

SOWING THE SEEDS OF FAITH: DEVELOPING A WESLEYAN IDENTITY-BASED CHURCH PLANTING MISSION CURRICULUM FOR SUSTAINABLE MINISTRY

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Abstract

Sustainable church planting remains a challenge for The United Methodist Church (UMC) in the Northwest Philippines Annual Conference (NWPAC), as many initiatives struggle with long-term viability, community engagement, and responsible resource management. This study addressed these issues by developing a church planting mission curriculum rooted in Wesleyan identity, integrating theological education with sustainability principles in promoting stewardship, social responsibility, and community transformation. The study utilized the Grounded Theory methodology (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) through a video- and audio-documented semi-structured interview, engaging 18 church leaders (six lay leaders and twelve ordained elders) across six districts of NWPAC. Participants represented diverse leadership backgrounds, particularly in church planting endeavors, and came from various geographic contexts across the Ilocos Region, La Union Province, Cordillera Region, and Eastern Pangasinan, where Ilocano is the dominant language. The research resulted in the grounded theory, “A Way Forward: PANAGMULA Church Planting Mission Curriculum”, which is a framework built on eight core elements: (1) Planning and Implementation; (2) Analysis of Ministry Areas; (3) Navigating Impediments; (4) Assessment Frameworks; (5) Grounded Methodology; (6) Missiological Identity; (7) Utilizing Church Mission Dynamics; and (8) Local Engagement & Adaptive Strategies. This curriculum is firmly grounded in biblical and Wesleyan theological principles—such as social holiness, the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, and the Great Commission. This study contributes to theological education for sustainability by offering an innovative curriculum model that balances faith formation with practical mission strategies. By emphasizing holistic mission engagement, local resource stewardship, and practical sustainability strategies, PANAGMULA equips church leaders to plant churches that respond to social concerns while maintaining Wesleyan Missiological identity. The PANAGMULA curriculum provides a contextually relevant and theologically sound approach to church planting that addresses the specific needs of the NWPAC. By integrating varying leadership backgrounds, different strategies for social and cultural contexts, and Wesleyan identity, the curriculum effectively supports sustainable church planting efforts. This research recommends further validation of the PANAGMULA Church Planting Curriculum across different cultural and socio-economic contexts, particularly in urban and rural church planting missions. Also, a longitudinal study is recommended to assess the long-term effectiveness of PANAGMULA in sustaining church growth and leadership development. Lastly, that this curriculum be utilized and be adapted by NWPAC and other Annual conferences for contextual validation and longitudinal study.

Key Words

Church Planting, Wesleyan Identity, Sustainable Ministry, Theological Education, Stewardship, Social Responsibility

Introduction

The United Methodist Church (UMC) in the Philippines is actively engaging in church planting mission since the beginning of the Methodist mission movement in 1898 (History of the UMC in Asia, 2019) to spread the gospel and nurture disciples of Jesus Christ. The Philippine Central Conference (PCC) provides the vision, mission, and objectives to direct the mission programs of the Baguio Episcopal Area (BEA) (Torio, 2022). The PCC is divided into three Episcopal areas (Baguio, Manila, and Davao), comprising 26 annual conferences (Imagining the Future: Philippines Context, 2021). The BEA consists of nine annual conferences (Ocampo, 2022), one of which is the Northwest Philippines Annual Conference (NWPAC), composed of 118 local churches divided into six districts namely: Northern Ilocos Mission (NIMD); Ilocos North (IND); Ilocos South (ISD); Cordillera Mission (CMD); Northeast Pangasinan (NEPD); and Southeast Pangasinan (SEPD), which translates to the Ilocos Region, La Union Province, Cordillera Region, and Eastern Pangasinan, where Ilocano is the dominant language (Torio, 2019). Although the Episcopal leadership presents the core principles of the mission programs, the execution of these initiatives—particularly the church planting mission—relies on the annual conference, districts, and local church levels, resulting to insufficiency in contextualized guides, strategies, and methods (Torio, 2022). Sustainable church planting remains a challenge in the NWPAC, as many initiatives struggle due to a lack of contextualized curriculum, inadequate leadership training, and limited community engagement (Torio, 2022). Despite the historical strength of church planting efforts in the Philippines, particularly among

Annual Conference (NWPAC). This challenge manifests in several critical areas:

First, there is a lack of contextualized curriculum for church planters. While the Episcopal leadership provides core principles for mission programs, the execution of church planting initiatives relies on the annual conference, district, and local church levels without contextualized guides, strategies, and methodologies to address the socio-cultural context of the Ilocos Region, La Union Province, Cordillera Region, and Eastern Pangasinan. Second, many church planting efforts struggle with long-term viability due to inadequate leadership development systems. Church planters often enter mission fields without proper training in both theological foundations and practical ministry skills, leading to inconsistent results and mission sustainability issues. Third, limited community engagement approaches have hindered the effectiveness of church planting initiatives. Many church plants fail to establish meaningful connections with their surrounding communities, resulting in isolated congregations that struggle to attract and retain members. Fourth, church planting efforts frequently encounter resource management challenges, including financial constraints, limited human resources, and inefficient stewardship practices. These challenges are particularly evident in rural areas and economically disadvantaged communities within the NWPAC. Lastly, there is a gap between Wesleyan theological identity and practical mission strategies. Many church planters struggle to translate this identity into contextualized mission approaches to local communities. Hence, this research addresses these interconnected challenges by developing a comprehensive, contextually appropriate church planting mission curriculum rooted in Wesleyan identity, specifically designed for the NWPAC context. The PANAGMULA curriculum aims to equip church leaders with the necessary theological foundations, strategic planning tools,

Protestant and Evangelical movements (Agcaoili, 2018; Carpio, 2018), sustainable church planting remains a significant challenge for the United Methodist Church in the Northwest Philippines

and practical ministry skills to establish sustainable church plants that promote community transformation and spiritual growth. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Examine the demographic and leadership profiles of church leaders engaged in church planting within NWPAC.
2. Identify contextual factors influencing church planting mission sustainability in the region.
3. Establish the biblical and theological foundations for a Wesleyan-based church planting mission curriculum.
4. Determine effective methodologies and strategies for equipping leaders in leadership formation, resource management, and community engagement on church planting.
5. Analyze the challenges hindering sustainable church planting in NWPAC.
6. Develop a structured and adaptable church planting curriculum that is contextually relevant, theologically sound, and sustainable model for mission work.

Methods

Research Design

This study utilized the Grounded Theory based on the methodology of Strauss and Corbin (1998) in developing the Church Planting Mission Curriculum rooted in Wesleyan Identity by identifying key components of a sustainable church planting curriculum through the qualitative data from church leaders in the Northwest Philippines Annual Conference (NWPAC).

Population, Samples, and Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was used to select 18 church leaders from six districts of NWPAC: 12 Ordained Elders (District Superintendents, Administrative Pastors, Mission Pastors, and Bible Translators).

6 Lay Leaders (Annual and District-Level Lay Leaders, Retired Deaconesses, Mission-based Lay people, and Christian Educators).

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted between May and June 2024 via face-to-face and virtual (Zoom) meetings. All interviews were video and audio-recorded, transcribed, and validated through linguistic cross-checking by experts fluent in Ilocano, Filipino, and English.

Data Analysis: Coding Process

1. Open Coding – Data from interviews with eighteen (18) church leaders (six lay leaders and twelve ordained elders) were analyzed line-by-line to identify key concepts, codes, and patterns. These initial codes captured cyclical ideas related to sustainable church planting and theological education.

2. Axial Coding – The open codes were then grouped into categories based on relationships and interactions between them through the six dimensions: (1) Causal Conditions - What causes the issue; (2) Phenomena - What is the core challenge; (3) Strategies - How is the issue addressed; (4) Consequences - What happens when strategies are applied; (5) Context - Where and how does this issue manifest; (6) Intervening Conditions - What external factors affect this. This phase helped establish the main codes that define the PANAGMULA Curriculum, ensuring that theoretical connections were drawn between theology, sustainability, and mission strategy.

3. Selective Coding – The core category of sustainable Wesleyan-based church planting was identified, integrating all the subcategories into a systematic theoretical framework. This process led to the development of the “A Way Forward: PANAGMULA Church Planting Mission Curriculum”, capturing the essential components required for effective and sustainable church planting ministry.

Validity and Reliability

Pilot Testing: The interview guide was pre-tested with three non-respondent church leaders to ensure clarity and relevance.

Triangulation: Findings were validated through cross-analysis of transcripts, recordings, and expert reviews.

Saturation: Data collection ceased once no new themes emerged, ensuring that the analysis reached theoretical saturation.

Ethical Considerations

All participants gave informed consent, and interviews were recorded with their approval. To maintain confidentiality, participants were assigned coded identifiers (R1, R2, etc.). This study adhered to the ethical research guidelines of Philippine Christian University, as overseen by the Institute for Research, Innovation, and Sustainability.

Results

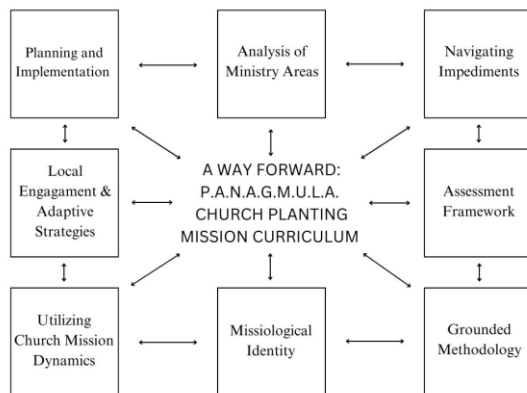


Figure 1. The Grounded Theory

Selective Coding: Grounded Theory

The PANAGMULA curriculum, derived from the Ilocano term meaning planting, serves as the foundation for a sustainable and socially responsible approach to church planting. The grounded theory from selective coding was derived from the axial coding that formed the essential structure of this curriculum:

P - Planning and Implementation – Establishing clear and strategic mission objectives.

A - Analysis of Ministry Areas – Conducting contextual assessments of mission fields.

N - Navigating Impediments – Identifying and addressing challenges in mission execution.

A - Assessment Framework – Developing measurable indicators for mission progress.

G - Grounded Methodology – Ensuring theological and missiological integrity.

M - Missiological Identity – Embedding Wesleyan spirituality in church planting.

U - Utilizing Church Mission Dynamics – Maximizing leadership and resource management.

L - Local Engagement – Strengthening community relationships for long-term impact.

A - Adaptive Strategies – Adjusting mission approaches to evolving societal needs.

Axial Coding

Planning and Implementation (P)

Effective church planting requires strategic mission planning to ensure alignment with both spiritual objectives and sustainable development. The research identified the following key components:

Clear mission goals: Respondents emphasized the need for well-defined church planting objectives. One leader stated, *“Without a clear mission, we risk ineffective church planting.”* (R11).

Step-by-step execution: Another respondent noted, *“We need a structured process—training, deployment, and follow-up.”* (R6).

Planning ensures that resources, leadership, and time are optimally utilized to create lasting church communities.

The causal condition is the necessity of an optimal missional strategy, as different communities require distinct approaches to church planting. As R6 explained, *“There are different practical approaches depending on the location—urban centers require different strategies from rural areas. Some communities need home-based fellowships, while others thrive with a formal church structure.”* This led to the

phenomenon of practical implementation, where mission workers must ensure that strategic planning is not only well-formulated but also effectively executed. To address this, the strategy developed was community engagement and relationship building, emphasizing the importance of establishing strong connections with local leaders and residents before implementing church planting initiatives. As R9 stated, *“Before planting a church, we must first conduct leadership training and immersion to ensure that the people involved truly understand the mission and their role in it.”* The consequence of this engagement is network enhancement, where well-established community relationships increase the likelihood of mission success and long-term church sustainability. R10 reinforced this, stating, *“People are more likely to support and join a mission effort when they see that the church is genuinely involved in their community and not just an outsider initiative.”* The context of strategic planning varies significantly across rural and urban settings, requiring flexible methodologies. R15 noted, *“Urban church planting is different from rural mission work. In cities, people are busy, and evangelism must be more relational and event-driven, while in rural areas, building trust takes longer but creates deeper connections.”* However, denominational openness and inclusivity act as intervening conditions, influencing how missions are received in different communities. As R12 emphasized, *“Being non-exclusive in our mission approach allows us to reach more people who might otherwise hesitate to join because of denominational barriers.”* The responses emphasized the need for strategic adaptability in church planting efforts, ensuring that mission initiatives align with community needs, are well-planned, and have strong local support.

Analysis of Ministry Areas (A)

Contextual assessment is crucial before launching a church planting mission. The study revealed:

Demographic studies: One respondent shared, *“We must understand the social, economic, and cultural landscape before engaging in mission work.”* (R3).

Spiritual needs assessment: *“Church planting should respond to the specific spiritual needs of the community.”* (R17).

By conducting a comprehensive ministry area analysis, churches ensure that their planting efforts address the real needs of people rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach.

The causal condition is the need to recognize discrepancies that affect church planting missions. Differences in spiritual life, human resources, and financial capacity often hinder sustainable ministry growth. As R2 pointed out, *“United prayer is essential to achieve church growth. That is often emphasized—sometimes, the anointing of the Lord is being called for. Without the power of the Holy Spirit, there is no ability to convince people.”* Similarly, R3 highlighted the lack of available human resources, stating, *“We are struggling with church planting, and our human resources are limited. There is no one available to work, and we no longer have pastors.”* The phenomenon of church mapping emerged as a response to these discrepancies, enabling mission workers to analyze and address community needs effectively. R4 explained, *“What people are truly looking for and what they need must be identified.”* Meanwhile, R1 stressed the importance of structured planning, stating, *“It is important to truly identify the need. How can this be fulfilled to meet the requirements? How can it be applied? How should it be done? What's the next step? There needs to be a follow-up to maintain the true purpose.”* As a strategy, geographic assessment was implemented to ensure that church planting initiatives align with the specific needs and conditions of each location. The consequence of this strategy is strategic execution, leading to more effective and contextually relevant church plants. The context

of these efforts requires sociological sensitivity, as R4 noted, *“You won’t truly understand something without immersion. We need to immerse ourselves first. This way, when faced with certain situations, we can respond appropriately instead of just assuming. We should immerse ourselves in these communities, get to know the people, understand their lives, and learn how many they are.”* Lastly, local engagement serves as an intervening condition, as active participation in the community strengthens mission efforts. R3 emphasized the need for direct involvement, stating, *“Go to the place. How many people are you targeting? Once you have identified your targets, they need to be oriented. We have a plan like this, especially if you want to evangelize. It is essential to have an evangelistic program in place.”* R10 further advocated for an ecumenical approach, noting, *“People don’t really care about labels. What matters is how the movement affects their lives and provides purpose. When they see that it contributes positively, they are more likely to engage.”* The responses emphasized the need for deep relational engagement in ministry efforts.

Navigating Impediments (N)

Church planting faces multiple challenges, including financial constraints, leadership gaps, and resistance to change. Respondents identified several strategies for overcoming these barriers: Leadership training: *“Many church planters struggle due to inadequate leadership skills.”* (R12).

Sustainable funding models: *“Financial limitations can be overcome through community-based support systems.”* (R9).

Community acceptance: *“Resistance is reduced when local engagement is prioritized.”* (R5).

A strategic approach to navigating impediments allows churches to proactively address mission challenges and ensure long-term sustainability.

The causal condition is the existence of financial constraints, leadership gaps, and external

challenges that hinder sustainable church planting. As R9 stated, *“When it comes to limitations, the first thing that always comes to my mind is money. It is what limits us even if we want to do something, especially if there is nothing to use.”* This underscores the phenomenon of church planting being hindered by these obstacles. R1 further elaborated, *“There are things that will cause hindrances or problems in church planting or mission work.”* Similarly, R8 acknowledged that such impediments may lead to setbacks, noting, *“Along the way, we may encounter struggles; we might stumble because we are not perfect enough to plant a church.”* To address these challenges, the strategy of church resource optimization was developed to ensure that existing assets, both financial and human, are utilized effectively. R6 emphasized the lack of lay involvement in mission programs, stating, *“Lay involvement is what is lacking.”* This gap often places a heavy burden on church leaders, as R15 noted, *“As a lay leader of the district, I am also a mother, a businesswoman, and a partner. Balancing these responsibilities is challenging.”* The consequence of addressing these impediments through proper resource management is productive mission deployment, ensuring that church plants remain sustainable despite obstacles. However, the context of these challenges varies depending on institutional structures. R13 highlighted personal struggles that contribute to mission difficulties: *“You also become weak. That is why there are so many challenges—your problems with yourself, your problems with others, and your problems at work.”* Lastly, congregational care and support serve as an intervening condition, as a strong support system within the church community can help leaders and missionaries endure these challenges.

Assessment Framework (A)

To measure success in church planting, clear evaluation criteria must be established. The study identified key performance indicators, such as:

Discipleship growth: *“Church growth should not be measured by numbers alone but by transformed lives.”* (R7).

Mission impact: *“A successful church plant impacts its community beyond spiritual aspects.”* (R10).

By developing a structured assessment framework, church leaders can ensure that church planting initiatives remain effective, and mission driven.

The causal condition is the need for intentional church planting mission engagement. Many respondents emphasized that mission work requires a structured and guided approach. As R5 stated, *“Church planting is about strengthening and growing the church’s mission; without a clear vision, the people will struggle.”* This aligns with the phenomenon of seeing the church planting curriculum as an educational resource that provides direction and structure. R1 illustrated this by comparing it to formal education: *“In schools, there is a curriculum to make learning easier. In church planting, a structured curriculum helps leaders understand their role and responsibilities.”* Similarly, R3 stressed the importance of having a framework, stating, *“There must be a guide or blueprint to follow when establishing and expanding a church.”* To achieve this, the strategy implemented was critical needs analysis in church planting initiatives, ensuring that mission efforts are tailored to community needs. As R10 described, *“At the start, we call them mission churches. We conduct Bible studies and visitations to assess the needs of the people before fully establishing a church.”* The consequence of this approach is enhanced church planting efficacy, as leaders are equipped with the knowledge to sustain and expand their missions. As R14 noted, *“A clear structure allows for*

better implementation and alignment with a unified goal.” The context for assessment frameworks requires contextualization, as church planting efforts must adapt to specific cultural, geographical, and societal conditions. R7 reinforced this by stating, *“Where there is no vision, the people will perish. A structured mission framework ensures that church planting remains relevant and impactful.”* However, organizational structure serves as an intervening condition, influencing how effectively the curriculum is implemented. Institutional policies, denominational regulations, and leadership engagement can either facilitate or hinder the success of mission efforts.

Grounded Methodology (G)

A solid theological and missiological foundation is crucial for ensuring that church planting remains biblically sound. Respondents emphasized:

Scriptural basis: *“Church planting is rooted in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).”* (R1).

Wesleyan spirituality: *“The Wesleyan Quadrilateral helps us balance Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience in mission work.”* (R4).

By ensuring that church planting follows a grounded methodology, churches maintain theological integrity and practical relevance.

The causal condition stems from the diverse socio-cultural landscapes in which church planting occurs, requiring an approach that is deeply rooted in local realities. As R3 observed, *“Each location presents unique challenges—different traditions, cultures, and beliefs must be considered.”* This led to the phenomenon of recognizing the need for contextual adaptation, where mission workers emphasized the importance of understanding local customs and spiritual practices before establishing church work. The strategy that emerged was community immersion, wherein church planters engage with

locals before formalizing mission efforts. As R7 shared, *“When people see that we are part of their daily lives, they are more open to receiving the gospel.”* The consequence of this strategy is a higher acceptance rate for new church plants, fostering stronger relationships within the community. The context of this methodology varies between rural and urban settings, where mission receptivity differs significantly. Additionally, government policies, denominational structures, and socio-political climates act as intervening conditions, influencing how successfully church planters integrate into a given community

Missiological Identity (M)

The Wesleyan heritage provides a distinct missiological identity that shapes mission efforts. Respondents stressed:

Personal and social holiness: *“John Wesley’s mission approach was holistic—spiritual and social transformation go hand in hand.”* (R14).

Servant leadership: *“Church planters must embody humility and service.”* (R16).

A strong missiological identity fosters sustainability, resilience, and community impact. The causal condition is the need to establish a firm theological foundation for church planting efforts, ensuring that missions remain consistent with Wesleyan theology. As R6 stated, *“Church planting is not just about expansion—it must reflect our Wesleyan identity.”* This led to the phenomenon of integrating theological education within mission work, emphasizing the importance of Scripture, Tradition, Experience, and Reason as guiding principles. The strategy developed was the inclusion of doctrine-based training for church planters, ensuring that theological integrity is maintained. As R9 explained, *“A well-equipped missionary is one who has a strong foundation in doctrine.”* The consequence is a clearer theological identity among church planters, reducing the risk of doctrinal inconsistencies. The context for this

category varies, as different church leaders have different levels of theological literacy, requiring flexible training approaches. However, denominational policies and accessibility to theological resources act as intervening conditions, influencing how effectively this training can be implemented.

Utilizing Church Mission Dynamics (U)

Church planting requires effective resource and leadership management. Respondents suggested: Mobilizing laity: *“Church workers cannot do it alone; lay leaders must be equipped for mission work.”* (R11).

Strategic partnerships: *“Collaboration with local churches strengthens mission impact.”* (R15).

By maximizing church mission dynamics, church planting efforts become more efficient and community driven.

The causal condition is the need to optimize available resources in mission work. As R12 noted, *“Often, we lack manpower and funding, so we must use what we have efficiently.”* This led to the phenomenon of focusing on mission structures that maximize existing resources, ensuring sustainability. The strategy developed was the promotion of lay leadership and bivocational ministry, allowing more individuals to contribute to church growth without over-relying on full-time pastors. The consequence is the optimized use of church resources, reducing dependency on external funding. The context of this category varies between small and large congregations, each requiring different resource management strategies. However, denominational policies, volunteer availability, and support networks act as intervening conditions that affect resource allocation.

Local Engagement (L) and Adaptive Strategies (A)

Sustainable church planting requires strong community relationships and flexible strategies. Respondents highlighted:

Relational evangelism: *“The best way to plant a church is not just by building structures but by planting faith in people’s hearts.”* (R11).

Contextual adaptation: *“Each community is unique; mission strategies must be adaptable.”* (R18).

By prioritizing local engagement and adaptability, churches ensure long-term sustainability and meaningful impact.

The causal condition for is the recognition of the specific needs of different communities, as church planting should not focus solely on religious expansion but also on addressing societal concerns. As R2 explained, *“Mission work is not just about planting churches; it is also about responding to the needs of the community.”*

The phenomenon observed was the integration of mission efforts with social development initiatives, such as education, healthcare, and livelihood programs. The strategy that emerged was the adoption of flexible mission models, enabling church planters to modify their methods to fit different community structures. As R8 highlighted, *“In some areas, house churches work better; in others, a formal church structure is necessary.”* The consequence of this adaptability is a higher sustainability rate for church plants, as communities take ownership of mission efforts. Contextually, engagement strategies must align with local economic and social realities, ensuring that mission work is relevant and impactful. However, local government support, interfaith relations, and economic conditions serve as intervening factors that affect the success of community engagement.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that sustainable church planting requires a structured yet adaptable framework, integrating theological foundations with strategic mission planning. The PANAGMULA Church Planting Mission Curriculum, derived through Grounded Theory methodology, presents an innovative model that

addresses the leadership, contextual, and sustainability challenges in church planting within the Northwest Philippines Annual Conference (NWPAC).

Key Findings Aligned with Research Objectives

1. Leadership Profiles and Contextual Challenges
One of the primary objectives of this study was to examine the demographic and leadership profiles of church leaders engaged in church planting and to identify contextual factors influencing mission sustainability. The findings reveal that church planters in NWPAC come from diverse backgrounds, including ordained elders, lay leaders, deaconesses, and Bible translators. However, a lack of standardized training and contextual adaptation often leads to inconsistent mission outcomes.

From the Axial Coding analysis, the categories of Assessment Framework (A) and Analysis of Ministry Areas (A) were identified as crucial in addressing these challenges. Respondents emphasized the need for structured leadership development programs that integrate theological education, contextual assessments, and leadership mentoring to ensure that church planters are adequately prepared. Many respondents specifically highlighted training gaps in administrative leadership, pastoral care, and resource management, emphasizing the need for curriculum-based instruction to strengthen these areas. These gaps indicate a disconnect between theological education and practical leadership skills, reinforcing the need for integrated training programs that equip church planters with both spiritual formation and operational competencies. This emphasis on leadership preparation directly connects to the importance of theological and missiological identity in shaping church planting strategies, which is explored in the next section

2. Biblical and Theological Foundations for Church Planting

The second objective sought to establish the biblical and theological foundations for a sustainable church planting curriculum. The findings reaffirm the importance of Wesleyan missiological identity in guiding mission work. Respondents frequently cited the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) as the theological basis for evangelism and discipleship, while the Wesleyan Quadrilateral (Scripture, Tradition, Experience, and Reason) was emphasized as a critical tool for contextual theological reflection in mission work.

Through Axial Coding, the categories of Grounded Methodology (G) and Missiological Identity (M) emerged as essential components of the PANAGMULA framework. Respondents emphasized the importance of maintaining theological integrity while ensuring that mission strategies remain flexible and culturally relevant. As one respondent stated:

"John Wesley's mission approach was holistic—spiritual and social transformation go hand in hand." (R14)

This aligns with Bevans & Schroeder's (2011) concept of Prophetic Dialogue, which argues that effective mission work requires a balance between doctrinal faithfulness and contextual engagement.

3. Effective Strategies for Sustainable Church Planting

Another objective of this study was to determine effective methodologies and strategies for equipping church leaders in sustainable church planting. The findings reveal that strategic planning, community engagement, and adaptive leadership are essential for long-term success.

The Axial Coding categories of Planning and Implementation (P), Navigating Impediments (N), and Utilizing Church Mission Dynamics (U) directly relate to this objective. Respondents highlighted that structured training, clear mission goals, and community-based leadership models improve mission outcomes.

One respondent emphasized:

"Without a clear mission, we risk ineffective church planting." (R11)

This aligns with Cass (2020), who argues that church planting efforts require strategic alignment with long-term mission objectives to ensure sustainability. Furthermore, findings show that financial challenges, leadership gaps, and community resistance remain significant obstacles. The study suggests that these can be overcome through localized leadership training, sustainable funding models, and contextual evangelism strategies.

4. Comparative Insights from Methodist Churches in Global Perspective

The findings demonstrate that global Methodist mission practices consistently emphasize adaptability, leadership development, and resource optimization, all of which are crucial for sustainable church planting. In Africa, United Methodist churches face economic sustainability challenges but have developed resilient mission strategies through strong communal leadership models (Wambugu et al., 2022). This parallels PANAGMULA's emphasis on Local Engagement (L) and Utilizing Church Mission Dynamics (U) to cultivate a sense of ownership and mission commitment within congregations. Similarly, Latin American UMC churches integrate social justice and grassroots involvement into their missions, addressing socio-economic inequalities through advocacy and community programs (Seneque et al., 2021). This reflects the Missiological Identity (M) and Analysis Ministry Areas (A) aspects of PANAGMULA, reinforcing the importance of holistic mission approaches. Meanwhile, Methodist churches in Southeast Asia navigate diverse socio-political landscapes by utilizing adaptive strategies that balance urban and rural mission efforts (Mutwiri & Kinoti, 2022). This aligns with PANAGMULA's Planning and Implementation (P) and Adaptive Strategies (A), demonstrating the necessity of cultural sensitivity and flexible mission frameworks. The integration

of these comparative insights validates the relevance of PANAGMULA as a globally applicable church planting curriculum.

Practical Theological Contributions

This study makes a significant contribution to practical theology by bridging the gap between theological education and mission strategy.

1. **Seminary Curricula:** Theological institutions can incorporate PANAGMULA's eight core elements into pastoral training programs, ensuring that future church planters are equipped with both missiological grounding and strategic leadership skills. In particular, these components can help theological institutions design mission courses that focus on contextual adaptation, ensuring that church planters are equipped to navigate diverse cultural and socio-economic landscapes.
2. **Church Leadership Training:** Annual Conferences can develop workshops and continuing education modules based on PANAGMULA, helping local church leaders adapt mission strategies to their specific contexts.
3. **Mission Planning:** Church organizations can use PANAGMULA as a structured blueprint for evaluating church planting efforts, ensuring sustainability and alignment with Wesleyan missiology. Annual Conferences may implement PANAGMULA as part of their mission planning through strategic workshops, district-level assessments, and annual evaluations of church planting effectiveness.

The PANAGMULA curriculum provides a structured approach to training church planters, ensuring that both theological identity and leadership skills are emphasized. By integrating strategic planning (P, A), theological and missiological integrity (G, M), and community engagement and adaptability (L, A, U) while navigating the missional challenges (N), this

model offers a sustainable, faith-driven curriculum for church planting. Its application extends beyond the NWPAC context, providing a systematic yet flexible guide for mission organizations, theological institutions, and local churches seeking to strengthen their church planting efforts.

Limitations and Future Research

While this study provides a strong foundation for sustainable church planting, several limitations must be acknowledged. Since this research focused on NWPAC, its findings may not fully capture the variability in church planting dynamics across other Philippine annual conferences or international settings. Further studies should validate the PANAGMULA framework across different cultural and socio-economic contexts to enhance its applicability. Secondly, a longitudinal study is recommended to assess the long-term effectiveness of PANAGMULA in sustaining church growth and leadership development. Thirdly, given the increasing urbanization of mission fields, future research should explore how PANAGMULA can be adapted for urban church planting, where socio-economic challenges and ministry dynamics differ from rural settings. Lastly, that this curriculum be utilized and be adapted by NWPAC and other Annual conferences for contextual validation and longitudinal study. Addressing these limitations will enhance the applicability and effectiveness of PANAGMULA as a model for sustainable church planting.

Conclusion

The PANAGMULA Church Planting Mission Curriculum offers a comprehensive, contextually relevant framework for sustainable church planting, integrating theological education with practical mission strategies. By integrating strategic planning, theological grounding, and adaptive leadership strategies, this model ensures that mission work remains both impactful and

sustainable. Future research should explore the adaptability of PANAGMULA across diverse cultural and socio-economic settings, reinforcing the role of theological education in sustainable missions. Additionally, examining its impact on leadership development and church governance would further broaden its application beyond church planting strategies. Additionally, exploring PANAGMULA's potential for digital and hybrid theological education could offer innovative pathways for training church planters in both urban and remote areas. Further studies could examine PANAGMULA's potential ecumenical applications, exploring how its principles might inform interdenominational mission collaborations. Considering the growing emphasis on social justice and environmental stewardship in contemporary theology, PANAGMULA's framework can also be expanded to integrate ecological sustainability in church planting, ensuring that new faith communities serve both spiritual and environmental responsibilities.

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