Evangelizing Executives: A Case Study of Club Members in Nairobi, Kenya

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The purpose of this study was to examine evangelization of executives in Kenya. Specifically, the study sought: to establish the biblical and theological basis for evangelizing executives in Kenya; to evaluate the role of the executives both in the church and in the society; to establish the culture of the executives in Kenya; to examine the current approaches used by Christian groups and Church to evangelize the executives in Kenya; to investigate the challenges faced by Christian groups and churches in evangelizing the executives; and to recommend ways and strategies for the Christian Religious Education (CRE) curriculum to effectively reach out the executives in Kenya. The study was exploratory in nature and adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches. It was implemented through surveys of a sample of executives in Kenya and senior leaders of mainstream Churches in Nairobi. Four case studies of both church and unchurched executives were used to complement these surveys. The study was conducted in Nairobi with the main field research being carried out in members clubs. This study had two populations, namely Kenyan executives and the top leaders of the ten mainstream churches in Kenya. Simple random sampling procedure was used to select the sample respondents from membership registers obtained from various golf clubs. Ten senior most leaders from each of the ten mainstream churches in the country were further selected for the survey of evangelists. Primary data were collected through surveys while secondary data were collected through library research. Questionnaires and an interview guide were used as researcher instruments after pre-testing. Data collection was conducted by the researcher with the help of two trained research assistants. The data were analyzed by applying a mix of both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Quantitative data were summarized and presented using graphs, charts and frequency tables. This was done to exemplify main trends that were derived from certain concrete responses. The quantitative data for this study were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data were analyzed through content analysis. This exercise involved classifying data into key themes, patterns and relationships. Propositions and conclusion were then made based on the apparent patterns or relationship within the data. The findings of
the study established that the Bible emphasizes on the need for theologians to preach out to all categories of people (including executives) so that they can be drawn closer to Christ. The task of the evangelist is to proclaim and explain the gospel (Romans 10: 14-15; Acts 8:35; Luke 24: 47, 32; 2 Timothy 4: 2-5; 1 Timothy 4: 13). Hence, evangelizing executives has a theological and biblical basis. Secondly, the findings identified the roles of the executives in the church along five broad categories namely: implementing values, monitoring, evangelization, giving resources and leading the church. Mentorship and evangelization were cited as the leading roles of executives. Thirdly, the study established that the executive class in the Kenya society is characterized by highly salaried professionals, business persons and the chief executives. They are financially able to provide financial support for various church programmes, especially evangelism. The effective means of reaching out the executives that were identified include Christian literature, story books/novels, newspapers, inspirational or motivational literature, golf/sports, social events, movies, televisions, expeditions and family outings. Their business cultures provide a good platform for the Church and other religious groups to evangelize executives. The understanding of their culture provides three areas of concern from which they can be approached for evangelization. They include: knowledge, character and tactics. The study further identified various approaches that can be applied by churches and Christian groups in evangelizing executives. The study found a number of challenges faced by churches and Christian groups in evangelizing executives. Unavailability of executives due to their tight and busy schedules has hindered the churches’ outreach programmes. Some of the executives demonstrate resistance and lack of acceptance to the gospel. The prevalence of strong social divides, discrimination on basis of socio-cultural, ethnic, and religious lines has in some instances scuttled efforts by churches to evangelize executives. Finally the study proposes a number of measures that the churches and Christian groups need to address to effectively evangelize executives. In addition, a design of a Christian Religious Education curriculum has been proposed with the view of supporting some of the proposed recommendations.