### **State of World Evangelisation**

The state of world evangelisation in a broad sense shows that twenty-nine per cent (29%) of the world's present eight billion people have little or no access to the Gospel. These amount to over two billion (2.3 billion) people as of the middle 2024. Three per cent (3%) of Christian Missionaries are targeting this twenty-nine per cent least reached portion of the population of the world. The imbalance is huge. Unreached People Groups (UPGs) and people with the least access to the Gospel are in huge numbers in countries within the 10/40 Window (between latitudes ten and forty degrees north of the equator). These comprise North Africa (core north of Nigeria inclusive), the Middle East and most of Asia (Mission Guide, 2022; Centre for Study of Global Christianity [CSGC], 2021). Nigeria still has at least ninety (90) UPGs, with Africa's UPGs numbering over



Cross-cultural missionary work could either be Regular Missions or Frontier Missions, based on whether it is carried out among people groups who have had churches planted among them or not (Lewis, 1994).



**Figure 1 : Evangelism, Regular Missions, Frontier Missions**

(Lewis, Jonathan, 1994)

### Structures to Accomplish the Missions Mandate

Ralph D Winter (2009) put forth the two structures of God's redemptive mission evident since the New Testament times. The first being the nurture-oriented congregational church structures, which he called Modality, and the second being task-oriented mission structures, such as mission agencies, called Sodality. The Modality are the local churches whose role borders on growing, nurturing through teaching and discipleship of static congregations in specific locations. The sodalities are “on-the-move” structures whose goal is to start new congregations of believers in new locations. Both the congregations and the missionary bands are part of the pattern for an effective mission thrust (Winter and Hawthorne, 2009).

### Importance and Potential of Youths in the Mission Work

A mandate is a command, instruction or directive to carry out a task with a sense of ownership because of the authority of, and the relationship those commanded have with the person who gives the mandate. Mandates outlive their original recipients and continue to be executed as a legacy by subsequent generations (Hawthorne, 2009). The Great Commission was a directive given by Jesus Christ to His followers after His resurrection and before His ascension to heaven. He backed it with the authority of His power and pronounced

its continuity by saying, “I will be with you till the close of age” (Holy Bible Matthew 28:18-20; Matthew 24:14). Mandates are legacies that every new generation struggles to keep and adhere to. The making disciples of all ethnic groups, baptising them and teaching them all that Jesus taught, till the close of the age, has therefore become a legacy that the church congregations (modality) and the missionary bands (sodality), focus on completing before the expected return of Christ (Butler et al, 2024).

The world population of about eight billion people comprises 23% youths. In Africa and Nigeria in particular, youths comprising ages eighteen to thirty-five (18-35) are at least forty-two (42%) of the population (U.N., 2022). These are the energetic and future-looking segments of the communities in any nation. Continuity of the Great Commission mandate and its completion lies with the youth. A scholar has posited that the greatest asset that Africa has today is its teeming Christian youth population, as the most youthful continent in the world. Nigeria is Africa's most populous nation. The potentials in youth, which the scholar termed “YouthPower”, include their passion if ignited, their strength, energy, talents, ideas, opportunities and their numbers. The problem of not performing as expected, to serve God effectively in their generation, cannot be with the youths, because they have not been unleashed. Mentoring is needed to harness these potentials as well as to sustain their interest in the task of serving as carriers of the Mandate of the Great Commission in their own generation (Perbi, 2020).

Today's leaders in churches and missions will have to rise to the task to mentor, coach and support the Christian youths to become self-aware of what they can be, guide them to discover their purpose in God's programme for the nations, envision and implement this purpose and gain personal fulfilment in it. Then alone will the Great Commission Mandate be continued to the next generations. This task lies with the leaders who preside over the youths (Perbi, 2020).

### **Creative Access Missions-Sending Methods**

Tentmaking is the art of holding or carrying on secular jobs in the place where one is sent as a missionary. One could also start businesses in such places to provide support for the mission work and the missionaries, as well as create access to the targeted people. Tentmaking is a strategy not for creative access countries alone, but helps young professionals to carry on their work while serving as Gospel messengers (Global Frontier Missions, 2021).

The case of tentmaking in cross-cultural mission dates back to the Apostle Paul and his missionary team in the Acts of the Apostles (18:2-3), as they went among the Gentiles. Some Protestant Missions understood the need for the mission to be self-sustaining; hence, they sent out skilled persons who were also, in essence, missionaries. The Moravians in Herrnhut, Germany, in 1737, under the leadership of Count Zinzendorf (1700-1760), sent teams of skilled artisans and traders to distant lands (the West Indies, and Labrador-among the Eskimos). These arrived in the mission fields, supporting themselves and their ministries through their trades. These tentmaking Moravian missionaries birthed great movements of God among the people they were sent to. Even though they went, not expecting to be supported, they were effective missionaries (Luke, 2020). Tentmaking has continued to be strategic for the dual benefits of getting access to difficult-to-reach mission fields and providing support for the missionaries and the mission itself.

## **Methodology**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The instruments used were questionnaire and interview guide. The reliability of the research instruments when tested using the Cronbach-alpha method was 0.947. The population of the study was Mubi North LGA 233,600 (NPC, 2022).

One hundred and fifty (150) copies of a questionnaire were administered to a total of one hundred and fifty (150) youth respondents, (fifteen in each of the ten selected congregations) with the following specifications: ages between eighteen and thirty-five; have been members of the church congregations purposively selected for upward of eight years on the average; must be Fali indigenes resident in the Fali communities selected. Interviews were conducted for 50 persons, comprising three youths who had been involved in missionary outreaches, a pastor and an elderly informant from each of the ten congregations purposively selected for the survey. Both the questionnaire and interview respondents willingly consented to supply the needed information without any form of coercion. Neither did they seek remuneration for information they gave, either overtly or covertly.

The communities and congregations selected are Christ's Disciples' Missionary Foundation (CDMF) Madivi, Julvu, Grace Evangel Mission (GEM) Madivi, Julvu, CDMF Lila, Julvu, CDMF Gilmari, Julvu, GEM Muhura, Julvu, United Gospel Faith Tabernacle (UGFTC) Mireyin, Mijulu, UGFTC, Lila, Julvu, CDMF Gubi, Mijulu, CDMF Muchalla 1, CDMF Muchalla 2.

The selected congregations had, at the time of their inception or later, cross-cultural missionary leadership. They are all led by indigenous Fali pastors today.

The data collected by the researcher were collated and analysed using appropriate scientific methods – percentages, descriptive analysis, content and thematic analysis, among others deemed appropriate.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Positive Youth Development Theory (PYD)**

The Positive Youth Development theory takes the stand that youths in themselves are not a problem to be solved, rather they are potentials to be developed. Many scholars have had inputs into the PYD theory. However, Peter Benson and Richard Lerner are recognised as key scholars and practitioners of the PYD theory and practice. They provide frameworks on how to enhance youths as future developers of legacy, by focusing on their strengths, potential and active participation in shaping their communities (Lerner et al, 2016; Benson and Pittman, 2001).

The process of PYD is necessarily in the context of relationships that influence them. The context-person relationship works in a bidirectional way that leads to growth and development. The way these contexts are designed, and the way youths are included in those designs through supportive nurturing, determines the success of the practice of PYD. The combination of relationships, programmes, family, schools, community, and congregations offering support, experiences and opportunities enhances achievement of purposes (Lerner et al, 2016; Benson and Pittman, 2001).

Another scholar recognises that values, moral perspectives, and religious worldviews are constructive resources for PYD. The position put forth here is that when youths have imbibed good moral values and are

adherents of religious beliefs, their development more easily aligns with the positive side. They turn out more focused on life goals, contribute more meaningfully to societal needs around them, and become more responsible leaders(Damon, 2004). Hence, the adoption of the PYD theory for this research.

## Findings

**Table 1: Demographics of Respondents**

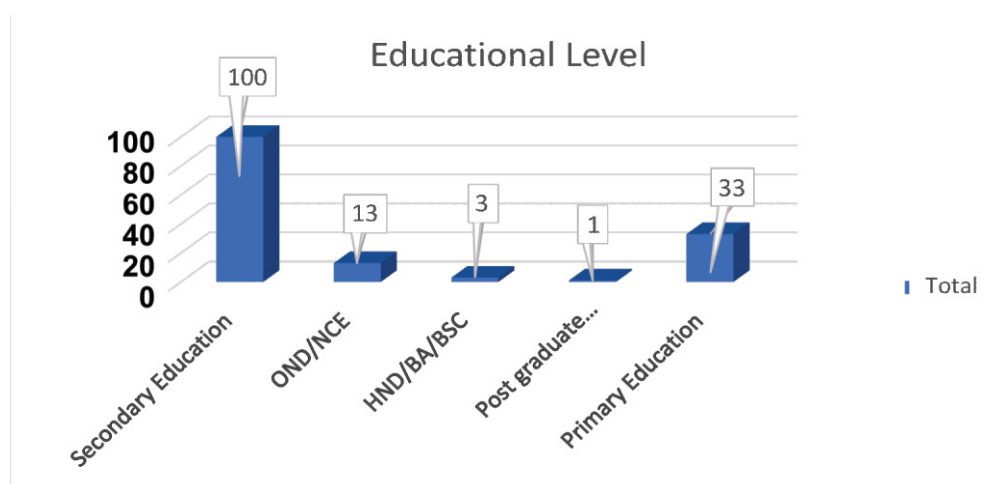
Construct	Distribution	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	100	67%
	Female	50	33%
Age	18-23 years	37	25%
	24-29 years	43	29%
	30-35 years	70	46%
Tribe	Fali	150	100%
Local government	Mubi	150	100%
Duration of membership	0-5 years	2	1%
	6-10 years	63	42%
	11 years and above	85	57%
Educational level	Primary Education	33	22%
	Secondary education	100	67%
	OND/NCE	13	9%
	HND/BA/BSC	3	2%
	Postgraduate education	1	1%
Vocation	Technical Skills (Artisan)	8	5%
	Agriculture	141	94%
	Others	1	1%

**Source: Field Survey 2025**

**Ages of Respondents:** They were all within the age bracket of eighteen to thirty-five years.

**Duration of years under GC teachings:** The respondents all had an average of eight to ten years in the churches or mission organisations before their opinions were sought, meaning that they had enough number of years under teachings about evangelism and missions

## Educational Levels and Vocations of the Respondents



**Figure 2: Educational levels of the respondents.**

Fig.2 shows that many of the respondents have secondary education as their highest educational level, while 22% have either primary school leaving certificates or did not pass through formal education. Only 12% have a higher educational qualification. This implies that the majority of Fali Christian youth targeted for cross-cultural missions in Mubi, Adamawa State, do not hold higher degrees in formal education; rather, they are engaged in farming and other vocations. This is further established in the vocational data, where 94% of the respondents are involved in agriculture; the 5% who are artisans also indicated that they are farmers, showing that 99% of the respondents are engaged in farming as their major or minor vocation, regardless of their educational qualifications.

### 1. Diminished Participation of Fali Christian Youths in CCM in 2014-2024

Analysis of participant answers reveals that the majority of Fali Christian youths exhibit modest engagement in cross-cultural mission activity, with just a few actively engaged. Expressions such as "Few are participating; the majority are not," "Limited engagement," and "Minimal interest" exemplify the prevailing apathy or lack of dedication towards Cross-cultural mission initiatives. A historical comparison highlights this trend: "Before the Boko Haram crises, there were greater involvements," and "Less involved than during the missionaries' presence" indicate a notable decrease in engagement since 2014.

This decrease is linked not just to security issues but also to internal priorities and cultural orientation. Numerous youths concentrate their religious endeavours locally, stating, "Youths dedicated themselves to Gospel work in Fali, rather than beyond their tribe," and have a preference for pastoral activities inside their communities, noting, "An increasing number are engaged in pastoral work." Few individuals are inclined to serve as missionaries to other cultural groups. This trend suggests that cross-cultural mission involvement has taken a backseat to local religious obligations and social familiarity.

### 2. Factors affecting FCY participation in CCM

Some factors were mentioned by the interviewees as motivating (facilitating) the FCY mission participation. That there has been a decrease in inter-communal clashes and wars, as was the case a few decades back, "when the Fali had to stay back home to protect their boundaries". Another factor that was mentioned as a facilitating

one is the fact of more personal autonomy of the young individuals due to the reduced authority of traditional leaders within the communities. Teachings on purposeful living in the pursuit of the GC and the need for accountability before God came up, also.

Factors that hindered the FCY involvement were security and political unrest in the region due to the volatile nature of Boko haram terrorists, leading them to rest in the comfort of their own cultural setting, financial limitations and a lack, which led to the prioritisation of pursuit for material gains through “different forms of businesses as smuggling across the border”. Other factors were “low levels of education” among the Fali youths, as indicated also in the demography table, limited theological and missions training, coupled with “reduced emphasis on discipleship and spiritual formation”. These eroded their confidence to engage people of nearby tribes, whom they felt were inferior to them, because they lacked sufficient secular and theological education to have meaningful intercultural interactions.

### 3. Prospects for Fali Youth Involvement in CCM

**Table 2: Actionable possibilities for Fali Christian youths' participation in CCM.**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1.	More intentional teachings on the Great Commission and Missions in the churches	<b>119</b> <b>(79.3%)</b>	<b>29</b> <b>(19.3%)</b>	<b>1</b> <b>(0.7%)</b>	<b>1</b> <b>(0.7%)</b>	<b>3.77</b>
2.	More opportunities for Missionary and Theological Training within the area	<b>101</b> <b>(67.3%)</b>	<b>47</b> <b>(31.3%)</b>	<b>2</b> <b>(1.3%)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3.66</b>
3.	Financial support from the local church for youths to access Training	<b>113</b> <b>(75.3%)</b>	<b>34</b> <b>(22.7%)</b>	<b>3 (2%)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3.73</b>
4.	Community and Family support	<b>92</b> <b>(61.3%)</b>	<b>49</b> <b>(32.7%)</b>	<b>7</b> <b>(4.7%)</b>	<b>2</b> <b>(1.3%)</b>	<b>3.54</b>
5.	Option to go as Tentmaking missionaries to unreached people groups as opposed to being full -time and waiting for support	<b>88</b> <b>(58.7%)</b>	<b>53</b> <b>(35.3%)</b>	<b>7</b> <b>(4.7%)</b>	<b>2</b> <b>(1.3%)</b>	<b>3.51</b>
6.	Business as Mission Trainings to enable youths to keep the Great Commission mandate and make disciples in the marketplace	<b>105</b> <b>(70%)</b>	<b>41</b> <b>(27.3%)</b>	<b>3 (2%)</b>	<b>1</b> <b>(0.7%)</b>	<b>3.67</b>
7.	Sharing more stories of mission successes around the world to give them wider perspectives	<b>101</b> <b>(67.3%)</b>	<b>45</b> <b>(30%)</b>	<b>3 (2%)</b>	<b>1</b> <b>(0.7%)</b>	<b>3.64</b>
8.	Pursuing the option of engaging migrants and those displaced by insurgencies	<b>91</b> <b>(60.7%)</b>	<b>49</b> <b>(32.7%)</b>	<b>7</b> <b>(4.7%)</b>	<b>3 (2%)</b>	<b>3.52</b>
	Weighted Mean					<b>3.63</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 shows the findings on actions that should be taken to boost the prospects of Fali CY involvement in cross-cultural missions. In addition to interviewees' opinions, they typically enumerate the actions that will positively develop the Fali youths and increase their capacity to engage other people groups in intercultural interactions. Most prominent of these prospects are: an increase in investing in relevant teachings and ongoing spiritual formation for the youths, "facilitating tertiary and higher education", theological and missionary training, innovative "vocational skills acquisition possibilities", and structuring financial support from local churches for youths who wish to pursue missions. The finding indicates that when youths are affirmed by family and community as valued assets, they will participate more in worthy ventures in the community. In the light of the hostile environment orchestrated by Islamic extremists in the region, these youths should be equipped to use creative access methods such as tentmaking and relevant business start-ups as methods to engage other people groups for missions, and equip them for Diaspora missions among immigrants who settle near them.

### **Discussion of results and their implications**

#### **Current level of Participation of FCY in CCM and Factors Responsible for Reduction in Participation over time**

Participation of Fali youths in CCM activities has declined significantly since 2014, primarily due to security concerns and socio-political instability. Youths mostly concentrate on pastoral and local mission endeavours instead of cross-cultural interactions, indicating a culturally insular orientation. This implies that their willingness to carry out evangelism and pastoral work could be stepping stones to encourage further participation in missions to other tribes.

The results indicate that the limited participation of Fali Christian youths in cross-cultural missions is due also to a mix of contextual, economic, and spiritual constraints. Implications of comments such as "Significantly deficient in vocational skills, resulting in diminished confidence in social interactions", and "Language obstacles with other communities, particularly attributable to a low educational attainment", are that the Fali Christian youths whom the leaders are expecting to be involved in cross-cultural mission work, are not yet fully prepared in capacity for such. Their educational and theological attainment needs to be upgraded to build their capacity to interact meaningfully with the outside world. The comments by interviewees on the reduction in their spiritual formation within the years under study imply the need to focus on a vital requirement for mission work – spiritual life vibrancy.

Security issues, notably the Boko Haram conflict, have significantly influenced the readiness of young persons to risk crossing cultures. The interaction of material, educational, and spiritual elements, namely, economic priorities (varieties of business ventures to combat lack), inadequate education, and feeble discipleship, constitutes a trio of significant obstacles, which was intensified by the regional insecurity.

#### **Prospects for Greater Participation in Cross-cultural Missions applying PYD Theoretical frameworks**

Actionable possibilities are all the options that will be required to holistically develop a group of people: consistency of teaching and discipleship inputs, mentoring, coaching by leaders and family members, intentionally facilitating their interest and pursuit of higher secular and theological/mission education by the cross-cultural missionaries who initially taught them literacy and primary education. Other actionable possibilities were innovative methods of sending out missionaries, such as tentmaking, which can only be

successful when the youths themselves have acquired relevant vocational skills to confidently step out. To therefore assist the FCYs to positively develop holistically, mission leaders have to intentionally facilitate interventions that boost morale, self-esteem, educational capacity through career counselling, coaching programmes and offering of scholarships for exceptional youths. The PYD theory advocates for changes that can bring progress rather than sticking to the status quo in mission practices. Youths have ideas; and with proper guidance, a great level of leadership capacity development and ownership of the Great Commission will be achieved among FCYs.

The fact that Christian youths are available among Fali people is the greatest asset towards the prospect of their participation in any community or religious responsibilities (Mshebi and Beukes, 2024). Involving the youths in decision making and planning the missions programme has been found successful in other studies, so the prospects are high when this is done with Fali youths also (Msebi, 2022). Positive youth development theory and practice requiring deliberate focus on helping young persons to reach their full potential come as a relevant part of the preparatory process to unleash Fali youths for community and cross-cultural responsibilities. Benson's framework involves developing youths both internally and externally, including areas for mentors and coaches to work on, such as positive identity, social competencies, positive values, commitment to learning, constructive use of time, support, and empowerment, among others (Benson, 1997).

### **Conclusion**

This research acknowledged that the continuation of the works of the mission that has been started among the Fali people in Mubi, Adamawa, Nigeria, is possible because of the assets and resources called “Youths”. Though this study revealed a great decline in youths' involvement in cross-cultural mission work between 2014 and 2024, it also identified actionable possibilities for their increased involvement. As prospects and strategies identified are radically pursued for implementation, there will be positive changes in participation. The prospects for the youths are also the strategies for leaders of the organisations to work upon. These are: positive development of the Fali Christian youths educationally, in vocational skills, in spiritual renewal and mentoring, giving room for their participation, adopting changes that favour their full involvement as missionaries, as well as granting financial and moral support to them.

In conclusion, continuity structures must be put in place and given time to fully develop before recipients of the Gospel can be fully empowered to replicate the same elsewhere. The work of the cross-cultural missionaries, though well-spoken about by the Fali people, needs to take on the phase of radical inputs to develop Fali youths to the capacity to replicate the mission's mandate elsewhere.

### **Recommendations**

In response to the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. Leaders of mission agencies and churches involved in cross-cultural mission work among the Fali people in the Mubi area should revisit the issue of spiritual renewal and return to discipleship foundations among the churches, to secure a youth community who are committed enough to Biblical truths to be ready to propagate them.
2. Leaders should strategically set goals for personnel development that include promoting higher education beyond the secondary school level to raise quality missionaries of Fali origin that can boldly engage other and

more enlightened cultures.

3. Leaders should enhance youth development by initiating and supporting projects and programmes that value youth, teach life skills (including marriage, finances), vocational skills and any other empowerment skills that may be observed as needed.

4. Mission agencies and churches working among the Fali people of Mubi should individually or collaboratively establish standard missions training and theological schools of higher status than they presently have, to make room for quality equipping of workers for missions and ministry.

5. Creative-access ministry methods such as Tentmaking and Business as Mission should be normalised as sending templates for mission work in the organisations, to facilitate ease of doing missions within areas that have fundamentalist Islamist' terrorist operations, as well as help youths to pay their bills, thereby reducing hardships on mission fields.

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