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Editorial

"Kingdom Movements": Perceptions, Analyses, and Realities

J. Nelson Jennings

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Since Evangelical Christianity further consolidated itself organizationally a half-century ago and distanced itself—on global, regional, national, and local levels—from the World Council of Churches, certain key themes have galvanized Evangelicals' missions attention. "Unreached People Groups" (UPGs) took center stage after Ralph Winter's "The Highest Priority: Cross-Cultural Evangelism" presentation at Lausanne I in 1974. By 1990 the "10/40 Window" had begun to provide more geographic and strategic focus to reaching UPGs, and the "AD 2000 Movement" dovetailed with many Evangelicals' eschatological hopes to give further urgency, plus a target date, for "finishing the task" of world evangelization. Upon entering the new millennium, "Diaspora Missiology" soon became a prominent theme of many missions conferences and publications.

The most recent theme that has drawn the attention of many evangelical missions leaders and groups has been labeled "Church Planting Movements," "Disciple Making Movements," or "Kingdom Movements"—the theme of this issue of *Global Missiology – English*. Several other publications have taken up this theme over the past several years, including multiple issues of *Mission Frontiers* (MF). For example, MF's March-April 2020 issue theme was "Movements: God's Way of Reaching Entire Peoples" (Frontier Ventures 2020). In his editorial, Rick Wood notes that "movements [are] the new popular thing in missions" (Wood 2020), while in the same issue Kevin Higgins quips that "we are in the midst of a 'movement movement'" (Higgins 2020). Throughout evangelical missiological publications, many authors point to David Garrison (particularly his 2004 *Church Planting Movements*) as having brought the notion and reality of "movements" to the forefront of evangelical missions strategizing.

It should be noted as well that *Global Missiology – English* has previously carried several articles concerned with movements, including feature articles pro and con in the October 2014 issue (Global Missiology 2014). This January 2022 issue is devoted solely to the "movements" theme, while of course in no way attempting to give the subject an exhaustive treatment. The seven articles here all take a positive, participatory stance and address such facets as socio-economic factors, methodologies, objections and misunderstandings, and leadership. Extensive and special research projects underpin several of the studies presented.

Critics and skeptics may see the current evangelical missions "movement movement" as little more than the latest fad that will soon morph into the next decade-long obsession. Proponents counter with, "Movements to Christ have always been the way that God has reached entire peoples. While movements have become much more frequent in our day, they are not new. They have been a continual reality for two millennia..." (Wood 2020); and, "Movements are not new. And indeed, one way to understand and read the New Testament is as a combination of case studies of the earliest movements to Jesus: the headwaters of all subsequent movements" (Higgins 2020). Once you catch on to how prevalent Kingdom Movements are actually occuring, advocates assert, you begin to see that such movements are indeed "God's Way of Reaching Entire Peoples"—a goal

which, the exhortation goes, is not only the ultimate goal of missions but should be the keystone of biblical hermeneutics and Christian living.

Once claims are made about new keys to understanding Scripture, Christian history, and living as followers of Jesus Christ—in this case a "movement" key—Michael Stroope's caution about *eisegesis* can be a helpful corrective: "The primacy of the Word of God demands we begin with the revelation of God rather than extra-biblical language freighted with modern ideas of organization, strategy, and funding" (Stroope 2019, 164). Stroope is speaking here about the even more basic notion and language of "mission" (and presumably he would concur with noting the importance of *vernacular* Scripture, à la Kwame Bediako, in working through whether certain language is "extra-biblical" or not), but the caution to examine underlying notions of "movement" is relevant. Just as "The ethos and spirit of modernity, with its unexamined values of progress, individualism, cause and effect, and commodification, are hardwired into mission" (Stroope 2019, 167), might it also be the case that evangelical mission leaders' perceptions and analyses of "movements" are fraught, to varying and nuanced degrees, with some of that same modern ethos and spirit? Thankfully a helpful overarching banner comes from the explicit conviction, shared among proponents and critics alike, of the Holy Spirit's sovereign initiative and work in bringing the good news of Jesus to all peoples so that Christ's entire, universal body of peoples throughout the world may be gathered and built up.

One area of further study (not taken up in either this issue of *Global Missiology – English* or, apparently, other relevant literature) is the overlap between how "revivals" and "movements" both are understood and in actuality occur. One or the other category is regularly used, sometimes about the same event—e.g., the rise of Methodism under John Wesley, the early-twentieth-century explosive growth of Korean Christianity—but hardly ever with an awareness of how the two notions might mutually inform each other. For example, could contemporary large-scale, multi-generational movements of Muslims to Christ also be understood as "revivals"? Would trying to do so cast light on the "pre-Christian" status of Muslims and indeed of all peoples throughout the world? Or what benefits might come from categorizing the 1920s-1930s East African Revival also as a "movement," using that current label's marks, catalyzing factors, and evaluative analyses?

Regardless how they are perceived and analyzed, recent "movements" to Christ will continue to affect the perceptions, analyses, and actual landscape of World Christianity and the worldwide Christian movement. Just as the multinational collection of Jesus's followers in Antioch (Acts 11:19-26) came to be called "Christians" instead of "Galilean," new descriptions of groups will be employed rather than such contextually outdated and irrelevant labels as "Protestant," "Orthodox," "Catholic," and even "Pentecostal." Perhaps the growing realization, among "Western" or "Western-trained" missions leaders, of how the Spirit of God is drawing vast numbers of "non-Western" peoples to Jesus will somehow stretch the limited but still prevalent skewed, predominately "Western" understandings of both Christian history and Christian missions: after all, if God is drawing and using various kinds of people today, couldn't he have done so in past generations—and did he not in fact do so beyond just northwest of Jerusalem? Moreover, if descriptive and organizational categories of Christians can become outdated and contextually irrelevant, and if God has been at work more widely among the world's peoples than heretofore has been assumed in many Christian circles, how might we who are "Evangelicals" come to reconsider our hidden (and perhaps contextually outdated and irrelevant) assumptions about who, including which traditions, actually make up the oft-referenced "global church"? In addition, to

whom else besides our own circles might evangelical missiologists and missions leaders look for learning about the nature and practice of Christian mission?

Learning more about recent "movements" and "revivals" should spur all of Jesus's followers to pray and otherwise participate in how God is at work around the world. Humility comes from realizing the surprising initiatives God takes. Worship becomes more genuine upon realizing the vast scope of God's work among the peoples he has made and loves. Compulsion to serve, in whatever humble ways God may lead, arises from realizing how God uses his people in gospel ministry. May God use this issue's set of articles to spur us all in gospel service.

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Kingdom Movements among Internal Migrants to Indian Cities

Sunil F. Kolhar

Abstract

India is predominantly a rural country, and missions in India have been predominantly concentrated in rural areas. But the urban population, though only 32 percent, is about 400 million in terms of absolute numbers—more than half of whom are poor. The author has observed in his church planting initiatives among the poor in the city of Ahmedabad that Kingdom Movements are taking place specially among the *poor migrants from interstate and interdistrict locations*. In search of missional reasons for why such Kingdom Movements are occurring, this article is based on a case study in the city of Ahmedabad.

Key Words: interstate and interdistrict internal migration, poor low caste migrants, urbanization

Introduction

Christians in India number about 27.8 million, constituting 2.3 percent of India's population (as of the 2011 Census; Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India n.d.). Most of them are found in either the southern parts of India (Chennai, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala) or in the northeast states (Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, and to some extent in Manipur). A small percentage of Christians are scattered throughout rest of the country.

This case study is of a Kingdom Movement among the internal migrants in the city of Ahmedabad, in the State of Gujarat in western India. Ahmedabad is a city with a population of about seven million with a total Christian population of about 50,000. Christianity has been in Ahmedabad for about 200 years. The approximately 200 Protestant churches, including Mainline and Pentecostal churches, have third- or fourth-generation Christians and for the most part are not involved in evangelism in the city. A few of the Pentecostal and independent small churches are involved in church planting, resulting in a few thousand new believers mainly from a poor economic background.

This case study examines one such independent, interdenominational fellowship which started a church planting initiative in the eastern part of the city among the slum dwellers in 2013. A 2014 study reported more than 834 slums and 958 chawls (large tenement houses) in Ahmedabad, which together house approximately 41 percent of the city's population (Mahadevia, Desai, and Vyas 2014, 23). The church-planting initiative in three such slums being examined here was thus, in terms of resources at least, a very small initiative.

Within a year of the church-planting initiative's start, it became obvious that there was a definite Kingdom Movement, not of the locals but of the internal (domestic) migrants of the city. Furthermore, these are not migrants from the same district that the city is also part of, but they are from other districts of the same state (interdistrict) and from other states of the country (interstate). This case study attempts to understand and analyse who these migrants are, whether there are definite missional reasons for this movement, and whether there are larger lessons for the Church in India.

Urbanisation and Migration

Before examining the reasons for this Kingdom Movement, it would be pertinent to understand the extent and types of those people migrating to cities, along with some of their characteristics that will give a wider perspective to this movement.

The urban population in India has been rapidly increasing. According to the 2011 census, it is 32% of the total population. Though this percentage is lower than the global level of 54%, there are two factors that should be noted. First, in terms of absolute numbers the urban population of India is a mind-boggling 400 million—which is more than the populations of most countries of the world. Moreover, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs reported in 2014 that India's urban population is increasing at an annual rate of 1%, which is higher than the global growth rate of 0.9% (Bhagat 2020, 429).

This increase in the urban population is due to three reasons: biological growth, reclassification of city boundaries, and internal migration. This article will be concentrating on the causes, patterns, and effects of internal migration.

In actuality, internal migration has been increasing for the past half century, since 1971, but there was a dramatic rise from 2001 to 2011. In absolute numbers, internal migration increased from 160 million in 1971 to 454 million in 2011. Of this total internal migration, urban migration was 31 million in 1971, and that number increased to 104 million in 2011. As for the annual growth rate of India's urban migration, it was about 4.5% in 1971-1981, then it actually decreased to -1.4% during 1991-2001. However, in the post-2001 period India's urban migration has increased by 11%. This increase is due to agricultural labour coming to the city. With the growing mechanization of agriculture, for the first time in Indian economic history the absolute number of workers in agriculture (unskilled labour, including women) declined by five million per annum between 2001-2011, with a corresponding annual increase of urban migrants by three million (Parida and Raman 2021, 449-452).

Upon considering the social groups that have been migrating, a new picture comes to the fore. As per the 2007-2008 NSS (National Survey Sample), the rate of migration was 46% for the higher caste, 21% for the SC's (Schedule Caste), only 9% for the ST's (Schedule Tribes), and 26% for the OBC's (Other Backward Classes) (Vartak and Tumbe 2020, 255). The SC's, ST's, and OBC's are the socially and economically deprived groups in the country. It would seem that these groups would be less inclined to migrate, knowing that they do not have the necessary skills to land a job in the city. Even so, various researchers confirm that the SC's, ST's, and OBC's have the highest propensity to migrate seasonally (Vartak and Tumbe 2020, 257). Further studies show that the annual rate of temporary migration is seven times higher than permanent migration (Kesri and Bhagat 2013). An earlier, 2012 study also points out that seasonal and temporary migration is a livelihood strategy among rural households (Bhagat 2020, 438).

Though the SC's and ST's find it difficult to get assimilated in the urban industrial sector, many of them still prefer to migrate, some permanently and most of them at least seasonally, for various reasons. Vartak and Tumbe feel that in their destination migrants have a chance to act according to their wishes, away from the control of the dominant caste. They quote Deshingkar and Akter as terming migration of the poor an "exit choice" (although not everyone agrees). Vartak also claims that the poor's urban migration is not premeditated: they migrate mainly for survival and their resistance to higher-class control is only a by-product. The People's Archive of India (PARI), initiated by P. Sainath, found that many of the Dalits who migrated to cities took up similar jobs in cities they had been doing traditionally in villages, based on their caste. While for the lower caste a lack of options is mainly because of

discrimination, for others (including the *shudras* (working class)—carpenters, barbers, and *dhobis* (washermen), for example) it is a lack of knowledge of a particular skill, lack of demand for that skill in the destination, and the presence of caste-based networks that limit information and other options (Vartak and Tumbe 2020, 260-261).

Migration patterns throughout India in 2007-2008 showed that, among all migrants, 53.3% were intradistrict, 32% were interdistrict (from the same state but a different district), and 14.7% were interstate. In absolute terms for all of India, net rural-to-urban migrants have increased from 11 million in 1981-1991, to 14 million during 1991-2001, and to 19 million during 2001-2011. It should also be noted that some states are out-migration areas while others attract migrants. Bhagat has concluded that areas with high levels of urbanisation and per-capita income have a high level of migrants. Moreover, it is the class I cities (those with a population of a hundred thousand or above) which have attracted the maximum number of migrants. India has 7,935 cities and towns according to the 2011 Census, but 70 per cent live in the 468 class I cities. Furthermore, 53 of these class I cities are million-plus cities which comprise 43% of India's urban population (Bhagat 2020, 434-442).

In 2007-2008 the NSS reported that 41.2% of the migrants to cities had moved within the same district, 33.6% were from other districts of the state, and 25.2% were from other states (National Survey Sample Office (NSSO) 2010). These figures indicate that a substantial number of migrants, in particular interdistrict and interstate migrants have been far from their extended families and communities of their village from which they emigrated. This particular state of affairs has a major bearing on this study.

Ahmedabad

As noted earlier, this study is based in the city of Ahmedabad, the commercial capital of the state of Gujarat with a population of about seven million (censusindia.gov.in/2011census/PCA/A4.html). Though the city's population has varied dramatically since it was founded, reaching an abysmal low at times due to the policies of its rulers or due to floods or famines, it has seen a steady growth in the last two centuries. Apart from being an important industrial centre, Ahmedabad is also an equally important educational centre with premier institutions like Physical Research Laboratories, Indian Institute of Management, National Institute of Design, and Gujarat Vidyapeeth, as well as two universities. One must also know that it is here that Gandhi started his Satyagraha movement and also established two of his ashrams.

Ahmedabad was founded in 1411 by Sultan Ahmed Shah. He encouraged merchants, weavers, and skilled craftsmen to come to Ahmedabad and thus made it a flourishing commercial and industrial city (Gillion 1968, 14). Salim Lakha writes of the city's pre-colonial times, "Even though it was a capital city, Ahmedabad was distinguished for its commerce and industry rather than administrative structure and religious function (Lakha 1988, 13). Though the availability of raw material enabled the city's industrial growth, another main cause was the excellent business structure of the city and the shrewd business acumen of the business community (Gillion 1968, 4-5). Population statistics of Ahmedabad for the seventeenth century are lacking, but general estimates indicate that the city was comparable to London or Paris with about one million inhabitants, including suburbs (Lakha 1988, 18).

Ahmedabad came under British rule in 1817, and the various British policies ensured that the city grew exponentially. Gillion quotes the *Ahmedabad Gazetteer* which reported that the population rose from 80,000 in 1817 to 116,172 in 1872 (Gillion 1968, 53). The city saw another population explosion in the next century, mainly because of the setting up of textile mills beginning in 1861. By 1946 there were 74 textile mills in the city employing 76,357

people (Yagnik and Sheth 2011, 162). The landscape of the city changed as people migrated to the city for jobs. The *Census of India, 1921* reported that the population rose from 116,873 in 1872 to 272,007 in 1921 (Gillion 1968, 104). During the 1947 partition there was an exodus of Muslims from Ahmedabad to Karachi, but that loss was compensated by refugees (Sindhis, Hindus, and Dalits) from Pakistan (Yagnik and Sheth 2011, 243). Though the textile mills closed down for almost a decade (1967-1985) and the economy hit rock bottom (Yagnik and Sheth 2011, 270-275), the city recovered dramatically in the succeeding years. Yagnik and Sheth report that a study done in 1997-1998 indicates that the informal sector grew faster than the formal sector: out of the 1.5 million workers in Ahmedabad city, 1.15 million worked in the informal sector (Yagnik and Sheth 2011, 303).

It is clear that Ahmedabad has always been a hotbed for migrants due to the various job opportunities available. The Indian government's various 1991 and 2001 census reports also confirm this trend of jobs pulling migrants to Ahmedabad. According to the 2001 census report of the government of Gujarat, of Ahmedabad's total population of 44.48lakh (4,448,000), 21.48lakh (2,148,000), or 48.3%, were migrants. The distribution of migrants according to the place of birth showed that 33.9% were born in the Ahmedabad district, 43.7% were born in other districts of the state, while 21.5% were born in other states. A similar trend was observed when the distribution of migrants according to their most recent previous residence was taken (Director of Census Operation, Gujarat 2001).

Migrants in Ahmedabad's Kingdom Movement

From this brief survey on urban migration in India, it can be concluded that internal migration contributes substantially to urbanisation. The Kingdom Movement under consideration here is mainly among interstate and interdistrict migrants, who usually form about 50% of the total migrant poor. They are mainly from the SC's (Schedule Caste or lower caste), ST's (Schedule Tribes), and OBC's (Other Backward Classes) and are mostly from a poor economic status. Though they eke out a living doing odd jobs, they make just enough to sustain them on a daily basis.

It is these poor migrants that are responding to the gospel in Ahmedabad and several other cities of India. In order to understand why, I interviewed about a dozen people, recorded their interviews, and analysed the responses. Given below is a summary of those findings.

Interview Findings

First and foremost, the people who have come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ have been from the states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh or from the border districts of Gujarat. Both these states, along with a few others like Madhya Pradesh and Odisha, are not highly urbanised, their GDP is very low, and they are not able to sustain their own state's people—so these are the states which are usually the sending states. On the other hand, Gujarat is a highly industrialised and urbanised state and along with states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Delhi is a receiving state. The districts of Gujarat from which migrants have been coming to Ahmedabad have also been less developed, hence those districts' residents migrated to Ahmedabad, a hotbed for migrants.

Quite a few of the migrants had never heard the gospel in their village and they know nothing about the Christian faith. The first time they heard the gospel was in the city, exemplifying just how important urban missions is for India. Most of the cities have representation of many of the villages where the gospel has never reached.

At least one migrant testified about hearing about Jesus back in the village from neighbours who had just returned from the city. It so happened that this couple who shared the gospel with the people of their village had experienced the Lord in Ahmedabad. They themselves were seasonal labourers and regularly visited their village at least once a year, where they began sharing about Jesus. This is not an isolated case, for we found that more often than not the people who come to know the Lord in the city became potential evangelists as they take the gospel back to their village. They also became potential contacts for those who want to come to the city. This was the case with quite a few of those interviewed. The person who shared the gospel with them also brought them and settled them in the city, helping them as well to find work.

The Apostle Paul used this same evangelistic strategy in his time. Bosch, agreeing with various other authors writes, "Paul concentrates on the districts or provincial capitals, each of which stands for a whole region: Philippi of Macedonia (Phil.4:15), Thessalonica for Macedonia and Achaia (1Thess.1:7f), Corinth for Achaia (1Cor.16:15, 2Cor.1:1), and Ephesus for Asia (Rom.16:5, 1Cor.16:19, 2Cor.1:8)." He further notes, "Paul thinks regionally and not ethnically: he chooses cities that have representative character. In each of these centres, the gospel will be carried to the surrounding countryside and towns" (Bosch 2006, 162).

To return to the interview results, here is a description of one particular group who heard the gospel for the first time in the city and came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

It is noteworthy that none of the interviewees came to the Lord because they felt they were sinners in need of a saviour. In India, among the Hindus, the concept of sin is not very strong, as they do not have a concept of a holy God, and sin is never seen to be committed against their god. The concept of wrong-doing is more culture-oriented or even self-determined rather than a revelation from their god. Thus, there is never a seriousness to "sin" and, moreover, there are ways to nullify one's wrong by one's karma or good deeds. They also believe in the transmigration of the soul, which means that they would come back to this world in some form based on their deeds. So Hindus do not see this life as the one chance to earn their salvation. They think that there will be many more chances. Hence the chances of people coming to know the Lord as their Saviour who can wash away their sin is very remote, a reality borne out by my interviews with these migrants in Ahmedabad.

At the same time, all of the interviewees went through some type of crisis in their lives in the form of physical sicknesses or even oppression of evil spirits. They tried cures through medicines and even visiting some spiritual medium or *baba* (a Hindu *Sadhu*, a religious Hindu ascetic practicing exorcism of evil spirits), spending a lot of money on both these things but without any relief.

In nearly all the cases, it was a Christian neighbour who had told them that Jesus could heal them of their problems. It should be noted the Christians who witnessed to their non-Christian neighbours were also staying in the slums and were mostly semi-literate people. Their knowledge of the Bible would itself be limited, but they had the conviction that Jesus could heal these people. It should also be noted here that it was mostly women witnessing to other women.

These non-Christian women were ready to try Jesus probably because they saw nothing wrong in trying another god according to the pluralistic worldview in which they believed. As they started believing they slowly got the healing they were seeking. It was in their healing that they experienced Jesus to be powerful. It was only later, as they began to attend church, that they recognised Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

Social Challenges

In India, extended families and communities are very important. They are the support system in times of need, and they are the ones who sanction the behaviour of their families or members. The people in the cities who had migrated from other states or other districts of the same state were far from their own extended families and also from their communities. That distance is what has proven to be a crucial point in their being ready to try Jesus to meet their needs. When they experienced the goodness of the Lord, they readily accepted him as their Lord and Saviour, for they did not have to fear any major backlash from either their families or from their communities. Moreover, because they did not have the support of their families and their communities, they were ready to try out a new faith. This experience was not found among the locals or even the intradistrict migrants for obvious reasons.

The caste system plays an important role in people's religious affiliation. The caste system is the basis of the social stratification among Hindus. It is a hierarchical structure, and one's social world is built in the space the particular caste assigns. The Dalits or low caste people are considered as outcasts or those who are outside the caste system. In the villages in India, where the caste system is still practiced, the Dalits are discriminated against and exploited in every way. The city thus becomes a means of freedom and, as James Scott points out, migrants' covert form of resistance (James Scott 1985, 33). In accepting the gospel, urban migrants can find a new locus for their identity.

A very important reality for interviewees was that in many cases, even after getting baptised, many of the migrants got married or were married by their parents in the previous caste/religion to which they belonged, according to the rituals of that caste. They were not able to find any partners in the Christian community in their small village or surrounding villages. They were not able to find a suitable match in the cities either, since the older generation Christians already settled in the city do not associate with these new converts who are from the lower strata of the society.

Many evangelical churches would term such behaviour (getting married into your old caste/religion) as backsliding. But in the cases I came across, such marriages proved to be a boon, for they brought the whole new family to the Lord in due time. These family conversions may not always happen, but the church needs to think of how they can accommodate such converts in their church structure.

Another very important aspect which should not be missed out in sustaining the faith of these new converts is the kind of church with which they get connected. The established churches are not in a position to take care of and nurture these new converts, and there is every chance of their becoming disillusioned.

New Church Plant

Among this study's interviewees, most of the converted migrants became members of the new church plant that we established. This church had begun just a year or two before the Kingdom Movement of migrants started taking place. The pastor in these first two years had created a strong core team of about eight to ten people, having trained them well doctrinally and helping them to become keen to work for the Lord. So when these first-generation migrants started attending the church, this core team formed an excellent support team for the pastor. The church got involved not only in spiritual work but also mercy or compassion ministry, which was strong with the limited resources they had. Moreover, the pastor changed the language of worship from the local Gujarati to Hindi, the mother tongue of these converts. These two

realities—being able to worship in their own mother tongue and having support for their needs—gave a feeling of belonging to these new converts and strengthened their faith.

Two examples demonstrate the faith of these converts. One of the families lost their two-year-old daughter to cancer, and another family lost their mother to cancer. I very specially asked them while interviewing them whether these incidents had any effect on their faith. Quite surprisingly, they replied that they knew that their dear ones were with the Lord and they couldn't ask for anything more.

Although all of the converted migrants had disassociated themselves from their old faith, most of them did not do away with many of the associated cultural or religious symbols. For example, Hindu women apply *sindoor* (vermillion) just above their foreheads or *tilak* (a red coloured spot) on their forehead as a symbol of their marriage; the women I interviewed and many other converts continued to apply these even after conversion. In their previous religion these symbols carried religious significance, but now they had become just cultural symbols. The church did not force them to do away with these symbols.

In a few cases, only one member of the family came to the Lord. In such cases, it became difficult for that person to dissociate themselves from their previous religion completely. In two of the cases, it was the lady of the family who came to the Lord. When she had to get her children married and did so with men belonging to her old caste and religion, she had to take part in the customs and rituals of her old faith. In such cases Christian converts may not have a choice, and the church needs to be patient with such people rather than judging them.

Conclusion

The Kingdom Movement among the interdistrict and interstate migrants in Ahmedabad took place for several reasons. It was in their vulnerability in the city that the migrants experienced the Lord; they were ready to try out this new faith because they were safe from the backlash of their extended families and communities; they were able to find a new locus for their identity in this new faith. The church played an important role in the initiation and sustenance of this Kingdom Movement. Also, the association of the new converts with their old religion and caste continued due to various social pressures. The church was patient with such converts and stood with them thus encouraging them in their time of need.

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Does the DMM Approach Lead to Movement Breakthrough?

Emanuel Prinz and Alison Goldhor

Abstract

This article reports on the first-ever systematic empirical study of factors that either contribute to or impede the catalyzing of movements. The representative sample comprises a mix of those who have catalyzed movements and those who have not, a total of 307 pioneer missionaries across 38 countries. Of the effective catalysts in the study, 77 percent either specify DMM (Disciple-Making Movements) as their ministry approach or use a DMM-related approach.

Based on 45 in-depth qualitative interviews and statistical analysis, the study verifies several elements of the DMM process. These include prayer, meeting holistic needs (what DMM calls "compassion ministry"), finding persons of peace and working through their social networks, a discovery approach based around small groups, obedience-emphasis, and effectively raising up local leaders.

Key Words: catalyst, DMM/Disciple-Making Movements, movement, pioneer

Introduction

What is the correlation between the Disciple-Making Movements (DMM) approach and movement breakthrough? A major research project of Bethany Research Institute in 2020-21 provided a golden opportunity to investigate this question.

The study brought together a sample of 307 pioneer church planters for an extensive Catalyst Competence Research project. This group consisted of 147 effective movement catalysts and a control group of 160 pioneer church planters who had not catalyzed a movement. Participants represented the largest mega-cultures of the world, with a focus on the regions or groupings where most movements occur, specifically Francophone Africa, East Africa, India, Indonesia, Latin America, and among Ethnic Chinese.

The study had two main goals: to compare the traits and competencies of the catalysts and non-catalysts, and to examine the factors that either contribute to or impede the catalyzing of movements, including the impact of the catalyst's ministry approach.

The research consisted of an in-depth survey, available in Spanish, French, Swahili, Hindi, and Indonesian, and also, where possible, an interview. These two methods combined provided a wealth of information about those who have catalyzed movements in a wide variety of contexts around the world.

Ministry Approaches of Effective Catalysts

As part of their general background information, survey participants were asked which of the following ministry approaches they use.

1. Adding new believers to existing Christian background-believer churches
2. Planting new churches consisting only of believers from the same religious background
3. CPM (Church-Planting Movements) as described by David Garrison

4. DMM as described by David Watson
5. T4T as described by Ying and Grace Kai
6. Community Learning Centers as described by Victor John

Of the effective movement catalysts, 73 percent selected DMM as the ministry method they use, confirming a clear correlation of DMM with movement breakthrough. (Note that of the 147 catalysts surveyed, 85 came from Victor John's network which has its own unique approach, number 6 on the list above. Because of the uneven distribution—the result of a convenience sample—this bloc of respondents was not included in the statistical analysis in this section.)

Survey participants had the option to choose more than one approach; 14 percent gave multiple answers. In addition, they could choose an "Other" category; the following were listed under "Other" (with the number giving this response in parenthesis).

- Compassion ministry (6)
- Church Multiplication, as described by George Patterson (3)
- Focus on Fruit, as described by Trevor Larsen (2)
- DMM combined with Insider Ministry (2)
- Adding new believers to existing churches, among the poor (2)
- People movement approach, as described by McGavran and Kasdorf (1)
- Four Fields, combined with Media to Movements (1)
- Church planting with multiplicative approach (1)
- Zúme as described by Curtis Sergeant (1)
- Cell church model (1)
- Chronological Bible Storying (1)
- Person of Peace (1)
- Person of Peace, combined with obedience-oriented discipleship (1)

Several of these approaches overlap with DMM or certain aspects of DMM. They include: Compassion ministry, Focus on Fruit, DMM combined with Insider Ministry, Zúme as described by Curtis Sergeant (Zúme 2022), Person of Peace, and Obedience-oriented Discipleship. Taken together, the overall percentage of effective catalysts who have used DMM-related approaches is 77 percent.

Ministry Approach as a Contributing Factor to Movement Breakthrough

In the section of the survey on contributing and impeding factors, participants were asked to rate "to what extent adopting the right ministry strategy or method contributed to the catalyzing of their movement." The average rating of the effective catalysts was remarkably high: 4.51 on a Likert scale of 1-5.

Not surprisingly, the pioneer church planters who had not catalyzed a movement gave a lower rating to this factor: 3.71. In their case the question was framed in different terms: "to what extent adopting the right ministry strategy or method contributed to their ministry fruitfulness."

Both catalysts and non-catalysts commented in the interviews that frustration with existing traditional ministry methods had led them to experiment with new forms of outreach. This

extensive quote from the catalyst of a huge ongoing movement in South Asia describes the early days of his ministry:

> I said: 'What is it we're doing wrong? Why are they rejecting the gospel?' I looked at the culture and looked at the language and our dependency on Western money: it was so power-controlled, and they were telling people what to do. I said, 'How about doing it the other way round, and letting the people discover what to do by the help of the Holy Spirit?' I was also thinking about the gender issue. At that time only men could baptize people…. Did Jesus give the Great Commission only to men or to all? Is obedience only for men or for all? In those days I had more questions than answers. If I asked anyone, people in the ministry were very defensive and no one was willing to give me an answer.

In this catalyst's case, willingness to try new approaches eventually led to a tremendous harvest of new disciples that continues to multiply to this day. Other effective catalysts also discovered that what others had thought were wrong ministry approaches proved to be right for their own particular contexts. The catalyst of a very large movement in Southeast Asia commented, "What everybody else was saying 'Don't do'—that usually works in our case!"

Whatever the specific approach, each successful movement catalyst naturally has confidence that approach is the right one.

Other Factors Contributing to Movement Breakthrough

Survey participants were also asked to rate a total of eleven factors that had contributed to their movement breakthrough. The list below was based on the factors cited most frequently by practitioners in interviews that formed part of a previous study (Prinz 2016; 2021).

These contributing factors include the following that are essential to the DMM method.

- Contribution of prayer
- Have done compassion ministry and met people's holistic needs
- Adopted the right (movement) ministry strategy or method
- Used discovery approach and discovery groups
- Implemented reproducible disciple-making
- Raised up leaders effectively

The following table shows which of these factors mark the greatest difference between the catalysts and non-catalysts.

Table 1: Contributing factors to movement breakthrough/ministry fruitfulness ranked by the greatest difference between catalysts and non-catalysts			
Factors that contributed to movement breakthrough	**Catalysts**	**Non-catalysts**	**Difference**
Raised up leaders effectively	4.55	3.75	+0.81
Adopted right ministry strategy	4.51	3.71	+0.80
Used discovery approach/groups	4.16	3.45	+0.72
Used reproducible disciple-making	4.52	3.97	+0.54

Met holistic needs	4.17	3.67	+0.50
Contribution of prayer	4.76	4.61	+0.14

Significantly, five of the six factors rated highest are all core elements of the DMM approach, the one exception being "Adopted right ministry strategy." (For more on DMM distinctives, see New Generations 2020.)

Characteristic elements of the DMM process that are also distinctive of the catalysts will be examined below, one by one. From anecdotal evidence collected in the interviews, it is clear that those catalysts who do not identify DMM as their ministry approach also make use of many of these DMM elements.

DMM Elements Listed by Effective Catalysts

(1) Prayer or fervent intercession

Prayer is a vital element in the DMM Cycle, and it is key in all forms of movements. The table below shows the same list of factors that can contribute to movement breakthrough, this time ordered by the rating that the effective catalysts gave to each. The contribution of prayer was ranked as number one by both the catalysts and the non-catalysts.

Table 2: Contributing factors to movement breakthrough ranked by effective catalyst rating			
Factors that contribute to movement breakthrough	**Catalysts**	**Non-catalysts**	**Difference**
Contribution of prayer	4.76	4.61	+0.14
Raised up leaders effectively	4.55	3.75	+0.81
Used reproducible disciple-making	4.52	3.97	+0.54
Adopted right ministry strategy	4.51	3.71	+0.8
Met holistic needs	4.17	3.67	+0.50
Used discovery approach/groups	4.16	3.45	+0.72

Besides being the most significant contributing factor in movement breakthrough, "fervent intercession" is also shown to be a key trait of effective movement catalysts. In addition to examining the role of contributing and impeding factors, the survey tested for traits and competencies that correlate with movement breakthrough. Participants rated themselves on a list of traits and competencies of effective leaders based on an extensive review of the literature on the subject over the past 70 years (Prinz 2021). Of all these traits and competencies, "fervent intercession" shows the greatest contrast between the two groups, as seen in the top row and last column of the following table.

Table 3: Fervent Intercession - the trait that most distinguishes catalysts from non-catalysts			
Traits and Competencies	**Catalysts**	**Control group**	**Difference**

Fervent Intercession	3.83	3.07	+0.76
Disciple-making	4.65	4.07	+0.58
Inspiring Personality	4.60	4.06	+0.54
Empowering	4.63	4.11	+0.52
Influencing Beliefs	4.70	4.19	+0.51
Assertiveness	4.77	4.29	+0.48
Creativity	4.32	3.86	+0.46
Agreeableness	4.60	4.16	+0.44
Inspiring Shared Vision	4.66	4.23	+0.43
Confidence in the Bible	4.77	4.39	+0.37
Confidence in Locals	4.88	4.53	+0.36
Hunger for God	4.51	4.15	+0.35
Listening to God	4.51	4.16	+0.35
Internal locus of control	4.43	4.11	+0.32
Persistence	4.30	3.98	+0.31
Expectant Faith	4.67	4.36	+0.31
Conscientiousness	4.69	4.41	+0.29
Evangelistic Zeal	4.68	4.39	+0.28
Tangible Love	4.69	4.43	+0.27
Drive to achieve	4.41	4.14	+0.27
Openness to Experience	4.44	4.19	+0.25
Extroversion	3.27	3.37	-0.10
Emotional stability	3.01	3.15	-0.14
Flexibility	3.47	3.63	-0.16

The in-depth interviews conducted with 15 catalysts and 30 non-catalysts add helpful details here. These interviews consisted of 14 open-ended questions which allowed interviewees to share about their experiences.

Figure 1 summarizes findings concerning the frequency of intercession, showing the difference between the practice of the catalysts and the non-catalysts. The last column indicates that some pioneers mentioned fasting in addition to prayer.
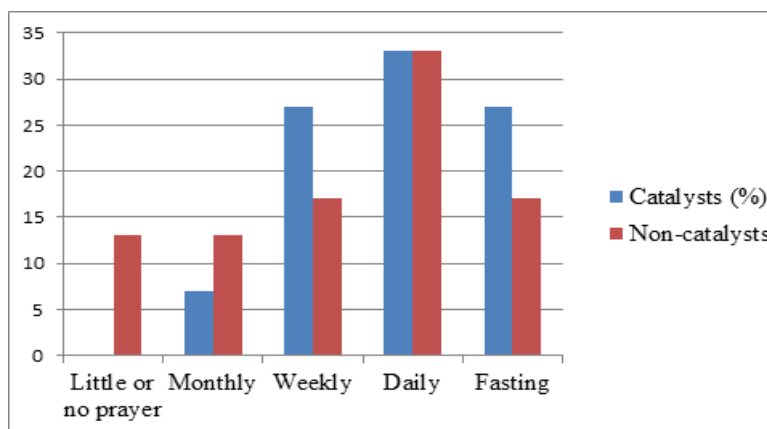
Figure 1: Frequency of intercession by catalysts and non-catalysts

The depth and quality of intercession are harder to assess. The following examples give a feel for the prayer lives of some of the catalysts and the disciples in their movements.

From East Africa: "Every morning a group of us get up early to pray before dawn and we call each other to wake one another up to pray. There are about 20 of us in our group committed to pray like that."

From West Africa, as reported by an expatriate catalyst: "The local leaders are people of prayer. ... At the beginning of the year they have seven days of prayer and fasting. It is normal to fast."

Also from West Africa, from a local catalyst: "Pastors and church leaders all pray. The last Friday of every month in our ministry is a time of fasting and prayer. We start from 8:00pm and go on to midnight or sometimes until 1:00am. Every week from 7:00pm to 8:30pm there is also a prayer meeting…. We pray for the unreached, for our missionaries (=local trainees sent to nearby people groups)."

From South Asia: "At one point we had up to about forty people that had committed to intercede every day based on whatever we told them."

In Southeast Asia a catalyst reports that new disciples are also taught to pray so that around 1200 Muslim-background believers (MBBs) are praying for him and his ministry.

Each one of the catalysts reported that others were also interceding for their people group. In some cases the intercessors were from within the movement; in others, sending churches were praying.

(2) Compassion ministry or meeting holistic needs

The DMM approach includes compassion ministry, also called access ministry, as one of its key elements. New disciples learn to love those around them in practical ways, taking care of widows and orphans and meeting holistic needs in the community. When asked about their ministry approach, six of the effective catalysts who answered "Other," rather than specifying DMM, described it as "Compassion ministry."

Survey participants were asked to what extent "meeting holistic needs" had contributed to the catalyzing of their movement. The effective catalysts' average response was 4.17, significantly higher than the non-catalysts (3.67—see Table 1 above).

A catalyst in West Africa told how a local farmer wanted him to join him out in his fields planting tomatoes. Despite his feeling that evangelism and church planting should be his first priority, he felt compelled to go and help. In the process he met several other farmers, and seven people were led to Christ and baptized as a result.

In one Southeast Asia movement, community learning centers provided the strategic platform to connect with local people and minister to them through this access ministry.

Other interviewees mentioned the advantages of having a practical skill such as well-digging as a way to integrate themselves into a community. The community accepted them because they had something useful to contribute.

(3) Finding persons of peace

DMM practitioners gain access to communities by looking for a friendly community member with whom to build a relationship: a "person of peace*"* (from Jesus' instruction in Luke 10). Such a person is open to the messenger, is open to the message, and opens his or her networks to the gospel. The person of peace is not necessarily the first believer; he or she may never become a disciple. His or her role is simply to open the door to the rest of the community. The following examples from the interviews illustrate this point.

Most disciples within one movement in South Asia came from extended family groups which formed the basis of house churches numbering anywhere from ten to 25 people. The first disciple in the community, the person of peace, was able to use existing networks of kinship for gospel witness. In other cases, relationships from work or neighborhood provided channels for evangelism.

Local evangelists in a West African movement prayed intensively that God would lead them to people of peace, both before setting out and as they arrived in a village. As they would strike up conversations or begin telling stories, they built relationships that eventually resulted in their being welcomed by the whole community. They often marveled at the way God would bring them to just the right people in ways they could never have planned or predicted.

A catalyst in East Africa gave the following account. He had been having great conversations with a senior sheikh and invited him to host a meeting when more could hear, so emissaries went out on donkeys and a month later a total of 55 sheikhs from around the region gathered together. He explained, "I didn't want to call for an immediate response. I wanted to facilitate… group conversion; I wanted to steer the whole group of political leaders into the Kingdom as a group. There was interest after the meeting, and we repeated these meetings for several months." When he felt they were ready he invited them to "to renounce Satan and all his works and to put their trust in Isa (Jesus) and become his followers and thereby enter the Kingdom of God—and they all did. Then they said they wanted the message to come into their villages, so they asked us if we could come into their villages: schoolteachers or headmasters of schools … said they wanted us to teach their children this message"—and so the movement spread. This sequence of events presents a classic description of the way a person of peace (in this case the senior sheikh) can open up his or her network of relationships for disciple-making.

(4) A discovery approach based around small groups

Once they see a clear welcome for their message, even by just a few, DMM practitioners encourage them to gather together to discover for themselves what God says in his Word, through Discovery Bible Study (DBS) groups.

Survey respondents were asked to what extent using a "discovery approach and discovery groups" contributed to the catalyzing of their movement or to their ministry fruitfulness. The catalysts' average rating was 4.16, once again significantly higher than the non-catalysts (3.45—see Table 1).

A West African interviewee described how a miracle opened the way for a DBS, which in turn led to the multiplying of the church. A woman whose father was an imam had become paralyzed, unable to walk for several years. A DMM team that began to reach out in that village came into contact with her. "Over time she experienced a dramatic miracle: she could stand up and be on her feet. This gave access to the people, with more openness in the family and community. We did DBS, engaging people with the Word of God. This lady… is now leading two or three groups." (This example also serves to highlight the role of the person of peace, in this case the imam's daughter.)

A catalyst in Southeast Asia explained that his movement's only strategy is Discovery Bible Studies. "We don't preach sermons; just tell Bible stories, just have questions and discussions. You don't have to have a formula to do that."

(5) An emphasis on obedience

One element of a Discovery Bible Study that sets it apart from traditional group Bible studies is that each group member is asked, "How will you obey?" Each time that they meet, DBS participants decide on a specific way they will put into practice what they have discovered in God's Word. This commitment to practical application puts the emphasis on obedience from the very beginning. New disciples are expected to obey what they have learned, and they are held accountable for the steps of obedience they commit to take. Next time they meet, they report back to the group on the fruit of these commitments. All are mutually accountable, from the newest believer to the group facilitator. For this reason, DMM is characterized by its emphasis on obedience.

Survey respondents were asked to what extent this statement applied to them: "My disciples give me the feedback that my discipling them has led to character formation and greater obedience to God." The effective catalysts' answers averaged 4.65 on the 1-5 Likert scale, once again significantly higher than the non-catalysts (4.07—see Table 1).

Because of the subjective nature of many of the questions about catalysts' traits and competencies, a sampling of third-party observer ratings was also collected. On this particular question, most of these rated the catalysts higher than they rated themselves.

"Obedience to the Bible" was mentioned by several of the catalysts interviewed as a factor that contributed to movement breakthrough. In addition to the contributing factors listed in the survey, the open-ended interview questions provided an opportunity to list other factors from their own experience. These additional factors covered a wide range, from "use of internet and social media" to "financial resources," and from "reproducible tools" to "openness to the gospel because of crises." Twenty percent of the catalysts interviewed listed "obedience to the Bible," compared with

seven percent of the non-catalysts. Twenty percent of the catalysts also added "DMM principles" on this open-ended list as a contributing factor to movement breakthrough.

(6) Reproducible Disciple-making

Because of its simplicity, the DMM approach is easily reproducible. This is another factor that effective catalysts rated highly in the survey as contributing to the catalyzing of their movement, with an average score of 4.52 for "used reproducible disciple-making" (Table 2). Again, their ratings prove higher than those of the pioneers who had not catalyzed a movement (3.97).

"Disciple-making" was also one of the competencies for which the survey tested. Once again, the catalysts scored significantly higher (4.65) than the non-catalysts (4.07).

The head of a large network in Southeast Asia reported that his team holds leadership retreats every quarter, equipping each movement leader to train the next level of leaders. These have now been reproduced to 16 or 17 generations.

A West African catalyst described how two of his leaders were able to cover an entire region by dividing into twelve segments the tribal territory they were trying to reach. Each was given a motorbike, and each recruited someone to mentor. A year and a half later, the trainees were ready to become mentors themselves. As new leaders were raised up, it became possible to reach more and more villages, each leader being mentored by the one who had recruited him or her.

(7) Effectively raising up local leaders

Every DMM is above all indigenous. This means that raising up local leaders is vital, another factor which catalysts rated highly in contributing to movement breakthrough (4.55—see Table 1). In contrast, the non-catalysts rated this factor much lower (averaging 3.75) in contributing to ministry fruitfulness.

A catalyst in South Asia reported, "We prayed for God to give us an evangelist who could communicate well in the local culture. God brought to us [a local man], who… developed an ability to lead people to Jesus from the Qur'an alone…. We encouraged him to reach out to people of influence." This is the common practice of this movement, leading to tremendous multiplication.

A West African movement developed the same way, as described by an expatriate catalyst: "It's not us: it's the two nationals that we've trained who are doing the work at this point. These two local people have catalyzed a movement that now has over 3,300 groups."

It is clear from the interviews that catalysts place great importance on the role of local leaders and the need to train, equip, and empower them.

The research shows "confidence in locals" to be a key characteristic of effective catalysts, the highest scoring trait (4.88) of all the traits and competencies for which the survey tested, as shown in Table 3 above. The catalysts also rated high in the competence of "empowering" (4.63), significantly higher than the non-catalysts (4.11). Interestingly, the data show that catalysts value "empowering" more highly the longer they have been in ministry, presumably because they see its tremendous benefit to movement breakthrough and sustainability.

Conclusion

Both the quantitative analysis and the qualitative data from the interviews verify a clear correlation between the Disciple-Making Movement approach and movement breakthrough. This positive correlation is based on the experience of those catalysts who explicitly identify DMM as their ministry approach, as well as those who put into practice its characteristic elements.

This correlation is made all the more striking by the contrast with those in the control group who have not catalyzed a movement. Time and again the effective catalysts rate higher in all elements related to Disciple-Making Movements.

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Healing Miracles, Church Planting Movements, and Population Dynamics

David Lewis

Abstract

Healing miracles have been among the occurrences reported among rapidly growing movements today, many of which are taking place in developing countries. Those countries are not only economically poorer than many industrialized countries but also have demographic patterns with a higher proportion of younger people. Drawing on findings from earlier research on Christian healing, this article suggests that these demographic factors may be among those which influence the perception that healing miracles seem to be more common among some rapidly growing movements as compared with more "traditional" churches.

Key Words: demography, healing miracles, movements, Wimber, "words of knowledge"

"Signs and Wonders" among Church Planting Movements

In recent decades there has been rapid growth among various movements around the world (variously characterized as "church planting movements," "house churches," and otherwise), mainly concentrated in developing countries of Africa and Asia. However, a possible forerunner to some of these movements, particularly in terms of the role of "signs and wonders" in evangelism, was the Vineyard movement in North America, Europe, and elsewhere. That movement was founded by John Wimber, whose books *Power Evangelism* (1985) and *Power Healing* (1986 / 1987) remain among the foundational texts for those learning how to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit. His influence and example have percolated through many of the contemporary movements which teach their disciples to heal the sick and cast out demons.

Nevertheless, the centuries-old question remains about why God seems to heal some people and not others. Although this question is unanswerable in terms of specific cases, where God alone knows best, certain statistically significant trends were discernible from a 1986 follow-up study of what had happened at a conference in Harrogate, England, where John Wimber was the main speaker. At the end of that conference 1,890 participants filled in questionnaires about their experiences. Over the following months, I conducted interviews with 100 of them selected at random by means of a random number table. This was a much more comprehensive study than my earlier research on a John Wimber conference in Sheffield in 1985 (Lewis 1986 / 1987). I believe that the trends shown in my study conducted in Britain can be extrapolated to explain some of the reasons why various movements in developing countries have seen significant growth when their preaching of the gospel has been accompanied by "signs and wonders."

Divine Healings More Common among the Poor or Marginalized

Analysing the 1,890 questionnaires in terms of the degree of physical healing reported by respondents showed that those from the higher and more educated social classes reported significantly *less* healing than those from "working class" backgrounds (Lewis 1989, 66-67; 1993, 336-337). This result was statistically highly significant ($p=<0.001$). One possible explanation for this finding is that those who are better educated are more sceptical about supernatural healing, so have less of a "child-like" faith. This was apparently a problem with the well-educated Pharisees and teachers of the law at the time of Jesus: although they could

not deny that miracles had happened, they were uncomfortable with some of the implications so sought to explain away the data in other ways (John 9:1-41). On the other hand, many of those whom Jesus healed were those on the margins of society (e.g., lepers) or others whose disability or illness had forced them to become beggars. Jesus explicitly announced that he had come to bring "good news to the poor" (Luke 4:16-21; Matthew 11:5). In extrapolating the findings in Britain onto a worldwide scale, it should be noted that British people, including those who are "working class," are still among the rich elite in this world as compared with many people in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Moreover, the National Health Service in the UK provides medical care for any citizen who needs it—and at a far higher standard than is available to many poor people in developing countries. Might it be that God is more likely to heal poorer people who for one reason or another do not have access to other medical resources? Such people have no other choice but to rely on God for miraculous healing. By contrast, some more affluent Christians with access to medical care might *in practice* tend to rely more on medicines than on God, even if they pray, too— sometimes praying for God to "guide the surgeon's hand." These dynamics may be one of the factors contributing to the growth in developing countries of church planting movements that actively pray for physical healing and deliverance from demons.

Anecdotally, many of the more dramatic miracles of healing, including raising the dead, seem to be reported from poor communities in Latin America, Africa, and Asia (Gardner 1983, 1930-1932; 1986, 35-38, 74, 116, 139-140, 164-165, 175-182). There are numerous examples of a breakthrough following a public miracle—a "sign" pointing to the power of God. A retired missionary through whom previously "very few people had come to the Lord," and with "minimal tangible results," paid a return visit to East Africa after learning how to pray for healing. She prayed for a woman who some years previously had been gored by a buffalo and had "long-term unhealed injuries." The impact of the prayer for healing was such that "at the end of those few weeks, the local witchdoctor came to Christ and they had a public burning of all his regalia and witchcraft artefacts… and most of the village turned to Christ also" (Horrobin 2016, 62-63). A similar case was reported from northern Thailand, where the first villager to become a Christian had died (as far as the missionaries and local people were concerned) but then suddenly came back to life. She had met with Christ but was told to go back and report what she had seen. Her knowledge of other villagers' hidden secrets was so accurate that "the village priest's son fled, to return half an hour later and announce that he wished to become a Christian" (Gardner 1983, 1932).

Such kinds of individual cases can be multiplied exponentially if a movement actively teaches Jesus-followers to do what Jesus did in praying for healing or casting out demons. It is difficult to quantify the extent to which growth among movements expecting to see "signs and wonders" may be greater than among movements without such expectations, but the kinds of examples given above indicate that some miraculous events can precipitate many decisions for Christ: the resulting effects are rather like that of pouring petrol on an existing flame.

Younger People More Likely to Receive Physical Healing

Participants at John Wimber's conference in Harrogate ranked their degrees of healing on a five-point scale ranging from "no healing" to "a little," "a fair amount," "a great deal," and "total healing." A statistically significant finding (p=<0.001) was that "a great deal" or "total healing" was reported much more commonly by younger people than older people (Lewis 1989, 63-65; 1993, 335-336). Again, a variety of explanations might be offered, including the observation from everyday life that children often seem to recover more quickly from certain injuries as compared with older people. This finding about younger vs. older healings is a

statistical tendency, not an absolute rule, and there are cases of older people receiving physical healing as well. Nevertheless, it raises questions about whether or not any similar pattern can also be discerned in the ministry of Jesus. The Bible does not precisely convey the ages of most of the people whom Jesus healed, but among the cases of raising the dead two are specified as being younger people—the daughter of Jairus and the widow of Nain's son; Lazarus might have also been relatively young if he had two unmarried sisters. We do not know the age of Tabitha / Dorcas (Acts 9:36-42), but those raised from the dead through the ministries of Elijah, Elisha, and Paul were also children or young people (1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:8-37; Acts 20:7-12). Furthermore, two exceptions to the generalization that those whom Jesus healed were mainly from the lower social classes actually were young people—the nobleman's son and Jairus' daughter, who was twelve years' old.

John Wimber's teaching emphasizes the importance of listening to God, in order to understand what God the Father is doing in a given situation (John 5:19). This principle applies not only to knowing what to pray for someone but also to identifying individuals that God wants to heal at that time. Such knowledge comes, per Wimber's teaching, through specific revelations from God ("words of knowledge," as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:8), some of which may be of a relatively general character whereas others can contain very specific identifying details. In one case, "the crowd would have had to have been 1200 times larger than it actually was for just one person to have had this combination of features through chance alone" (Lewis 1989, 135). Moreover, a high degree of healing was reported by 62.5% of those responding to a highly specific word of knowledge, as compared with 30% to 45% of those responding to less specific revelations (Lewis 1989, 156). Wimber was surprised when he learned that 85% of those responding to more specific words of knowledge were in their thirties or younger (Lewis 1989, 156, 158; 1993, 336). This close relationship between listening to God and seeing God's power at work underlines the importance of maintaining a close walk with God when ministering in healing or deliverance.

It is notable that a statistical link with age applies to physical healing but not to what is loosely termed 'inner healing'—which often involves repentance from sin or the forgiveness of those against whom one has been bearing grudges. There is no statistically significant difference between older and younger people in the results that they report from this kind of refining process. If inner healing is to some extent a preparation for heaven, does it imply that God still has a purpose in this world for those to whom he grants physical healing? In other words, is physical healing not only a gift of health in general but also a means by which those who are healed can continue to serve God's purposes here on earth?

The finding that younger people are more likely to receive physical healing has implications for one of the reasons why miraculous healings seem to be more often reported from developing countries, including those where there are rapidly growing church planting movements. The general population of those countries is on average much younger than the average age of the population in more industrially developed countries of North America, Europe, Japan, and Australasia. (Exceptions are mainly among immigrant populations in these countries.) These demographic contrasts between aging populations in highly industrialized countries and the more youthful populations of many poor countries might explain in part why miracles of divine healing seem to be more common in developing countries and may to some extent account for the growth of some church planting movements.

Signs to Non-Christians

A primary purpose of John Wimber's "Signs and Wonders" conferences was to equip ordinary Christians in being open to the Holy Spirit and praying for healing and deliverance.

In response to being asked how they had put these teachings into practice, many interviewees replied that they had prayed for other Christians to be healed, with mixed results. However, a minority reported occasions when they had stepped out in faith to pray with non-Christians, who had often seen noticeable improvements in their conditions (Lewis 1989, 203-234). Anecdotally at least, God often seems to grant physical healing in situations where the healing is a sign to non-Christians—including the healing of older people, whose healing from a long-term disability can be a dramatic sign to others (John 5:5; Acts 4:22). A modern example of an adult being suddenly healed from a long-term disability is the case of Jennifer Rees-Larcombe, described in her book *Unexpected Healing* (1991). Her healing was described as a "Real Miracle" in the headline on the front page of her local newspaper (Bakowski 1990), so it was a witness to the whole town where she was living. Although signs as evangelistic tools were key features of the ministry of Jesus and his disciples, signs may precipitate a decision but they are not in themselves a "magic formula" to bring people to faith. Although some did put their faith in Jesus after seeing a miracle (e.g., John 2:11; John 4:53; Acts 3:1– 4:4), others became more opposed (e.g. John 11:46-50; Acts 4:5-21; 5:12-18). "Signs and wonders" are not substitutes for sharing the gospel, but they are a divine *confirmation* of the truth of the message (Mark 16:20; Acts 14:3; Hebrews 2:3-4).

The fact that "signs and wonders" seem to be reported more often from rapidly growing movements than from other types of church planting might be attributable simply to the greater overall numbers of people in those movements. Moreover, there are some movements that have not had a focus on "signs and wonders" or have not been actively teaching their disciples how to pray for healing and deliverance, and such movements' reports of miracles are apparently less common. Although God can do the unexpected, often he works in answer to prayer—in response to, hence as reflections of, his people's expectations, to at least some extent. Might it be that some, if not many, Christians in industrially developed countries have become socialized into a certain degree of scepticism or doubt about the supernatural? If such an outlook comes from the critical thinking instilled by education, that aspect of life in industrialized settings may at least partially explain the aforementioned finding that physical healing was less commonly reported by more educated people.

On the other hand, some younger people may be more expectant in their prayers because they have not yet been so socialized into conventional church attitudes towards the supernatural. Anecdotally, I have heard of a number of cases in which people had not received healing after church leaders had prayed for them but were healed after the prayer of a younger, relatively inexperienced Christian. One example is the young woman who prayed for Jennifer Rees-Larcombe, mentioned earlier. God sees beyond people's words into the attitude of the person's heart. (Compare Zechariah and Mary in Luke chapter 1.) Realizing that fundamental importance of a believing attitude is one reason why, if asked to pray for someone, I often invite one or two others to pray alongside me—and I may include those who are not leaders in the church, as their faith may be greater than mine. This practice is also a way to teach others involved: first I give them an example to follow, but then I let them put it into practice themselves. This method of learning by doing is also how Jesus trained his disciples (Mathew 10:1-10).

Expectancy

One's worldview is not innate but is learned by socialization into a community with a shared outlook on life. That process has important implications for mission, because younger people are often more receptive to new ideas and may be more willing to commit themselves to a different perspective on life. By comparison older people, whose attitudes have become more fixed, are not as receptive to new ideas—especially if they think they have more to lose if

they were to change their existing beliefs or practices. Within a "faith community" there can also be gradual shifts in attitudes towards "the supernatural" as people assess their experiences of answered prayer (or otherwise). To some extent, those who consider themselves "older and wiser" may outwardly profess a belief in miracles if it is part of the orthodoxy of the community, but in practice they may be dubious about actually praying for supernatural healing. Over time, there can be an overall shift in prevailing attitudes within the community as a whole: people's expectations drop, they are less likely to pray seriously for a miracle, and their experience matches their expectations.

By contrast, where people have experience of miracles their expectancy for God to do more of the same also increases. If such an expectancy becomes infused within a movement, a large number of people begin to pray with increased faith that God will heal people. Within any movement, there is a process over time whereby disciples learn from experience. For example, within a certain church planting movement (with which I have been involved as a trainer over the last 16 years) in the last few years there has been a much greater expectancy that God will lead them by means of supernatural revelations to prepared "persons of peace." Through visions or "words of knowledge" movement participants may be led to go to a certain village and at times God gives the names of a specific street or even a house number or some other clearly identifying information. As a result, house fellowships have been planted in many different communities.

This process of changing expectancies can occur in any fellowship or movement. It is important to note here that a lack of any expectation of supernatural activity is not the same as what Paul Hiebert labelled Westerners' "excluded middle," as Hiebert actually includes miracles within the "Western" or "modern" view of religion (Hiebert 1982, 39-45; 1985, 157-158). However, in practice this "modern, Western religion" may often hold a "belief that" miracles can happen (at least in theory) rather than an active "belief in" the power of God to intervene today in an actual situation encountered in real life. It might be that those whose worldviews are already more open to the possibility of supernatural encounters in one form or another may be the ones who are more willing to put their faith in Jesus into practice by expecting Jesus to do the same miracles in everyday life today as he did in Galilee approximately two millennia ago.

All Christians are bounded in some way by their particular, human expectations of what God can do. This is one reason why people often associate the term "signs and wonders" with miraculous healings, forgetting that the term "sign" in John's gospel is not restricted only to miracles of healing. In daily life many Christians are also likely to forget that Jesus said, "anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these…" (John 14:12). I have discussed possible interpretations of these words of Jesus elsewhere (Lewis 1989, 311-319). Here it is noteworthy that one example from the just-mentioned discussion (Lewis 1989, 317-318) involves the faith of a young child who believed that God could cause a coin to materialize from nowhere. Perhaps it is necessary for God's people to be in desperate straits genuinely to seek God to perform extraordinary and unexpected miracles. This prerequisite of desperation might be a reason why those being persecuted for their faith have sometimes experienced miracles such as flying through the air or being given supernatural power to run faster than a horse ("Brother Roman" 2018)—experiences that, while ridiculous to modern sceptical minds, actually have biblical precedents (Ezekiel 3:14; Acts 8:39-40; 1 Kings 18:46). An absence of persecution often weakens the church from the inside out, whereas the external pressures faced by the persecuted church may serve to refine and deepen their trust in Jesus. This time-proven reality may be a further reason why some types of miracles seem to be more commonly

reported among movements in parts of Asia and Africa where Jesus followers are willing to die for their faith.

Dependency upon God Alone

When God answers prayers for healing and deliverance, Christians often experience a deepening of their own faith. Moreover, they know that it is God who heals, and they cannot attribute the healing to their own character traits or other competencies. They are dependent on the Holy Spirit, a posture that promotes greater humility. Their desire to be used by God and to be receptive to the voice of the Holy Spirit may also be a motivation for holiness in their personal lives. However, these characteristics of humility and holiness among those "on the front line" in praying for healing and deliverance might be lost among movement catalysts or other Christian leaders who become engaged more in pastoral, teaching, or administrative aspects of leading a movement. Once Spirit-led Christians are no longer actively engaged in spiritual warfare, evangelism, and praying for the sick, there is a danger that they begin to rely more on their own personal traits and competencies, trusting in their human experience and methodology rather than listening to God and relying on God's supernatural power. Even if their self-evaluations of their spirituality are high because they think that they have founded a movement (so God must be working through them, and they must be using the right methods), there is a danger of losing their cutting edge and drifting away from a close walk with God. Dependency on God alone and listening to his voice are fostered by an active involvement in personal ministry, which includes praying for those who are sick and driving out demons.

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Rapid Kingdom Advance: How Shall We View It?

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Abstract

Rapid and multiplicative increase constitutes one of the most contentious aspects of Church Planting Movements, as described by David Garrison and others. Numerous concerns have been expressed about the element of rapidity. This article interacts with some of the most salient concerns, discussing the following questions: How does the Bible view rapid kingdom advance? Is rapid growth a goal of CPM? Does rapid growth lead to superficial and fragile faith? Does desire for rapid growth bring temptation to take shortcuts? Does stress on rapid growth add temptation to claim big numbers?

Key Words: Church Planting Movements, rapid, superficial

Introduction

In 2004, David Garrison defined a Church Planting Movement as "a rapid and multiplicative increase of indigenous churches planting churches within a given people group or population segment" (Garrison 2004, 21). In the years since then, much has been written about Church Planting Movements (CPMs) and other closely related terms, such as "Disciple Making Movements" (DMMs) and "Kingdom Movements." This article uses CPM as the best-known and most inclusive of these terms. Many of God's people are celebrating the rapid and multiplicative increase of indigenous churches planting churches. Those celebrating with greatest joy include those *experiencing* the phenomenon—especially the many newly coming to salvation in Christ—and those close enough to observe it firsthand. The global body of Christ seems to be currently experiencing a missional season of remarkable growth in many places.

At the same time, the description of rapid increase brings cause for concern among many, including some missiologists and experienced missionaries. Of all the elements in Garrison's definition, perhaps the greatest stumbling block for many is the word "rapid." Some of the most common concerns expressed about rapid multiplication include:

1. Scripture gives no promises that reproduction will be rapid.
2. Rapid growth is an unbiblical and unhealthy goal.
3. Rapid growth can lead to superficial and fragile faith. Is there adequate follow-up and discipleship? Or are CPMs laying a foundation a mile wide and an inch deep?
4. Desiring rapid growth may bring temptation to take shortcuts in order to see fruit appear quickly.
5. Stress on rapid growth may add temptation to claim large numbers.
6. High expectation for rapid multiplication of new churches gives workers little patience for the hard slogging in evangelism and discipleship needed to launch a movement. If they don't see fruit quickly, they will lose enthusiasm and hope and want to give up.

Each of these concerns deserves serious consideration.

How Does the Bible View *Rapid* Kingdom Advance?

How did the inspired writers of Scripture view rapid kingdom advance? And how does the Bible guide God's people to view rapid kingdom advance today? Of course, as Creator, Sustainer, and Sovereign God could do *everything very quickly*, if he so desired, including the whole of salvation history. He chose instead to work through processes that have taken many thousands of years, as noted in Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8b. God is not in a hurry, and while on earth Jesus never seemed in a hurry—for example in his apparently casual response to his friend Lazarus's fatal illness (John 11:6, 17, 21-23). Hence God's people must guard against acting in haste, which can result in missing the right way (Proverbs 19:2) and sharing in the sins of others (1 Timothy 5:22).

As for Scriptures related to rapid advance in kingdom purposes, 2 Chronicles 29:36 reports that "Hezekiah and *all* the people rejoiced at what God had brought about for his people, *because* it was done so quickly."[1] The speed with which God acted in that time of spiritual revival gave ample grounds for righteous rejoicing among *all* his people.

The Psalms reveal at least a dozen verses calling on God to act *quickly* (Psalms 22:19; 31:2; 38:22; 40:13; 69:17; 70:1,5; 71:12; 79:8; 102:2; 141:1; 143:7). In light of Jesus's command to love our neighbor as ourselves, these model prayers for personal rescue can rightly be applied in praying for salvation to come quickly to the lost.

In the parable of the sower Jesus sounds a note of caution about the danger of shallow discipleship: "Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow.... But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away" (Matthew 13:5, 21). Clearly not all rapid growth is healthy growth. Yet it does not logically follow that all rapid growth is *un*healthy growth. The difference between health and unhealth is *determined* by adequate roots and *manifested* by endurance in Christ or lack thereof. We see also in this parable that the seed falling on good soil "produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown" (Matthew 13:8b). Here Jesus's parable stresses abundance more than speed per se, but such abundance in one generation would normally be considered very significant—and rapid.

Luke, in his reporting of God's work among the early Church, seemed to view positively his report of rapid growth and large numbers: "So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem *increased rapidly*, and a *large number* of priests became obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). Some might claim this was mere historical narrative, neither a command nor a normative pattern for the Church age. Yet the Apostle Paul himself would challenge such arguments with his command to the church in Thessalonica: "Pray for us that the message of the Lord *may spread rapidly and be honored*, just as it was with you" (2 Thessalonians 3:1b). God's people are *commanded to pray for* rapid advance of the gospel.

Other New Testament texts give us insight into the nature of gospel advance in the New Testament. Acts 19:10 says all the Jews and Greeks in the province of Asia (an estimated 15 million people) "heard the word of the Lord" in two years. They certainly did not all hear it *directly* from Paul or the 12 initial disciples in Ephesus. The message apparently spread quite quickly through generational multiplication of disciples.

In Romans 15:19 and 23, Paul states that from Jerusalem all the way to Illyricum there was no place left for his pioneering work. Adequate discipling and laying firm spiritual foundations clearly did not depend on Paul being physically present in every location for great lengths of time. How could sufficient leadership be developed and adequate spiritual grounding and discipleship happen

among so many in such a short time? A clue lies in Paul's instructions to Timothy: "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2). Paul describes here multigenerational discipling of *groups* of leaders. We see four generations described: Paul, Timothy plus "many witnesses," "reliable people," and then "others." Paul applied a very reproducible approach to leadership training, so "reliable people," many of whom may have never even met Paul, could quickly become "qualified to teach others."

How was Paul able to start a church and leave it three weeks later, then it would become healthy and reproduce? He would come back six months to a year later, write a few letters, and those churches changed the world. How? As Paul wrote to Timothy, "What you heard from me, keep as the pattern (*hupotupōsis*) of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 1:13). He urged others to imitate him and his "way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church" (1 Corinthians 4:17b). He gave thanks to God that the believers in Rome had "come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance" (Romans 6:17b). Paul had a pattern of teaching that he used in every church: a simple reproducible pattern backed up by sound leadership training and a grand vision. Such a pattern enabled rapid reproduction. Modern CPMs likewise generally develop an easily reproducible pattern of instruction for discipleship.

Luke has recorded in Acts 14:23 that Paul's appointment of elders in certain churches did not depend on lengthy theological education. Paul's practice here does not argue against theological education per se; rather, the relevant point is that Scripture does not present it as a *prerequisite* for spiritual leadership in all contexts. The criteria found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 can and should be applied contextually in every situation, fitting also with 1 Timothy 5:22, as already mentioned.

To summarize this brief overview of some key biblical passages, God does not promise that reproduction will be rapid in every situation. In some cases he chooses to work slowly. Yet Scripture encourages us to *rejoice* at rapid kingdom advance as well as to pray for it.

Two mission leaders offer helpful clarification of biblical perspective on rapid multiplication. Zane Pratt writes: "Gospel urgency makes rapid multiplication something we should desire…. Our passion for the glory of God in the gospel and our love for our lost global neighbor compels our desire for the gospel to advance as rapidly as God will bless" (Pratt 2017). Steve Smith illustrates well the interplay of human methodology with God's sovereign choice in the advance of CPMs:

> Think of it this way. As a sailor, I can work on all of the controllables: making sure my sails are up, the tiller is in the right position, the sails are trimmed correctly. But until the wind blows, my sailboat is dead in the water. The wind is the uncontrollable. Or if the wind is blowing, but I as a sailor fail to raise the sails or trim them to catch the wind, I go nowhere. In this case, the wind is blowing but I don't know how to move with the wind. Jesus [said] 'The wind blows where it wishes'…. The Spirit blows in ways we cannot forecast, but blow He does. The question is not whether He is blowing. The question is: 'Is my ministry positioned to move the way He blows so that it can become a movement of God?' (Smith 2013, 29).

Right methods do not guarantee rapid kingdom advance, but they play a role in preparing the way for God's Spirit to work mightily. Ultimately, we surrender all sacrificial effort invested in any missionary approach into the sovereign hand of our loving Father.

Is Rapid Growth a Goal of CPM?

The discussion above suggests that rapid growth is not and should not be a goal per se. The rapid multiplication seen in CPMs results naturally from God blessing the use of appropriate means for making disciples and planting churches. These usually include reaching groups (rather than individuals), consistent evangelism by all believers, involvement of all believers in studying and applying God's Word, and empowering local leaders. Simple low-cost approaches can multiply much more quickly than approaches requiring large investment of resources. Applying these and other CPM-oriented patterns often *naturally* results in rapid multiplication. In fact, though, the early stages of catalyzing a CPM rarely happen quickly. Stages such as learning a new language and culture, finding a person of peace, and an evangelistic Discovery Group continuing to the point of a decision to follow Christ can take many years. CPM principles are far from a recipe for quick success.

CPMs multiply rapidly but not because of focusing on *rapidity*. They focus on *immediacy*. Believers are to hold a value of *immediately* obeying what they learn. The Gospel of Mark uses the word $\varepsilon v \theta v \varsigma$—"immediately"—over 30 times. "And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.' And *immediately* they left their nets and followed him" (Mark 1:17-18 ESV, emphasis added). Mark emphasizes that disciples, out of their love for God, obeyed immediately. Disciples in CPMs frequently obey the Word without delay or reservations. This immediate obedience results in rapid life transformation and rapid multiplication of believers and churches. In CPMs such Christianity is normal.

Descriptions of rapid growth in CPMs are exactly that: descriptions. However, if *description* is interpreted as *prescription*, unhealthy patterns could develop. But as already mentioned, speed is not a goal per se: it is a natural result of applying easily reproducible biblically sound patterns. Noteworthy is how sub-Saharan Africa is seeing rapid growth through more traditional church planting approaches as well as through CPMs. This article does not address the health or shortage thereof in every case of rapid growth. The issue in question is rapid growth taking place specifically through CPMs.

Does Rapid Growth Lead to Superficial and Fragile Faith?

As conveyed in the Parable of the Sower, superficial and fragile faith *can* result from rapid growth. But is that always the case or even the norm in CPMs? Most accusations of shallow faith seem based more on fear[2] or non-movement cases[3] rather than actual data from any of the more than 1,300 CPMs known to the 24:14 Coalition (www.2414now.net). Numerous actual case studies, assessments, articles, and books (see references and appendix) describing Kingdom Movements illustrate the faith of ordinary believers. They describe a faith that is passionate, well-grounded, and thriving *despite* persecution (the acid test mentioned in the Parable of the Sower). What might we find if we compare the resilience through persecution of disciples' faith in CPMs with the resilience of believers' faith in U.S.-American Evangelical churches? Those in movements have, on average, much *stronger* testimonies of enduring persecution than those questioning their depth of faith (John and Coles 2019, 69-84).

Regarding sound doctrine, it is instructive to compare results of research in the United States with samples of data from CPMs in developing nations. The 2018 LifeWay Research survey found that a majority of U.S.-Americans with "evangelical beliefs" (Smietana 2015) say, "Most people are basically good (52%); God accepts the worship of all religions (51%); Jesus was the first and greatest being created by God the Father (78%)" (Weber 2018). In contrast, the 2005 assessment of a CPM among the "K" people of Guatemala found that: "There was an overwhelming consensus among them that Jesus is God. There was no question about their theology of Jesus. The question asked was, 'Who is Jesus?'…. all responded in various ways that 'Jesus was God'" (from a confidential assessment of CPM among the K people of Guatemala, 2005). Meanwhile an outside team assessing a CPM in Africa in 2018 found "a quality of discipleship that is producing solid new believers who understand basic doctrines and sacrificially follow Jesus…. The new believers had a good understanding of basic doctrines like salvation, Jesus, Holy Spirit and even baptism although they have not had a lesson on that yet" (from a confidential assessment of a movement in Africa, 2018). A full assessment of the 73 million disciples currently involved in CPMs globally has not been attempted. However, all existing evidence suggests that their doctrinal orthodoxy stands up quite well when compared to U.S.-American Evangelicalism.

Every CPM within this article's purview has some pattern for follow-up and discipleship. In fact, many have thorough curricula designed to equip believers with firm doctrinal foundations for their life in Christ. By definition, a CPM has four or more generations of churches reproducing churches (Coles and Parks 2019a, 315). By passing on biblical truths, these disciples internalize the teachings better than if they had just passively received them. Those fearing doctrinal shallowness usually envision (or cite examples of) first-generation converts won through traditional methods rather than believers within a multi-generational movement. It turns out that rapid growth in the context of a healthy movement tends to produce disciples with a more passionate and contagious faith than the slow growth to which most of us are accustomed (Coles and Parks 2019a, 174-184).

Does Desire for Rapid Growth Bring Temptation to Take Shortcuts?

Temptations to take shortcuts exist among *all* servants of Christ—both in traditional approaches and in movements. Yet as shown above, the specter of shortcuts in discipleship dissolves in the light of actual data from CPMs. Fear of shortcuts in leadership training and equipping turn out to be based on traditional assumptions about how leaders should be equipped rather than on biblical commands or examples. Jesus said, "by their fruit you will recognize them" (Matthew 7:20). The questions this article considers receive more accurate answers through examining the fruit being borne in movements rather than through fears based on *a priori* assumptions or occasional anecdotes.

Does Stress on Rapid Growth Add Temptation to Claim Big Numbers?

Those who catalyze movements and those within movements do not put "stress on rapid growth." They focus on loving God and immediately obeying what he tells them through his Word. The immediacy of obedience (along with application of other CPM principles) tends to *result in* rapid growth.

Certainly the temptation to exaggerate numbers in hopes of financial gain or prestige can lure those using *any* church planting approach—traditional or CPM. The larger numbers related to CPMs might trigger those thinking traditionally to reason, "How could that possibly be true? Based

on what I've seen and experienced, someone must be lying or exaggerating to come up with number like that!" Better, however, than assuming falsehood or bad motives among Christian brothers and sisters is to check with reliable sources who can support or suggest caution concerning various reports.

Justin Long, Director of Research with BEYOND and Research Team Leader for the 24:14 Coalition, has summarized the criteria used by the 24:14 Coalition to accept a movement report as credible:

1. We only accept data reports from established and trusted movement practitioners, many of whom have been working for 10 to 30 years. There are approximately 30 movement families (networks of multiple movements) with significant interrelationships of trust, training and accountability inside the family and sometimes between families. Most fellowship reports are cross-referenced between at least five generations of churches and leaders within the movement.

2. The leaders from this network must be vouched for by a trusted movement practitioner or coach who is not a part of the network before they are counted in the global and regional totals.

3. For larger movements, we as the global 24:14 movement generally round to the nearest order of magnitude, and often the movements themselves will intentionally undercount or reduce by certain percentages if they feel caution is warranted. Some outside assessments conclude that the reports are significantly undercounting what is happening. Thus, we feel confident what we report is a "floor" not a "ceiling."

4. Most movements report numbers on a semi-annual basis to the 24:14 research team via secure email.

5. Occasionally, as warranted, movements will invite practitioners or researchers in to do an external audit. The main goal is to analyze the health and dynamics of the movement to help them improve, but it can also help verify the numbers (Coles and Parks 2019b, 40-41).

Sources such as the 24:14 Coalition and those listed below in the References and Appendix offer carefully weighed reports from movements around the world. Many CPMs also track other categories of fruit besides numbers of disciples. Some use advanced software tools to track *all* the major elements of church life found in Acts 2.

Does High Expectation for Rapid Multiplication of New Churches Give Workers Little Patience for the Hard Slogging in Evangelism and Discipleship Needed to Launch a Movement? Does Such Expectation Increase the Likelihood of Workers' Discouragement If They Don't See Fruit Quickly?

As already clarified, CPM principles *do not* promise quick results. The early stages of catalyzing a CPM rarely happen quickly or easily. Much prayer, hard work, and interaction with local people (both believers and unbelievers) in a focused context are needed to lay a solid foundation. CPM trainings often share the maxim, "Go slow to go fast." It normally takes much *longer* to find a person of peace who opens their household than to find just anyone who is open to the gospel. It takes longer to share a vision and discover others who resonate with the vision—enough to pursue

it without pay—than to hire local believers as evangelists. The greater danger is that workers may start out aiming to catalyze a movement but over time begin to settle for traditional methods because they are *initially quicker and easier*. Such a shift might include just reaching individuals instead of groups, hiring local evangelists, paying for transportation so seekers can attend gatherings, and other methods that can yield traditional church planting fruit but be unlikely to result in a movement. It turns out that a high level of vision and expectation inspires the perseverance in useful steps that more often *do* result in movements. Movements usually have a period of multiple years with little or no growth while a foundation is laid that sometimes results in exponential growth (John and Coles 2019, 9-12).

We believe in a great God who has done and continues to do mighty things. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). We stand by faith in him along with William Carey who said, "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God." The rapid Kingdom advance of Church Planting Movements consists of millions of "great things" taking place in our day. God has moved powerfully at many points throughout church history, and many CPM principles consist of the best wisdom of past missions work being re-launched. God does not guarantee a specific set of methods will yield abundant or rapid fruit. We know that all our best effort, using any method, is subject to his sovereign choice to bless. We also know he clearly blesses the use of appropriate means to advance his Kingdom. We can join the early Thessalonian believers in obeying the Lord's command to: "Pray for [gospel messengers] that the message of the Lord *may spread rapidly and be honored*, just as it was among [the first Thessalonian believers]." And when the Lord is pleased to answer such prayers with rapid Kingdom advance, we can rightly join the psalmist in saying, "For you make me glad by your deeds, Lord; I sing for joy at what your hands have done" (Psalms 92:4).

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[1] All Scripture references quoted from the NIV, except where otherwise specified; any italic font has been added for emphasis.

[2] For example, in the 36-minute podcast "Are Explosive Disciple-Making Movements Really Healthy?" Zane Pratt uses the word "fear" five times to describe his perspective on various aspects of Church Planting Movements, including rapid reproduction. *The Missions Podcast*, July 2, 2018 (accessed January 22, 2022).

[3] For example, Pratt (ibid, @ 9:46-12:20) cites numerous cases to illustrate his concern about the danger of syncretism. None of the examples he cites claims to be a Church Planting Movement.

The Effective Catalyst: An Analysis of the Traits and Competencies of Pioneers who have Catalyzed a Movement

Emanuel Prinz and Alison Goldhor

Abstract

This article reports on the largest-ever empirical research into the personal traits and competencies of an effective movement catalyst. The study compared survey results of 147 pioneers who catalyzed a movement with a control group of 160 pioneers who did not, spanning 38 countries across the globe. The study identifies 15 traits and competencies where effective catalysts rate themselves ≥ 4.5 on a 1-5 Likert scale, as well as where they show significantly higher self-ratings than non-catalyst pioneers in the same six regions. The study further identifies significant inhibiting and contributing (and internal/external) factors and their impact on the catalyzing of movements. Some of the study's findings challenge the conventional understanding of an effective movement catalyst among movement thinkers.

Key Words: catalyst, competencies, movement, pioneer, traits

Introduction

What traits and competencies characterize pioneers who have been instrumental in catalyzing a movement? What traits and competencies distinguish these effective movement catalysts from those who have not catalyzed a movement? These two questions formed the basis of an extensive Catalyst Competence Research project by Bethany Research Institute in 2020-21.

The study had a sample size of 307 pioneer missionaries, of which 147 had catalyzed a movement and 160 had not. Participants represented the largest mega-cultures of the world, with a focus on the regions or groupings where most movements have occurred, specifically Francophone Africa, East Africa, India, Indonesia, Latin America, and Ethnic Chinese. All participants completed an online survey (available in French, Swahili, Hindi, Indonesian and Spanish as well as English) with 95 questions; 45 of them also gave in-depth interviews.

Developing a List of Traits and Competencies

Based on a review of the relevant literature on empirical leadership studies and apostolic and movement leadership (including Prinz 2016), a list of 24 trait and competency constructs was developed. (Definitions can be found in Appendix A.) These 24 constructs were grouped into the following three domains, as shown further below in Table 1:

1. The "Big Five" personality domain: traits and competencies related to personality and character;
2. The "Spiritual" domain: traits and competencies of a spiritual nature, having to do with one's relationship to God;
3. The "Socio-Influential" domain: traits and competencies related to social behavior and influencing others.

Table 1: Trait and Competency Constructs, Grouped into Three Domains		
Section 1: Individual traits and competencies ("Big Five" domain)	Section 2: Spiritual traits and competencies ("Spiritual" domain)	Section 3: Social Influence traits and competencies ("Socio-Influential" domain)
1. Openness to experience	1. Hunger for God	1. Extroversion

2. Creativity	2. Listening to God	2. Assertiveness
3. Drive to achieve	3. Evangelistic Zeal	3. Inspiring Personality
4. Conscientiousness	4. Expectant Faith	4. Influencing Beliefs
5. Internal locus of control	5. Fervent Intercession	5. Inspiring Shared Vision
6. Persistence	6. Tangible Love	(Number 6 was cut after the pretest)
7. Agreeableness	7. Confidence in Locals	7. Disciple-making
8. Flexibility	8. Confidence in the Bible	8. Empowering
9. Emotional stability		

After an initial pretest, a list of 44 questions was developed to measure participants' ratings of each of these trait and competency constructs (TCs). These are labeled TC1-1-1 through TC3-8-1, based on the three domains described above. In the following tables we will present respondents' average self-ratings for the 24 trait and competency constructs.

Traits and Competencies at Construct Level

All the trait and competency constructs examined had been identified in a literature review as those universally correlated with leadership effectiveness by empirical research. So it does not come as a surprise that effective catalysts rated themselves higher than non-catalysts for 21 of the 24 traits and competencies. (In each case, the means difference between catalysts and non-catalysts was statistically significant.) For 13 of the constructs, the difference between catalysts and control group was at least 1/3 of a Likert point (>0.33), and for seven of them it was almost half a Likert point (>0.46).

Table 2 below shows the trait and competency constructs that mark effective movement catalysts, sorted by self-rating by catalysts in descending order. Traits and competencies identified in the leadership literature review as characteristic of effective leaders are also rated highly by the effective movement catalysts. The only exceptions are the constructs at the bottom of the table, each with a rating lower than 4.0: *flexibility, extroversion*, and *emotional stability*.

The study also assessed whether the means difference between catalyst and control group ratings was statistically significant. Except for the three rows at the bottom of the table, the means difference between catalysts and control group members was statistically significant for all other trait and competency constructs.

Table 2: Trait and Competency Constructs Sorted by Self-Rating				
Trait and Competency Constructs	**Catalyst**	**Control**	**Difference**	**Standard Deviation**
TC2-7 Confidence in Locals	4.88	4.53	0.36	0.77
TC2-8 Confidence in the Bible	4.77	4.39	0.37	0.81
TC3-2 Assertiveness	4.77	4.29	0.48	0.84
TC3-4 Influencing Beliefs	4.70	4.19	0.51	0.74
TC1-4 Conscientiousness	4.69	4.41	0.29	0.85
TC2-6 Genuine love	4.69	4.43	0.27	0.87
TC2-3 Evangelistic Zeal	4.68	4.39	0.28	0.64
TC2-4 Expectant Faith	4.67	4.36	0.31	0.94
TC3-5 Inspiring Shared Vision	4.66	4.23	0.43	0.77
TC3-7 Disciple-making	4.65	4.07	0.58	0.96

TC3-8 Empowering	4.63	4.11	0.53	0.97
TC1-7 Agreeableness	4.60	4.16	0.44	0.92
TC3-3 Inspiring Personality	4.60	4.06	0.54	0.92
TC2-1 Hunger for God	4.51	4.15	0.35	0.74
TC2-2 Listening to God	4.51	4.16	0.35	0.74
TC1-1 Openness to Experience	4.44	4.19	0.25	0.93
TC1-5 Internal locus of control	4.43	4.11	0.32	0.99
TC1-3 Drive to achieve	4.41	4.14	0.27	0.75
Average of all traits and competencies	4.41	4.06	0.34	0.50
TC1-2 Creativity	4.32	3.86	0.46	0.83
TC1-6 Persistence	4.30	3.98	0.31	0.98
TC2-5 Fervent Intercession	3.83	3.07	0.76	1.02
TC1-8 Flexibility (not significant)	3.47	3.63	-0.16	0.93
TC3-1 Extroversion (not significant)	3.27	3.37	-0.10	1.04
TC1-9 Emotional stability (not significant)	3.01	3.15	-0.14	1.20

To try to understand the reasons why three traits and competencies were not verified as significant, we offer some possible explanations. *Flexibility* brings strengths in certain situations but potential weaknesses in others. Empirical studies have shown that leaders are universally marked by flexibility; apparently this is less true of effective movement catalysts. Without further research, we are at this point unable to offer a clear explanation as to why this trait is not a significant marker of movement catalysts.

Extroversion is measured in this study on a behavioral level, not as a psychological inclination. At times, and as the situation demands, catalysts can be assertive, while at other times they may choose more introverted behaviors, giving space to others with the intent of empowering them. In balancing the two, catalysts may deliberately hold themselves back.

With regards to *emotional stability*, there is no apparent explanation as to why catalysts do not rate themselves higher.

Looking at the list as a whole, practitioners will benefit as they see what are the traits and competencies of those pioneers that God uses to catalyze a movement. It will give them a basis for an honest self-assessment of how much they have developed each of these traits and competencies as well as help them to identify their biggest gaps, providing direction for their ongoing development.

Findings at the Question Level

In the process of the survey's development, each construct was operationalized, meaning that the trait or competency was broken down into catalysts' specific behaviors, attitudes, and convictions. Table 3 shows the 22 responses where (a) catalysts rated themselves the highest (≥4.50), (b) catalysts and control group show a statistically significant difference, and (c) that difference amounted to at least 1/3 of a Likert scale point (≥0.33). Responses are sorted by catalyst self-rating in descending order. For all questions shown in the table there was a statistically significant means difference between catalysts and control group members.

Table 3: Self-ratings for the 44 Questions Testing for Traits and Competencies
Sorted by Highest Catalyst Ratings

Questions Measuring Traits and Competencies	Catalysts	Control Group	Difference
TC2-1-3 **Hunger for God**: Deep down, I feel a hunger to know God more and to be closer to His heart.	4.93	4.61	0.33
TC2-7-2 **Confidence in Locals**: I am confident that God grows and uses new disciples - He can use them as much or more than He can use me.	4.88	4.53	0.36
TC2-2-2 **Listening to God:** I regularly spend time seeking God's guidance.	4.84	4.46	0.38
TC2-3-3 **Evangelistic Zeal**: I regularly think about more effective ways we can share the Gospel.	4.78	4.40	0.38
TC3-5-3 **Inspiring Shared Vision**: To those around me, I express confidence that our goals will be achieved.	4.78	4.28	0.50
TC1-3-4 **Drive to Achieve**: Setting and achieving goals motivates me.	4.78	4.26	0.52
TC2-8-1 **Confidence in the Bible**: Others would describe me as someone who has a deep confidence in the power of the Bible for discipling and ministry.	4.77	4.39	0.37
TC3-2-2 **Assertiveness**: I am motivated to influence and bring change, wherever I go.	4.77	4.29	0.48
TC2-2-1 **Listening to God**: Others would describe me as a person who is strongly dependent on God for my life and ministry.	4.71	4.28	0.44
TC3-4-4 **Influencing Beliefs**: I regularly communicate my most important values and beliefs to others.	4.71	4.19	0.52
TC1-3-3 **Drive to Achieve**: Once I set a goal, I am motivated to work until I have attained it.	4.70	4.36	0.34
TC3-4-1 **Influencing Beliefs**: I regularly talk about my most important values and beliefs.	4.70	4.19	0.51
TC2-3-1 **Evangelistic Zeal**: Others would describe me as a person who is passionate about seeing as many people as possible saved.	4.68	4.35	0.33
TC1-6-2 **Persistence**: When things get hard, I am tenacious and push through until the job is done.	4.68	4.27	0.41
TC3-7-1 **Disciple-making**: My disciples give me the feedback that me discipling them has led to character formation and greater obedience to God.	4.65	4.07	0.58
TC3-8-1 **Empowering**: Others would describe me as someone who empowers others and develops their potential.	4.63	4.11	0.53
TC1-7-2 **Agreeableness**: I am characterized by pleasant conversation and companionship.	4.60	4.16	0.44
TC3-3-1 **Inspiring Personality**: People have said that they are proud of being associated with me.	4.60	4.06	0.54
TC2-1-1 **Hunger for God**: Others would say that I love God passionately.	4.54	4.14	0.40
TC3-5-2 **Inspiring Shared Vision**: I articulate a compelling vision of the future.	4.54	4.19	0.35
TC2-1-5 **Hunger for God**: I follow God, but I do not feel that I desire Him deeply. (inverted)	4.51	4.13	0.38

TC2-5-5 **Fervent Intercession** [coded]: On average, I spend this many hours per week praying by myself or with others on behalf of our adopted people: ___	3.75	2.78	0.98

From this list in Table 3, we can glean best practices that distinguish effective catalysts from pioneers who have not catalyzed a movement—which takes the insights gleaned from Table 2 one level deeper. Not only do we see what the traits and competencies of effective movement catalysts are, but Table 3 also identifies the specific convictions, attitudes, practices, and behaviors in their lives. These can be seen as a list of what in organizational behavior theory is termed "Best Practices" and what missions research has labeled "Fruitful Practices" (Woodberry 2011). Having such a list will enable practitioners to identify practices and behaviors that have made a significant difference in enabling a movement to be catalyzed.

Differences between Same-Culture, Near-Culture, and Expatriate Catalysts

Table 4 below shows the trait and competency constructs distinguished by the origin of the main catalyst: he or she may be an expatriate, a member of a different people group near the group being reached (in the same country), or a member of the same people group. When comparing how each of these sub-groups ranked themselves, differences were typically small. The table only shows the eight trait and competency constructs which exhibited a statistically significant difference between the three groups.

Table 4: Trait and Competency Constructs by Origin of Main Catalyst				
Trait and Competency Constructs	**Expat**	**Same country proximate people group**	**Same people group**	**All**
TC1-7 Agreeableness	4.24	4.15	4.45	4.36
TC1-8 Flexibility	3.91	3.83	3.35	3.54
TC1-9 Emotional stability	3.43	3.37	2.88	3.07
TC2-5 Fervent Intercession	3.09	3.26	3.54	3.41
TC3-1 Extroversion	3.70	3.55	3.15	3.32
TC3-3 Inspiring Personality	4.06	4.38	4.37	4.32
TC3-4 Influencing Beliefs	4.28	4.25	4.53	4.43
TC3-7 Disciple-making	4.06	4.37	4.41	4.34
Average of all traits and competencies	4.18	4.28	4.22	4.22

Note that expatriate catalysts rank significantly lower than their counterparts on *agreeableness, disciple-making*, and *intercession*. They rank higher on *emotional stability, flexibility,* and *extroversion*. The catalysts from the same country, interestingly, rank in the middle between expatriate and same people group catalysts for most traits and competencies. Where they rank considerably higher than both other groups is *drive to achieve*. Catalysts from the same people group rank lower than the other two groups in *flexibility* and *emotional stability*. They rate themselves higher than the other groups on *intercession* and *disciple-making*. Overall, given that only eight of the 24 traits and competencies showed a statistically significant difference between the three groups, and that the average across all traits and competencies was not statistically significant, we conclude that catalysts from different cultural

backgrounds have far more similarities than differences in the traits and competencies they exhibit.

Contributing and Inhibiting Factors

While the study assumed that the traits and competencies of the movement pioneers would have a primary influence on movement outcomes, it also sought to measure other influencing factors. These other factors were grouped as eleven so-called "contributing factors," which would be expected to positively influence the catalyzing of a movement, and ten "inhibiting factors" that would negatively influence the catalyzing of a movement.

These 21 factors can alternatively be categorized as "internal" or "external": internal factors are those that can be influenced by the pioneers themselves and/or their teams, while external factors are outside of their immediate control and cannot be influenced directly (other than through prayer). Of the 21 factors, 13 were classified in the study as internal and eight as external.

The list of *contributing factors* is as follows, with (I) denoting internal factors and (E) external:

1. Prayer (I)
2. Received specific guidance from God (I)
3. Compassion ministry/met people's holistic needs (I)
4. Right ministry strategy or method (I)
5. Contextualized ministry approach (I)
6. Discovery approach and discovery groups (I)
7. Reproducible disciple-making (I)
8. Raised up leaders effectively (I)
9. Conversions without human involvement (for example Jesus appearing to people in dreams or visions, or people coming to faith by reading the Bible without any human agent) (E)
10. Signs and wonders (E)
11. Prior openness to the Gospel (meaning that the people were ready to hear) (E)

The list of *inhibiting factors* is as follows (also with (I) and (E) denotations):

1. Time limitation due to tentmaking (I)
2. Time limitation due to family challenges (I)
3. Personal character issues (I)
4. Conflicts on the team or with ministry partners (I)
5. Money misuse or corrupting character (I)
6. Government opposition (E)
7. Persecution by society (E)
8. Lack of funding (E)
9. Key workers recruited away by better paying organizations (E)
10. Lack of prior openness to the Gospel (E)

Survey participants rated the extent to which each factor had impacted their ministry on a Likert scale of 1-5, with 1 representing *not at all* or *not at all significantly* and 5 signifying *very much* or *very significantly.* The effective catalysts were asked: "How much did this factor contribute to/impede the catalyzing of your movement?" Pioneers in the control group who did not catalyze a movement were asked a slightly re-worded question: "How much did this factor contribute to/impede your ministry fruitfulness?"

Table 5 displays the results for Contributing Factors; further below Table 6 carries the results for Inhibiting Factors. The first two columns show the average self-ratings of each group on the 1-5 Likert scale, sorted by the self-ratings of effective catalysts. Column 3, "Both," represents the average of both groups, while column 4, "Difference," shows the difference between the two groups. An asterisk behind the "Difference" value indicates that the means difference between catalysts and non-catalysts is statistically significant.

	Table 5: Factors Contributing to the Catalyzing of a Movement/Ministry Fruitfulness				
	Contributing Factors	**Catalysts**	**Non-catalysts**	**Both**	**Difference**
1	Prayer (I)	4.76	4.61	4.68	0.14
2	Received specific guidance from God (I)	4.6	4.35	4.47	0.25*
3	Raised up leaders effectively (I)	4.55	3.75	4.13	0.81*
4	Reproducible disciple-making (I)	4.52	3.97	4.23	0.54*
5	Right ministry strategy or method (I)	4.51	3.71	4.09	0.8*
6	Contextualized ministry approach (I)	4.33	4.2	4.26	0.12
7	Signs and wonders (E)	4.3	3.99	4.14	0.31*
8	Compassion ministry/met holistic needs (I)	4.17	3.67	3.91	0.5*
9	Discovery approach/groups (I)	4.16	3.45	3.79	0.72*
10	Prior openness to the gospel (E)	3.76	3.44	3.59	0.32
11	Conversions without human involvement (E)	2.65	2.78	2.72	-0.12
	Average of all Contributing Factors	**4.21**	**3.81**	**4.00**	**+0.40***

It is remarkable that effective catalysts experience every one of the internal factors as contributing more significantly than the control group—factors which they themselves had influenced in the first place. The difference is most apparent with the following factors, where the difference between effective catalysts and non-catalysts is significant and amounts to at least 0.33 (1/3 of a Likert scale point): *raised up leaders effectively* (+0.81), *right ministry strategy or method* (+0.80), and *use of a discovery approach* (+0.72). All the factors where the ratings of the two groups differ most widely have to do with ministry strategy or approach: *raised up leaders effectively* (+0.81), *right ministry strategy or method* (+0.80), *discovery approach/groups* (+0.72), *reproducible disciple-making* (+0.54), and *compassion ministry/met holistic needs* (+0.50). Interestingly, there was not a statistically significant difference for the contributing factor *prior openness to the gospel* between both groups, even though catalysts rated this factor slightly higher than non-catalysts (but the inhibiting factor *lack of prior openness to the gospel* received a much higher rating in the control group; see below).

Significantly, all these factors are internal, meaning that they can be influenced by pioneers and their teams. The only external factor with a statistically significant means difference between the two groups, albeit amounting to only 0.31, was *signs and wonders*. The only factor that contributed slightly more significantly in non-movement ministry situations was *conversions without human involvement*, an external factor, but the means difference between catalysts and non-catalysts was not statically significant.

	Table 6: Factors Inhibiting the Catalyzing of a Movement/Ministry Fruitfulness				
	Inhibiting Factors	**Catalysts**	**Non-catalysts**	**Both**	**Difference**
1	Persecution by society (E)	3.29	3.43	3.36	-0.14
2	Lack of funding (E)	3.05	3.38	3.22	-0.33*
3	Government opposition (E)	3.02	3.13	3.07	-0.1

4	Lack of prior openness to the gospel (E)	2.82	3.43	3.14	-0.61*
5	Time limitation due to family challenges (I)	2.7	2.98	2.85	-0.28
6	Key workers recruited away (E)	2.63	2.58	2.6	0.05
7	Time limitation due to tentmaking (I)	2.59	3.07	2.84	-0.48*
8	Conflicts on team or with partners (I)	2.47	2.51	2.49	-0.03
9	Personal character issues (I)	2.2	2.79	2.51	-0.59*
10	Money misuse or corrupting character (I)	1.76	2	1.89	-0.24
	Average of all Inhibiting Factors	**2.65**	**2.93**	**2.80**	**-0.28***

The factors that catalysts rate highest as impeding movement breakthrough were *persecution by society* (3.29), *lack of funding* (3.05), and *government opposition* (3.02)—all external factors. Non-catalysts rated *persecution by society* and a *lack of prior openness to the gospel* equally high (3.43).

The internal inhibiting factors that catalysts rated most highly were *time limitation due to family challenges* (2.7), *key workers recruited away* (2.63), *time limitation due to tentmaking* (2.59), and *conflicts on team or with partners* (2.47). These ratings were mostly lower than those for external factors.

The most significant differences between effective catalysts and the control group are that non-catalysts face a greater *lack of prior openness to the gospel* (-0,61), their ministry is impeded more by *character issues of team members or partners* (-0.59), and they are challenged more by *lack of time due to their tentmaking jobs* (-0.48).

It is encouraging to note that both catalysts and non-catalysts give significantly lower ratings to the inhibiting than to the contributing factors. While variables such as *persecution by society* and *lack of funding* constitute a definite hindrance to movement breakthrough, they apparently have far less impact than variables such as *prayer* and *receiving specific guidance from God*, which affect outcomes positively.

The data provides answers to questions that are often raised about movements. First, effective movement catalysts are not more effective in catalyzing movements because their contexts are "easier." The average external inhibiting factor rating for catalysts was 2.82, only slightly lower than for non-catalysts (2.92), a difference which was not statistically significant.

Second, movement catalysts may be partially more effective because the people among whom they are ministering are simply more open to the gospel. Effective catalysts rated a *lack of prior openness to the gospel* significantly lower than non-catalysts (-0.61). This difference needs to be qualified, though, since this factor was included in both positive and negative forms, with *openness to the gospel* on the list of contributing factors and *lack of openness* on the list of inhibiting factors. Effective catalysts assessed *openness to the gospel* as a more significant factor by a margin of only +0.32. There was also no significant difference between effective catalysts and the control group regarding their experience of *government opposition*, another factor related to the openness of a society for the gospel. Even so, the research confirms that a *lack of openness to the gospel* does play a role as a factor in the catalyzing of movements.

When comparing the significance of internal and external factors, as well as the total averages of contributing and inhibiting factors, the following table shows the differences between the catalysts and non-catalysts:

Table 7: A Comparison of Internal and External, Contributing and Inhibiting Factors

	Catalysts	Non-catalysts	Both	Difference
Average of all Internal Factors, both Contributing and Inhibiting	4.14	3.72	3.92	+0.42
Average of all External Factors, both Contributing and Inhibiting	3.24	3.04	3.13	+0.20
Average of all Contributing Factors	4.21	3.81	4.00	+0.40
Average of all Inhibiting Factors	2.65	2.93	2.80	-0.28
Average of all Internal Contributing Factors	4.45	3.96	4.20	+0.49
Average of all Internal Inhibiting Factors	3.66	3.33	3.48	+0.32
Average of all External Contributing Factors	3.57	3.40	3.48	+0.17
Average of all External Inhibiting Factors	3.04	2.81	2.92	+0.23

As could be expected, the contributing factors rate higher, and the inhibiting factors lower, for the effective catalysts than for the control group. The most significant difference is between internal contributing factors, pointing to the influence of effective catalysts' lives and leadership. Effective catalysts also rated both external contributing and external inhibiting factors higher than non-catalysts, indicating that generally speaking their ministry context is no more favorable than that of non-catalysts.

The Mutual Influence of Catalysts' Traits and Competencies and Other Factors

This section evaluates the influence of traits and competencies as well as contributing and inhibiting variables on movement outcomes. While the study assumed that the traits and competencies of the movement pioneers would have a primary influence on movement outcomes, it also sought to measure other influencing factors unrelated to the pioneers' traits. These variables were entered into a multivariate statistical analysis called regression analysis. A regression measures the simultaneous influence of several explanatory variables on a response variable (or outcome) in order to show which of these factors influence the outcome in a significant way.

The first regression analysis (Table 8) focuses on traits and competencies at the question level, which reflect specific behaviors or activities related to these traits and competencies. The results indicate which items differentiate effective catalysts from those who did not catalyze a movement. (Note that a p-value below 0.05 is statistically significant.)

Table 8: Traits and Competencies (Question Level) of Effective Catalysts that Differ Most Significantly from the Control Group		
Traits and Competency Items	**Value**	**p-value**
TC3-4-4 **Influencing Beliefs**: I regularly communicate my most important values and beliefs to others.	-0.910	0.000
TC1-6-5 **Persistence**: I tend to stop trying when things get very hard. [inverted] – re-worded as a positive: I don't give up, even when things get hard.	-0.512	0.012
TC1-3-4 **Drive to Achieve**: Setting and achieving goals motivates me.	-0.508	0.015
TC2-8-1 **Confidence in the Bible**: Others would describe me as someone who has a deep confidence in the power of the Bible for discipling and ministry.	-0.483	0.034
Average of all Contributing Factors	*-0.481*	*0.003*

TC2-5-5 **Fervent Intercession**: [coded] On average, I spend this many hours per week praying by myself or with others on behalf of our adopted people: ___	-0.452	0.002
TC2-3-3 **Evangelistic Zeal**: I regularly think about more effective ways we can share the gospel.	-0.407	0.049
TC2-2-4 **Listening to God**: I am too busy with other things to wait on God and listen to Him. [inverted] – re-worded as a positive: I regularly wait on God and listen to him.	0.346	0.052
TC1-3-1 **Drive to Achieve**: Others would describe me as an achievement-oriented person.	0.457	0.019
Average of all Inhibiting Factors	*0.499*	*0.000*
TC1-8-4 **Flexibility**: I find it hard to adapt to change. [inverted] – re-worded as a positive: I adapt to change quickly.	0.627	0.001
TC1-3-3 **Drive to Achieve**: Once I set a goal, I am motivated to work until I have attained it.	0.758	0.004

A total of six trait and competency questions correlated positively with movement catalyzing, each of them belonging to a different trait and competency construct. Four trait and competency questions correlated negatively with movement catalyzing, two of them belonging to the construct *Drive to Achieve*.

The individual trait and competency question with the strongest positive correlation with movement catalyzing was "TC3-4-4 I regularly communicate my most important values and beliefs to others." This question is part of the trait and competency construct *Influencing Beliefs,* defined as the competence to influence others toward certain ideals, a process that shapes beliefs and transfers values. It is possible that this competence functions like a keystone among all competencies of an effective catalyst—and that its proficient practice is at the very heart of movement ministry.

This finding, although not entirely surprising, provides significant insights. For one, what is widely recognized as the foremost school of leadership, "Transformational Leadership," has empirically identified *Influencing Beliefs* (or "Idealized Influence") as one of only four competences of transformational leaders (e.g., Riggio 2014). Also, from a movement philosophy standpoint, the effective transference of spiritual beliefs and values forms the key to movements because it leads to the multiplication of disciples and churches. It appears, then, that the single practice with the biggest impact on movement breakthrough is for catalysts to communicate often their most important values and beliefs.

Table 9 examines the importance of individual contributing and inhibiting factors, while also taking into account the influence of individual traits and competencies that were found to have a statistically significant influence on the catalyzing of movements.

Table 9: Catalysts' Traits and Competencies (Construct Level) and Other Contributing and Inhibiting Factors		
Source	**Value**	**Pr > Chi²**
Contributing Factor: Adopted right ministry strategy (Internal)	-0.293	0.017
TC3-2 Assertiveness	-0.289	0.029
TC2-5 Intercession	-0.276	0.005
TC3-4 Influencing Beliefs	-0.274	0.035
Contributing Factor: Raised up leaders effectively (Internal)	-0.263	0.058
Contributing Factor: Used discovery approach/groups (Internal)	-0.226	0.034

Inhibiting Factor: Time limitation due to tentmaking (Internal)	0.175	0.062
Inhibiting Factor: Lack of prior openness to the gospel (External)	0.202	0.034
TC1-3 Drive to achieve	0.264	0.060

The results show that five contributing and inhibiting factors correlate with movement outcomes, three positively and two negatively. As would be expected, the contributing factors all correlate positively with movement catalyzing, while inhibiting factors correlate negatively.

Four of the five factors with significant influence are internal. The only external factor is the inhibiting factor *lack of prior openness to the gospel*.

The analyses show that, *irrespective of the individual traits and competencies of the catalyst*, *the following factors correlate with movement outcome*. With each factor we added (in parentheses) the means difference between catalysts and non-catalysts from tables 5 and 6. The combination of descriptive and multivariate statistical analysis shows that factors with the highest and statistically significant means differences between catalysts and non-catalysts were also the factors in the regression with the greatest impact on movement outcomes.

Contributing factors:

- Raised up leaders effectively (0.81)
- Right ministry strategy or method (0.80)
- Discovery approach and discovery groups (0.72)

Inhibiting factors:

- Lack of prior openness to the gospel (-0.61)
- Time limitation due to tentmaking (-0.48)

Overall, it is evident that the most important factors behind movement catalyzing are (a) the traits and competencies of the pioneers and (b) internal factors that can be directly influenced by pioneers and their teams. Only one external factor—*lack of prior openness to the gospel*—played a role, albeit a lesser one, for the catalyzing of movements.

Summary and Conclusions

The research identified 22 traits and competencies that characterize effective movement catalysts and distinguish them from pioneers who have not catalyzed movements. Fifteen of these traits and competencies, with a more significant difference in the ratings, distinguish effective catalysts even more clearly from non-catalysts.

The catalysts who were interviewed in addition to completing the online survey referred to their intentionality and focus as an additional essential factor contributing to movement breakthrough. The non-catalysts did not mention either intentionality or focus at all—a significant contrast between the two groups.

The study also identified a number of specific convictions, attitudes, and behaviors that characterize effective catalysts and distinguish them from non-catalysts. These can be labeled "Best Practices."

A total of six traits and competencies correlated positively with movement catalyzing in the regression analysis (Table 8). These are combined below with the findings of the descriptive statistics and the analysis of contributing and inhibiting factors.

The following explanatory variables (traits and competencies, and contributing or inhibiting factors) *were highly rated by catalysts* (at least 4.5 out of 5) and were shown in the regression analysis to have the most significant influence on movement outcomes:

- *Influencing Beliefs*: I regularly communicate my most important values and beliefs to others. (positive correlation)
- *Drive to Achieve*: Setting and achieving goals motivates me. (positive correlation)
- *Confidence in the Bible*: Others would describe me as someone who has a deep confidence in the power of the Bible for discipling and ministry. (positive correlation)
- *Fervent Intercession*: On average, I spend this many hours per week praying by myself or with others on behalf of our adopted people. (positive correlation)
- *Evangelistic Zeal*: I regularly think about more effective ways we can share the gospel. (positive correlation)
- *Drive to Achieve*: Once I set a goal, I am motivated to work until I have attained it. (negative correlation)
- *Raising Up Leaders Effectively* (contributing / internal)
- *Right Ministry Strategy or Method* (contributing / internal)

The following explanatory variables (traits and competencies, and contributing or inhibiting factors) *were rated relatively highly* by catalysts (higher than 4 on a 1-5 Likert scale) and were also shown in the regression analysis to have significant influence on movement outcomes:

- *Persistence*: I don't give up, even when things get hard. (positive correlation)
- *Listening to God*: I regularly wait on God and listen to him. (negative correlation)
- *Drive to Achieve*: Others would describe me as an achievement-oriented person. (negative correlation)
- *Discovery Approach and Discovery Groups* (contributing / internal)
- *Lack of Prior Openness to the Gospel* (inhibiting / external)

Taken together, these two lists present this study's first key finding, namely the leader traits and competencies that correlate with the effective catalyzing of movements.

The second key finding is that seven of the eight explanatory variables most highly rated by effective catalysts correlate positively with movement outcomes. Most notable among those key variables was regular communication of one's most important values and beliefs, a competence identified as integral to effective movement catalyzing. Practicing this key competence proficiently may well have the single greatest impact on movement breakthrough.

Identifying this competence as a keystone may well guide effective catalysts to practice it effectively, thus possibly making this study's greatest single impact on movement breakthrough.

The implication of these findings is that pioneers must focus more on developing positive traits and competencies within themselves and their teams, rather than being concerned about external inhibiting factors beyond their control. A positive focus on developing strategic traits and competencies is much more likely to lead to successful movement outcomes. The list of traits and competencies presented here as characterizing effective catalysts gives mission trainers a blueprint for their training curricula and points mentors to the areas on which to base their mentoring. Focusing on these traits and competencies in trainees and mentees will increase effectiveness in developing fruitful movement catalysts for the kingdom.

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Appendix A: Definitions of Traits and Competencies

Openness to Experience: Posture to actively engage in experiences in an open-minded way, with the expectation that there will be something new to learn.

Creativity: Using one's imagination to come up with new and original ideas and innovative approaches.

Drive to Achieve: Motivation to achieve goals and to get things done and attain results that focuses effort and motivation on decisive actions.

Conscientiousness: Tendency to display self-discipline, act dutifully, and strive for achievement against measures or outside expectations, related to the way in which one controls, regulates, and directs one's own impulses.

Internal Locus of Control: Belief that one has control over the outcome of events in one's life as opposed to external forces beyond one's influence, and that life outcomes derive primarily from one's own actions.

Persistence: Capacity to work with distant objects in view, be tenacious in spite of challenges, overcome obstacles, and not give up amidst difficulties.

Agreeableness: A concern for social harmony that motivates individuals to seek out and maintain close, social relationships and to be considerate, kind, generous, trusting and trustworthy, helpful, characterized by pleasant companionship, and willing to compromise one's own interests when interacting with others.

Flexibility: The willingness and ability to adapt to new situations, cope with change, and approach demands in novel ways, especially when stressors or unexpected events occur.

Emotional Stability: Being emotionally mature, stable, and able to regulate one's emotions in ways helpful for interactions with others.

Hunger for God: Desiring depth in relationship with God, yearning to know and love him more deeply, evidenced in extended and habitual practice of spiritual disciplines chosen for best fit.

Listening to God: In a posture of dependence on God, regularly take time to listen to him, wait on him, seek guidance for life and ministry, and obey whatever he says.

Evangelistic Zeal: Being driven by a passionate urgency to see the Good News shared with all the lost and passionately sharing the Good News with everyone possible.

Expectant Faith: Exercising faith that God will show his power through one's life and in particular having expectant faith that God will grow a movement and save many.

Fervent Intercession: Praying regularly for extended times on behalf of the adopted people, for many to be saved in a growing movement.

Tangible Love: A genuine interest in the lives and welfare of the people to whom one reaches out, genuinely caring for them and expressing love to them in tangible ways.

Confidence in Locals: Confidence that God by the efficacy of his Word and Spirit can grow and use new and immature believers, and hence grow a local movement from local resources.

Confidence in the Bible: Confidence that God's Word contains eternal principles making it the ministry guidebook as well as the foundational discipleship tool, and hence a key ingredient in the growth of even the youngest disciple.

Extroversion: Tendency to focus outwardly on a behavioral level, on others rather than self, and to initiate conversations when with other people.

Assertiveness: Motivation to influence people and situations, even to the extent of dominating, sharing one's beliefs and convictions clearly so that people take notice, and being bold and courageous even when facing opposition and threat.

Inspiring Personality: Displaying a sense of authority and confidence, acting selflessly in ways that build other people's respect for them and instilling a sense of honor in others for being associated with them.

Influencing Beliefs: Talking often about one's most important values and beliefs, considering the moral consequences of decisions with people, and emphasizing the importance of living toward a purpose.

Inspiring Shared Vision: Articulating a compelling vision of the future, talking enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished, and expressing confidence that goals will be achieved.

Disciple-Making: Intentional Bible-centered teaching in the context of a relationship that is transformational and leads to heart obedience, encompassing spiritual disciplines and character formation.

Empowering: Recognizing the gifts of others, enabling them to develop these gifts, assigning responsibility and authority to others including the relinquishing of control and the risk of failure, and equipping them to carry out those responsibilities by means of mentoring, coaching or training.

Appendix B: Methodology

Definitions

Following David Garrison (2004; 2014), we define a movement as "a rapid indigenous multiplication of disciples making disciples and churches planting churches in multiple streams within a people group to the fourth generation."

An effective catalyst is then defined as a pioneer who

1) has catalyzed a movement with churches that have multiplied to the fourth generation,
2) was the first to engage this people group with the gospel in a way that led to the catalyzing of the movement (not necessarily the first to share the gospel among them), and
3) was the most influential catalyst (compared to others who made contributions to the growth of the movement).

Catalysts who catalyzed a movement to the fourth generation of churches were designated as "effective catalysts," while the other pioneers were designated as "control group members" or "non-catalysts."

Study Design and Pretest

In a pre-test, a survey with 125 questions (an initial list of 25 trait and competency constructs measured through five questions each) was administered to 181 students, missions agency staff and missionaries, and Global South missionaries around the world. The results were subjected to a Reliability Analysis, which measures the internal consistency of each construct through Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

The use of this Reliability Analysis streamlines the measurement of a construct by discarding survey questions that do not strongly correlate with other questions, but it does so at the expense of reducing complexity—a potentially significant drawback when evaluating complex sociological phenomena.

Of the 25 constructs, nine had good Cronbach's alpha values ($>.80$), four had acceptable values ($>.65$), and 12 had poor values ($<.65$). After a subsequent Exploratory Factor Analysis with varimax rotation that yielded a 6-factor solution, the final survey consisted of 24 constructs measured by 44 questions. Constructs with low inter-item correlations were represented only by a single item, and one construct ("individualized consideration") was removed.

Final Survey

The final survey was administered using a convenience sample, which yielded highly disproportional shares of pioneers from India, unevenly distributed between effective catalysts and control group members. Consequently, the influence of potentially significant factors on movement catalyzing, such as region, country, ministry network, ministry approach, the religion of the adopted people group, and fluency in their heart language, could not be evaluated.

The final survey results were again subjected to a Reliability Analysis, which yielded poor ($<.65$) Cronbach's alpha coefficient values for seven constructs. Values improved significantly after deleting responses to questions with a negative response scale that differed drastically from those with positive response scales (within the same construct). It seems likely that non-native speakers in particular may have confused responses for questions that were asked in a negative way in order to mitigate social desirability bias. For four constructs, Cronbach's alpha coefficients continued to remain low (between .50 and .60).

A subsequent Exploratory Factor Analysis after varimax rotation yielded a 3-factor solution without clear alignment for any single domain, featuring more problematic cross-loadings than at the pre-test factor analysis. This problematic Analysis constitutes an important limitation for the subsequent multivariate analyses that use constructs or domains (as opposed to individual

questions) as dependent variables. It also points to the complexities involved in reliably measuring traits and competencies through survey questions.

The regression analysis included a total of 33 factors, accounting for sample size limitations: (a) all questions related to four trait and competency constructs that were significant in a previous analysis; (b) the 22 trait and competency questions with the largest difference between the average response of all catalysts versus the average response of all control group members; (c) the average of all contributing and inhibiting factors.

The statistical significance of means differences in self-ratings between catalysts and control group members was assessed using the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test (based on $p<0.05$). For Table 4 showing self-ratings for expats, members of the same people group, and members of a proximate people group, the equivalent Kruskal-Wallis test was employed.

Polycentric Leadership for Kingdom Movements (Part I)

Joseph W. Handley, Jr.

Abstract

One of the simplest definitions for a Kingdom Movement is that proposed by David Garrison in looking at Church Planting Movements: "a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment" (Garrison 2004, 21). Over the years, the terminology has changed but in essence Garrison's definition captures the basic construct of these types of movements. The growth of literature about how these movements flourish is remarkable (Cole 2020; Lim 2017). While leadership approaches are reflected in these studies, the focus could be strengthened. In addition, while general missional leadership theories relate, they do not necessarily bring full attention to leading these types of multiplying movements. Perhaps the closest approach would be Mike Breen's book *Leading Kingdom Movements*. He posits a biblical framework for disciple making encouraging leaders to invest in others by expanding their scope of influence—but still more can be explored (Breen 2015).

This article draws on recent research on Polycentric Mission Leadership highlighting an approach worth further contemplation and study (Handley 2018; 2020). The research conveyed in the article unfolds with movement theory, a "team of teams" construct, collaboration and partnership, CUBE theory and systems leadership, and targeted interviews. Ultimately, polycentric leadership is offered as a new theoretical model for leadership. Polycentric leadership is a collaborative, communal approach to leadership that empowers multiple centers of influence as well as a diverse array of leaders. The article claims that polycentric leadership is well suited to addressing contemporary issues and to leading Kingdom Movements during this era of a globalization.

Key Words: collaboration, Lausanne Movement, leadership, movements, partnership, polycentricity

Introduction

This issue of *Global Missiology* highlights the importance of Kingdom Movements in mission today. Leadership within these movements is something that increasingly will need to be reviewed. This article, after considering a wide variety of relevant material, points to a new theoretical model of leading mission movements. While Mike Breen does an admirable job, perhaps the best so far, of constructing a biblical framework for disciple making (Breen 2015), this article highlights elements of a "Polycentric Mission Leadership" model that gives further dimension to the concept of leadership within mission movements (Handley 2018; 2020).

Movement Theory

To discern leadership for Kingdom Movements, a better understanding of movement theory is important. Esler posited a "General Integrated Movement Attribute Model" which focused on resource mobilization (Esler 2012):

> Resource mobilization theory suggests that movement organization is a dominant feature
> of a movement. Evaluation of a movement must therefore include and broaden the scope

of our study to include organizational culture. Understanding the missionary agency as an organization bent on forming religious movements opens up the possibility that organizational theory can be applied to the study of movements (Esler 2012, 65).

In coming to this model of movement theory, Esler surveyed studies from "New Social Movements" and "Social Movement Organizations." He sought wisdom from these models and theories to better understand how church planting movements could be effective. According to Blumer,

> Social movements can be viewed as collective enterprises seeking to establish a new order of life. They have their inception in a condition of unrest, and derive their motive power on one hand from dissatisfaction with the current form of life, and on the other hand, from wishes and hopes of a new system of living. The career of a social movement depicts the emergence of a new order of life (Blumer 1969, 99).

Hanciles noted that "[Movements] do not have a commander and chief. There is no one person who can claim to speak for the movement as a whole, any more than there is one group that represents the movement. Movements are actually 'polycentric' or 'polycephalous' with multiple leaders" (Hanciles 2009, 40-47). Thus leadership in flourishing movements is shared or collaborative.

Esler added, though, that religious movements do not necessarily form from a position of unrest (Esler 2012, 23). As Bainbridge states, "A religious movement is a relatively organized attempt by a number of people to cause or prevent change in a religious organization or in religious aspects of life. Religious movements have some similarities with political, cultural, and social movements, in that they are collective human attempts to create or to block change" (Bainbridge 1996, 3).

Esler's particular interest was reviewing sodality movements, leaning on missiologists like Roland Allen, Donald McGavran, and David Garrison. In relation to leadership and the suggestion by Hanciles above about collaborative leadership, Esler discovered an interesting conflict. While such observations as those cited earlier point to a multiplicity of leaders for a movement, Paul Pierson suggested that "breakthroughs, expansion, renewal movements and the like are almost always triggered by a key person" (Pierson 2009, 135-149). Esler surmises that a reconciliation may be in the form of the leader purely as a "catalyst or lightening rod" rather than as the sole leader of the movement (Esler 2012, 52). Hesselgrave, McGavran, and Reed, on the other hand, seem to be more in line with the idea flowing from Social Movement Theory. They suggest that the role of the leader is not as important as the people within the movement (Hesselgrave et al. 1978, 318).

Steve Addison added new dimension to understanding movements in his *Pioneering Movements: Leadership that Multiplies Disciples and Churches*. He highlights the important role that movements play in bringing about change: "For better or for worse, movements create and remake the world we live in. If we want to change the world, we must understand movements. In simple terms, a movement is a group of people committed to changing the world. The spheres of politics, science, culture and faith are shaped and remade by movements" (Addison 2015, 15). He goes on to identify five levels of leadership in multiplying movements. These are "seed sellers, church planters, church multipliers, multiplication trainers, and movement catalysts" (Addison 2015, 95). In other words, leaders start, build, multiply, train, and catalyze for growth to foster a

movement. Addison then defines the key roles for movement leaders: "Their job is to 1) seed discontent with the status quo, 2) cast a vision of what God could do, and 3) provide simple but profound methods to get people started and help them remain on track" (Addison 2015, 141).

These same traits can be found in Dave Logan, John King, and Halee Fischer-Wright's book *Tribal Leadership*. They posit that there is synergy between leaders and their tribe. The stronger the bonds between them, the stronger the movement. "This is how Tribal Leadership works: the leader upgrades the tribe as the tribe embraces the leader. Tribes and leaders create each other" (Logan et al. 2011,184). These authors' observation affirms Esler's research that key to catalyzing Kingdom Movements is resource mobilization. These movements begin with mobilization of people toward a common cause and strengthen when a community forms to achieve that same purpose.

Esler elaborates on the structures necessary to foster movements. He highlights the importance of developing a *bricolage*—referring to innovation and improvisation when building something new—as a fresh way to form cooperatives. He suggests that a "coalition pools resources and coordinates plans, while keeping distinct organizational identities" (Esler 2012, 93-95). Kingdom Movements thus draw from a variety of groups or networks and work collectively to achieve more together than they could alone. Social Movement theorist Schein provides further dimensions emphasizing the importance of drawing from multiple people within networks to foster momentum for a movement:

> For diversity to be a resource… the subculturals must be connected and must learn to value each other enough to learn something of each other's culture and language. A central task for the learning leader, then, is to ensure good cross-cultural communication and understanding throughout the organization. Creating diversity does not mean letting diverse parts of the system run on their own without coordination. Laissez-faire leadership does not work, because it is in the nature of subgroups and subcultures to protect their own interests. To optimize diversity therefore requires some higher-order coordination mechanisms in mutual cultural understanding (Schein 1985, 143-144).

Cultural acuity is also critical in leading across global platforms. Esler points out: "In a bricolage organization, in which numerous cultures are cooperating for the same objective, the context becomes much more important. It is the very 'richness' of this context that makes diversity desirable. It also may lead to insider-outside dynamics because only those who understand the context are able to participate effectively" (Esler 2012, 220).

In sum, Esler notes the crucial nature of resource mobilization, hints at the importance of structures to facilitate that movement, and finally highlights the need for cultural acumen to lead these movements and structures well. These structures and approaches are key parts to a polycentric approach to leadership. They highlight the themes of collaboration among diverse agents and from a variety of places (Handley 2021, 231) that are vital to leading well within Kingdom Movements. Implied within the mobilization construct is the importance of charisma to rally the troops, though that charism is not exclusively motivational in nature from the research. More importantly, it is the value of trustworthiness or strength of character that polycentric leadership draws upon that inspires people to follow (Handley 2021, 230).

Team of Teams

In 2015, U.S. General Stanley McChrystal partnered with researchers from Yale University to uncover some of the key aspects of leadership in the current era of global complexity. He used the fight against the Al Qaeda network as a key case study. McChrystal argued that "to succeed, maybe even to survive, in the new environment, organizations and leaders must fundamentally change. Efficiency, once the sole icon on the hill, must make room for adaptability in structures, processes, and mindsets that is often uncomfortable" (McChrystal 2015, loc 218).

I found the synthesis provided by McChrystal and his fellow authors to be the most comprehensive among the material I reviewed. The transitions the U.S. military must address in fighting terrorist movements like Al Qaeda contain many parallels to leading in the context of our globally connected, diverse missional world today. Leading Kingdom Movements has much to learn from McChrystal.

According to McChrystal, the U.S. military has been the single most efficient, prepared, and powerful force in the world. Yet, with all their power and proficiency, they could not defeat Al Qaeda: "We were stronger, more efficient, more robust. But AQI was agile and resilient. In complex environments, resilience often spells success, while even the most brilliantly engineered fixed solutions are often insufficient or counterproductive" (McChrystal 2015, loc 1423-1424).

McChrystal and his team point out that the United States' military framework was built on the successes of the Industrial Revolution, particularly the influence of Frederick Taylor. Taylor set in motion many of the innovations of what some may call America's greatest century. By honing the science of management to the greatest possible efficiencies, industry was never again the same. Peter Drucker argued that "without Taylor's innovations, America would have been unable to defeat the Nazis" (McChrystal 2015, loc 852). And historian Jeremy Rifkin noted, "[Taylor] probably had a greater effect on the private and public lives of the men and women of the twentieth century than any other single individual" (McChrystal 2015, loc 917).

The top-down, fixed-solution style of leadership was prominent in the past. Many leadership books highlighted the role of the CEO, the Senior Pastor, or General Manager. McChrystal offered that this type of leadership had strengths and weaknesses. It led to more goods being produced in a faster time for less cost. However, "This new world [of conflict with Al-Qaeda] required a fundamental rewriting of the rules of the game. In order to win, we would have to set aside many of the lessons that millennia of military procedure and a century of optimized efficiencies had taught us" (McChrystal 2015, loc 971). He continued, "These events and actors were not only more interdependent than in previous wars, they were also faster. The environment was not just complicated, it was complex" (McChrystal 2015, loc 1127).

Leadership in this complex environment is needed to adapt and empower local teams to take ownership of the local context. Information must be shared more broadly rather than held among a few at the top of the command chain. The dynamics that created the most powerful and devastating military force in the world became hindrances to the success of the mission! McChrystal states, "Frederick Taylor's managerial solutions were unequivocally designed for complicated problems rather than complex ones" (McChrystal 2015, loc 1287). The world of warfare had become more than just complicated—it was becoming exponentially complex.

Wei-Skillern, Ehrlichman, and Sawyer capture the essence of McChrystal's ideas well in their *Stanford Social Innovation Review* article, "The Most Impactful Leaders You've Never Heard Of":

Rather than leading with a top-down approach, network entrepreneurs focus on creating authentic relationships and building deep trust from the bottom up. This focus on relationship-building costs relatively little yet ultimately makes a tremendous difference in impact. Network entrepreneurs ensure that the power of others grows while their own power fades, thereby developing capacity in the field and a culture of distributed leadership that dramatically increases the collaboration's efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. These individuals foster unique cultures and values among their networks that enable those networks to sustain and scale impact (Wei-Skillern, Ehrlichman, and Sawyer 2015, 1-2).

McChrystal realized that the U.S. military's leadership needed a new approach—hence his essay, "It Takes a Network to Defeat a Network" (McChrystal 2015, loc 1581). He later suggested, "cooperative adaptability is essential to high-performing teams" (McChrystal 2015, loc 1702). He argued that a decentralized structure is better designed for this type of environment: "Adam Smith's 'invisible hand' of the market—the notion that order best arises not from centralized design but through the decentralized interactivity of buyers and sellers—is an example of 'emergence'. In other words, order can emerge from the bottom up, as opposed to being directed, with a plan, from the top down" (McChrystal 2015, loc 1948-1955).

Given these realities, the U.S. military instituted a systems approach where information was shared broadly. It was less efficient, but it created a more holistic awareness and allowed them to operate as a "team of teams." McChrystal cites the research of Sandy Pentland from MIT, who found that "sharing information and creating strong horizontal relationships improves the effectiveness" (McChrystal 2015, loc 3576).

McChrystal also notes that speed in decision making is crucial in the field of contemporary warfare, where situations are too complex to wait for decisions from above:

We found that, even as speed increased and we pushed authority further down, the quality of decisions actually went up. We had decentralized on the belief that the 70 percent solution today would be better than the 90 percent solution tomorrow. But we found our estimates were backward—we were getting the 90 percent solution today instead of the 70 percent solution tomorrow (McChrystal 2015, loc 3889).

Before considering McChrystal's conclusions, it is important to note the research conducted by J. Richard Hackman, the Edgar Pierce Professor of Social and Organizational Psychology at Harvard University and one of the world's leading experts on teamwork. Hackman observed, "Research consistently shows that teams underperform, despite all the extra resources they have. That's because problems with coordination and motivation typically chip away at the benefits of collaboration." To counteract this reality, Hackman suggested five conditions for effective teamwork:

1: Teams must be real. People have to know who is on the team and who is not. It's the leader's job to make that clear.

2: Teams need a compelling direction. Members need to know, and agree on, what they're supposed to be doing together. Unless a leader articulates a clear direction, there is a real risk that different members will pursue different agendas.

3: Teams need enabling structures. Teams that have poorly designed tasks, the wrong number or mix of members, or fuzzy and unenforced norms of conduct invariably get into

trouble.

4: Teams need a supportive organization. The organizational context—including the reward system, the human resource system, and the information system—must facilitate teamwork.

5: Teams need expert coaching. Most executive coaches focus on individual performance, which does not significantly improve teamwork. Teams need coaching as a group in team processes—especially at the beginning, midpoint, and end of a team project (Coutu 2009).

Hackman's suggestions regarding teamwork help to frame how McChrystal concludes his book with insightful nuggets of wisdom for leadership in a modern complex era:

Effective adaptation to emerging threats and opportunities requires the disciplined practice of empowered execution. Individuals and teams closest to the problem, armed with unprecedented levels of insights from across the network, offer the best ability to decide and act decisively… The doctrine of empowered execution may at first glance seem to suggest that leaders are no longer needed. That is certainly the connection made by many who have described networks such as AQI as "leaderless." But this is wrong. Without Zarqawi, AQI would have been an entirely different organization. In fact, due to the leverage leaders can harness through technology and managerial practices like shared consciousness and empowered execution, senior leaders are now more important than ever, but the role is very different from that of the traditional heroic decision maker (McChrystal 2015, loc 3980, 4030).

These insights are pertinent for leading Kingdom Movements. Adaptability, collaboration, and empowerment are central themes in the research findings. Beyond collaboration, the formation of movements and teams requires a communal and relational form of leadership that is core to polycentric leadership (Handley 2021, 231, 233). Building on these "team of teams" themes, in dynamic interplay with the insights from movement theory, can provide a roadmap for leading Kingdom Movements.

Collaboration and Partnership

In looking at the history of the Lausanne Movement, Doug Birdsall made an interesting observation: "Consensus on a common goal is perhaps the most obvious ingredient for both intra- and inter-organizational collaboration. Individuals and organizations are unlikely to work in partnership if their goals are not in alignment and mutually beneficial" (Birdsall 2012, 75). This insight highlights the importance of collaboration and partnership for leading a movement.

Before delving into the nuances of how groups can work together, it is important to understand why we should consider working together. Simon Sinek makes this point clear in his *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action* (originally a TED Talk. He notes that when leaders start with the *how* or the *what*, they lose most of their audience; but, when a leader starts with the *why*, people follow (Sinek 2011).

In his book *Well Connected*, Phill Butler points out that what attracts people and keeps them committed to a partnership are 1) great vision and 2) seeing results (Butler 2006, 41). According to Butler, once potential partners have a compelling reason to work together and a desire for strong results, they must build trust: "All durable, effective partnerships are built on trust and whole

relationships" (Butler 2006, 51). There must be trust between the people, the processes, and the plans for effective partnership to develop. The involvement of multiple parties highlights the value of a leader who can galvanize support and build strong relational equity across multiple sectors of an alliance. Leading a movement is significantly different from leading a company that does not have many stakeholders. It *is* similar, perhaps, to leading a modern university.

I was once in a meeting with a key stakeholder and the president of a particular Christian university. As the stakeholder pushed the president to move the university toward a particular cause, the president wisely mentioned that leading a university was not like leading this stakeholder's company. Vision could not be pushed from the top but rather needed to bubble up through the faculty and various departments of the university. In a similar fashion, leading a movement requires the skills to mobilize people—as Esler has noted as well as the teamwork that McChrystal has advocated.

Jopling and Crandall's research, conducted through the U.K. *National College for School Leadership,* supplements these ideas about collaboration and leadership by highlighting the importance for leaders to listen. "Perhaps the most critical thing for leaders to do is listen well to their followers, for it is they who will carry the burden of bringing the network to life and realizing its intent. Structuring meaningful dialogue and framing questions that elicit felt concerns and make explicit the perspectives of the followers are essential to successful network leadership" (Jopling and Crandall 2006, 5). To listening skills they add the value of facilitation: "Network leaders act as cross-cultural brokers, drawing on expertise, evidence and knowledge from outside and, increasingly, inside the network. I think as a facilitator you just help things to happen, to take place, where I think as a leader, you have to drive them much more, and there are times when you do both" (Jopling and Crandall 2006, 11).

More important than these various traits for missional partnerships, however, is what Butler emphasizes:

> Spiritual breakthroughs are not a game of guns and money. No human effort, expenditure of resources, or brilliant strategy will alone produce lasting spiritual change. Our partnerships must be informed and empowered by God's Holy Spirit in order to be effective. The challenges of relationships, cultural and theological differences, technical and strategic issues, and sustainability can only be dealt with in a process rooted in prayer (Butler 2006, 101).

This emphasis on prayer and God's necessary role resonates with Esler's perspective. As Esler reviewed Kingdom Movements and the effort to lead them, he noted that church planting movements are distinctly different from other social movements. Far more than just human agency is involved. God is the One moving in history. It is in following his lead that people can be effective at building the type of collaboration that will foster authentic partnership.

Butler's point also relates to the roles of a facilitator that Jopling and Crandall note above. These roles include:

• Demonstrate a heart and spirit of maturity, clearly committed to Christ and his Kingdom.

• Demonstrate a sense of urgency about the vision on the leader's heart—whether it is a neighborhood, a special sector of people in your city, or an unreached people group in a distant location.

• Demonstrate knowledge about what is involved in successful collaboration.

• The leader's organization, if the leader is attached to one, has a good reputation.

• Remain neutral and committed to everyone's success, together, rather than to a private, one-person or one-organization agenda.

• Show genuine interest in other ministry leaders and their visions.

• Be consistent in speech and conduct.

• Handle confidential or sensitive information responsibly—remembering that both what one says and does not say about other ministries and their leaders are important.

• Keep one's promises. Do what one says one will do as well as when one says it will be done. If one finds that the promises cannot be kept, be honest and indicate realistically what one is going to do (Butler 2006, 211).

Butler also highlights several practical considerations for managing partnerships: develop clear and measurable goals, set a realistic time frame for action, put in place sustainable personnel to see the project through, and foster ownership of the vision that grows over time (Butler 2006, 288). These are key considerations in leading Kingdom Movements.

The May-June 2015 issue of *Mission Frontiers* highlighted the similarities between the *Transform World* movement and what can be called the *Starfish* approach. Perhaps most insightful to understanding movement leadership is their description of "catalysts" from the book *The Starfish and the Spider* (Brafman and Beckstrom 2006):

The book identifies a set of people the authors call "catalysts" who tend to be skilled at creating decentralized organizations. The authors list several abilities and behaviors (called "The Catalyst's Tools") that "catalysts" have in common, including:

1. Genuine interest in others.
2. Numerous loose connections, rather than a small number of close connections.
3. Skill at social mapping.
4. Desire to help everyone they meet.
5. The ability to help people help themselves by listening and understanding, rather than giving advice ("Meet people where they are").
6. Emotional Intelligence.
7. Trust in others and in the decentralized network.
8. Inspiration (to others).
9. Tolerance for ambiguity.
10. A hands-off approach. Catalysts do not interfere with, or try to control the behavior of, the contributing members of the decentralized organization.
11. Ability to let go. After building up a decentralized organization, catalysts move on, rather than trying to take control.

'A leader is best when people barely know that he exists; not so good when people obey and acclaim him; worst when they despise him.' (p. 115) (Lao-tzu).

'As a catalyst, it's all about letting go and trusting the community.' (p. 111) (Transform World Staff 2015).

Building on Roembke's and Elmer's research on multi-cultural teams, Mark Oxbrow, in a paper for the Edinburgh 2010 Conference, adds pertinent insights to what Butler presented pertinent. The first is that "multi-cultural partnerships need multi-cultural objectives: we need to understand what is valued as 'success' or 'achievement' in each culture." He also speaks to "contextual relevance [where] great ideas can be a real success in the right context; [however] in the wrong context, they can be a complete flop" (Oxbrow 2010, 7).

Mary Lederleitner adds the challenge to the development of trusting, cross-cultural partnerships when neo-colonialist wealth disparity is involved:

> A concern in missiology is how there can be effective cross-cultural partnerships, with vast sums of wealth coming from affluent donors and nations, without fostering a new form of colonialism now known as "neo-colonialism." Neo-colonialism implies that although there is no physical occupation by a foreign power, wealth and resources are given in ways that still dominate others. Some on the receiving end of mission funding feel demeaned and controlled by the process. For these partners there is a sense that they are losing their right to make their own decisions and they are losing their voice. Because of this there is a concern whether true partnership, the kind that models genuine mutuality, can ever take place given such a vast disparity of wealth (Lederleitner 2009).

Despite whatever challenges there are to developing trusting cross-cultural partnerships, Kärin Primuth points to movements in the Muslim world that began with Western leaders that are now being led by indigenous leaders. She notes that multi-cultural networks are a great demonstration of biblical unity: "Networks offer a context to build trust across cultures and to genuinely listen and learn from our partners in the Majority World. They provide a platform for dialogue with our brothers and sisters in the Global South to mutually define what the North American Church can contribute to today's mission movement" (Primuth 2015).

Primuth's insights dovetail with research from global business. For example, Caligiuri stated that the present and future global environment and workplace "need leaders who are able to effectively manage in complex global environments, who are able to negotiate cultural challenges and conflicts, and who understand seemingly conflicting regulatory requirements, unexpected costs, and diverse stakeholders in foreign countries" (Caligiuri 2013, 176). It is critical for global leaders to understand how their behaviors appear in the eyes of their followers. To do that there is an urgent need to understand cross-cultural differences. She also mentioned that those global leaders who have available cultural responses can work effectively with colleagues from different cultures. Alire also supported the idea of being effective in diverse organizations "...is largely dependent on the extent to which they have the respect of those they seek to lead" (Alire 2001, 101). Global leadership is about leading diverse people in complex environments. To deal with people global leaders need to know about their background, including their beliefs, values, religions, and sensitivities. To do that global leadership requires cultural understanding. Culture develops as people understand the importance of interacting with their environment over a period of time. People carry their own culture to their workplace. Thus, cultivating harmony among cultures in a multicultural organization is the art of global leaders (Caligiuri 2013, 175-182).

The ability to navigate across a variety of cultures, stakeholders, and global scenarios is a vital trait for empowered leadership in a globalized era. This study is unaware of any comprehensive collection of these important insights for leading Kingdom Movements.

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Prerequisites for Movements? Questioning Two Widely-Held Assumptions

Emanuel Prinz, with Dave Coles

Abstract

The data presented in this article challenge two assumptions that have been held widely among movement thinkers and practitioners: "Movements can only happen after lengthy previous gospel proclamation, by the actual movement catalyst or by preceding pioneers"; and, "Movements only occur among people groups that are receptive to the gospel." Both notions are challenged by the data of recent research into 35 different movements.

Key Words: catalyst, movement, pioneer

Introduction

This study's recent research among 35 movements in 15 different countries suggests fresh consideration of two very important questions: "Must a movement build on lengthy previous gospel proclamation?" and "Do movements only occur among receptive people groups?" Commonly held assumptions of affirmative answers to these questions may unnecessarily have hindered efforts to initiate movements, in particular among unreached Muslim peoples.

The movements examined in this study represent the major regions of the Muslim world, including West Africa, East Africa, the Arab World, Turkestan, South Asia, and Southeast Asia (also referred to as Indo-Malaysia). Most movements researched took place in Indonesia (18). Other countries with multiple movements included in the study are India (3), Jordan (2), Ethiopia (2), and Bangladesh (2). One church planting movement is underway in each of the following: Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mozambique, Sudan, Pakistan, China, and Myanmar. One movement has grown from Kenya across the borders into Somalia and Tanzania.

Of the nine regions of the Muslim world that Garrison describes as the different *Rooms in the House of Islam* (2014), only North Africa and the Persian world are not represented in this study. (The initial pioneer leaders of the two movements in these regions have passed on and were thus unable to contribute to the research.) The movement among the Kabyle-Berber of Algeria was catalyzed in the 1970s (Marsh 1997; Blanc 2006), and the one among the Persians of Iran in the 1980s (Garrison 2014, 90-94, 130-141).

Biblical and Theological Foundations

The research for this study rests on the conviction that three factors influence the emergence or impediment of movements: the sovereignty of God, the receptivity of the gospel's recipients, and the person (traits) and ministry (competencies) of the pioneer (Packer 1961; 2008; Clark 2006; Snyder 2010).

The first factor, the sovereignty of God, eludes all human investigation (Luther [1516] 1937; Calvin [1536] 1989; Grudem 1994). This elusiveness reflects the Apostle Paul's conviction, "How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!" (Rom. 11:33; all Scripture quotations are from the ESV). This study rests on the theological foundation of God's sovereignty and human responsibility.

God determines "all things" (Eph. 1:11) according to his perfect, eternal will and plan. At the same time, humans are responsible for their every action, and their decisions are genuine decisions: they have a real impact on the outcome of events (Grudem 1994, 315-337). These convictions mean that the following propositions are equally true (Packer 1961; 2008; Clark 2013):

• Wherever people come to faith in Christ Jesus, it is ultimately because of God's sovereign election and predestination. Wherever a movement emerges, God has sovereignly willed for it to happen.

• Each person who hears the gospel (assuming sufficient maturity and mental faculties) has the capacity to make a genuine decision in rejecting or accepting Jesus Christ, a decision for which they will be held responsible. Wherever the message of Jesus Christ has been adequately proclaimed and people have not received it, they have willfully rejected the gospel.

• All pioneers make genuine decisions about how to live their lives and carry out their ministries among the societies where they live and serve. Those decisions can be conducive to or impede the catalyzing of a movement (Goldmann 2006).

The second factor affecting effective catalyzation of a movement is the receptivity of the people among whom the good news is spread. The Bible teaches that the amount of fruit may not lie in the effort of the sower, but in the fertility of the soil (see Matt. 13:23). A rough survey of the world today confirms this teaching. Some people groups and regions show great receptivity, and almost every church planting team serving among those groups and regions sees fruit. Examples among Muslim peoples include Albanians and the Kabyle Berbers in North Africa (Mandryk 2010, 95, 98; Blanc 2006). Some other people groups seem so unreceptive that church planting teams have seen hardly any fruit at all, for example the Malay and Bruneians (Mandryk 2010, 557, 172).

The third factor related to catalyzing a movement is the person of the pioneer. While affirming the above theological factors, the pioneer leader remains a critical factor in whether or not a movement emerges. We teach what we know, but we reproduce *who we are*. Modeling plays an absolutely essential role in Christian discipleship (2 Tim. 3:10). Thus, the traits of pioneers will influence their effectiveness.

Since God has chosen to use human agents to take the good news of his kingdom to mankind, the person of the disciple maker impacts the results in pioneer church planting. The Apostle Paul's sequential chain in Romans 10 seems to indicate the critical factor of the pioneering gospel messenger. Romans 10:14-15 outlines the chain that must occur for unreached peoples to come to faith in the gospel:

1. God sends (ἀποσταλῶσιν - *apostalosin*) a "sent one" (the meaning of "apostle" or "missionary").
2. The sent one preaches.
3. The unbeliever hears.
4. The unbeliever believes.
5. The unbeliever, now a believer, calls on the name of the Lord.
6. The believer is saved.

This chain of elements can be summarized in the rhetorical question, "How can they call on the Lord without the sent one—the pioneer?" They cannot! The person and ministry of the pioneer is essential.

The Apostle Paul, the ultimate model for all pioneers, describes the diligence of his own efforts, stating, "Like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation" (1 Cor. 3:10b). He refers explicitly to his skills; hence, skills do affect the outcome. "The fire will test what sort of work each one has done" (1 Cor. 3:13). A modern church planting team's ministry will face a similar test. Accordingly, "what sort of work" a pioneer does directly affects whether or not that work will produce lasting fruit.

The Apostle Paul succinctly formulates the confluence of the divine and the human factors, and summarizes the theological foundation of this study, when referring to those who build God's church as "God's fellow workers" (1 Cor. 3:9). The Greek word used for fellow workers (sometimes translated "coworkers") is συνεργοί, the source of the English word "synergy." This study's research builds on David Garrison's assertion that effectively catalyzing a movement results from the synergy of the human element with the divine, "a divine-human cooperative" (Garrison 2014, 255). Consequently, this research particularly focuses on the person of the pioneer.

Must a Movement Build on Lengthy Previous Gospel Proclamation?

Many have thought that movements can only be catalyzed among people groups who have had many years of previous Christian work sharing the gospel (Livingstone 1993, 18). Some would express this assumption more moderately: movements seem highly unlikely to occur in pioneer situations. The biblical principle referenced is, "whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6). The oft-cited prime examples are the movement among the Kabyle-Berber in Algeria and the mid-to-late 1960's mass movement to Christ in Indonesia. The movement among the Kabyle-Berber occurred in the 1970s after several generations of Christian witness with hardly any response at all, starting with the pioneer Charles Marsh nearly 50 years earlier in 1925 (Marsh 1970; Marsh and Verwer 1997). In Indonesia between 1965 and 1971 two million Muslims turned to Christ (Willis 1977), but only after more than three centuries of Christian missionary work in the country.

The data informing this study indicate that this notion should be reconsidered. Movement breakthrough does not necessarily require a long period of sowing. At the time of their participation in this study, the pioneer leaders and their teams had been ministering between two and 24 years since taking up residence among the people groups in which they were serving. One participant had an itinerant non-residential ministry approach, in which he did not live among his people group. Of those participants living among their focus people groups, the average length of ministry was 8.4 years.

The length of ministry among the people group before the first fellowship of Jesus followers started a daughter fellowship ranges from three months to 15 years. The birthing of the first second-generation fellowship is considered the tipping point, where reproduction begins happening and a movement is catalyzed. Six church planting movements took between only three and six months of ministry for that to occur. Sixteen movements took between one and three years to be catalyzed. Four movements took between four and eight years. In only two movements did that process take place between 11 and 15 years. Three survey participants were not able to answer precisely the question about when the movement was catalyzed. The average time between the pioneer leader

arriving on the ground and the birthing of the first second-generation fellowship was only two years and seven months.
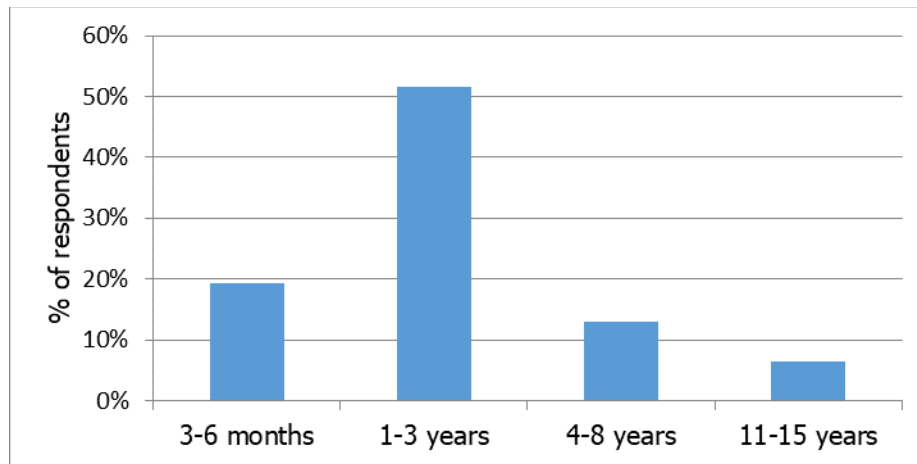

Figure 1: Time of Pioneer's Ministry Prior to Movement Breakthrough

A related consideration is the number of years of any known gospel proclamation prior to the ministry of the pioneer leader and his or her team. This period ranged from zero to 100 years. Five participants answered zero: there had been no gospel proclamation at all prior to their arrival among the people group. For one movement it had been one year. For two movements it was four to eight years. The largest portion of participants, representing ten movements, answered between ten and "20+" years. Four movements had been preceded by 40 to 50 years of gospel proclamation, and in one movement it had been 100 years. Eight participants could not answer the question precisely, one describing it simply as "many" years. The median among those who answered the question was 15 years.
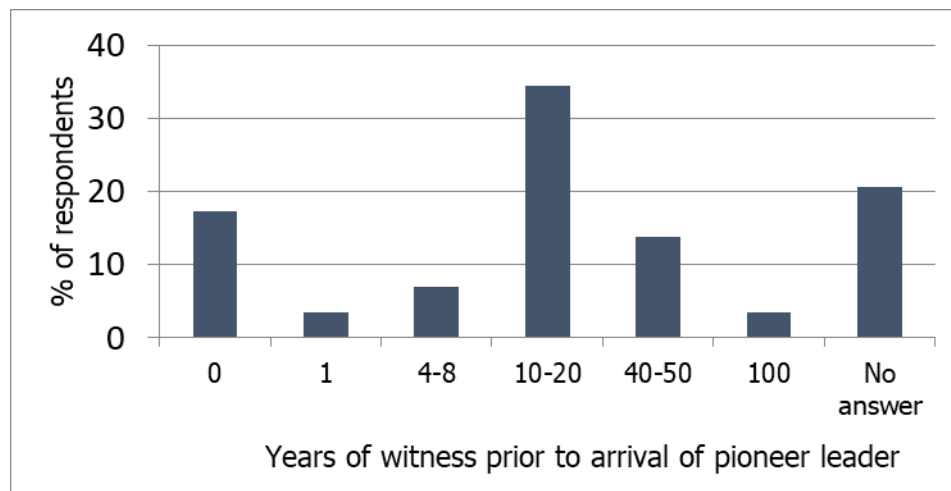

Figure 2: Year of Witness Prior to Arrival of Pioneer

This data are surprising in light of commonly held assumptions. It has been widely held that movements can only be catalyzed among people groups where there have been many years of previous Christian work sharing the gospel. The above figures of this study indicate that such a notion needs to be reconsidered. Some movements had been preceded by up to 100 years of gospel

sowing, but others by only a few years—and others had had no previous sowing at all! These numerous examples show that only a small proportion of the movements among Muslims have built on a significant history of Christian work. Many of the movements have occurred without building on any foundation of previous work. They have been catalyzed by the very first pioneer among the people group.

This finding is new in the sense of being a first-time verification by specific data. However, the hypothesis had already been formulated in 2008 by an expert panel of church-planting movement (CPM) trainers from multiple regions globally. They concluded: "there seemed to be no difference in the … CPMs in terms of how long there had been gospel exposure in the area previously. For example, in both large and small CPMs, there were examples of longer and shorter histories of Christian work" (Stevens 2008, 3).

The data of this present study substantiate the earlier observations of those CPM trainers. Prior gospel witness seems to play little or no role in the likelihood of a movement being launched among a Muslim people group. This data-based conclusion debunks the heretofore common assumption that lengthy prior gospel proclamation must precede a movement being catalyzed.

Do Movements Occur Only among Receptive People Groups?

Concerning the second assumption, the supporting research data suggest no association between a people group's gospel receptivity and the effective catalyzing of a movement among them. Movements are apparently unrelated to the overall receptivity of the people group.

The receptivity of this research's people groups toward the good news varied significantly at the time when the pioneer leaders first took residence among them. Participants used the *Dayton Scale* (Dayton and Fraser 2003), which ranges from -5 (strongly opposed) to +5 (strongly favorable) to measure the receptivity of societies and people groups toward the gospel. Among the people groups surveyed in this study, seven were assessed to have been strongly opposed (-5 and -4) to the gospel at the time when the pioneer leader first took up residence among the group. In 11 people groups, receptivity was assessed as somewhat opposed (-3 and -2). Two people groups were described as indifferent to the gospel (rated -1 to +1), while five were assessed as somewhat favorable to the gospel (+2 and +3). Only five out of 35 people groups were considered strongly favorable to the gospel when the pioneer leaders began their work among them. The following chart shows the nearly even distribution.
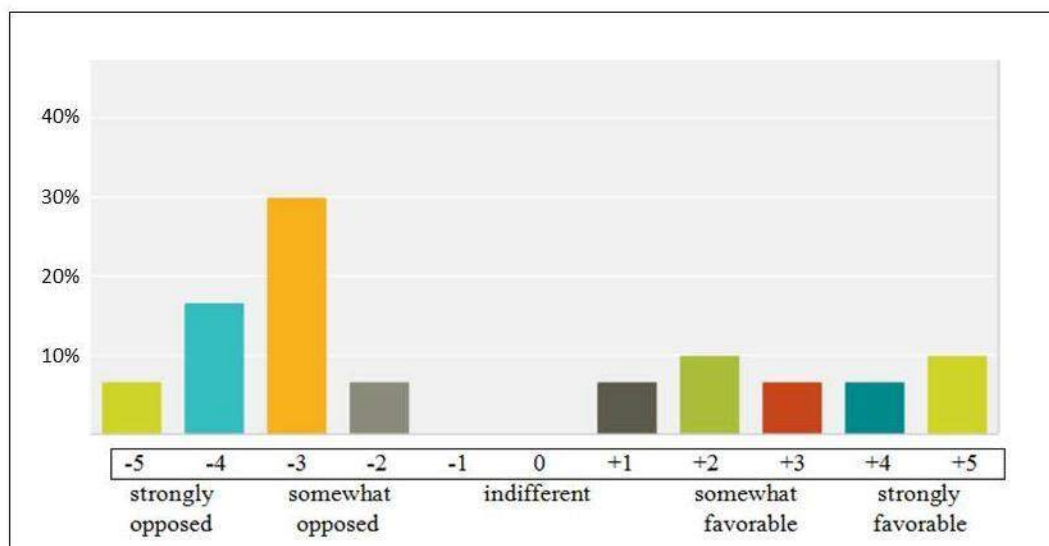
Figure 3: Receptivity of People Groups Toward the Gospel

The data show no correlation between gospel receptivity of a people group and the effective catalyzing of a movement among them. Movements seem unrelated to the overall receptivity of the people group. How can we explain this counter-intuitive reality?

Perhaps receptive pockets exist within most or all societies, including those having a low level of overall receptivity. Steve Smith's research into church planting movements affirms this conclusion: "There may be hardened people groups, but in every one there are harvestable individuals" (Smith 2011, 83). Trousdale's research comes to a similar conclusion, pressing further to note that often "the hardest people yield the greatest results" (Trousdale 2012, 155). This observation in many movements does not refer to gospel receptivity among entire people groups but to individuals and subgroups in society. The key open individuals are often referred to as "persons of peace," based on Jesus' instructions in Matthew 10 and Luke 10 (Trousdale 2012, 190; Watson and Watson 2014, 123-139). Trousdale also observes the principle that "sometimes the most difficult person to reach with the gospel will become the most dedicated follower of Christ" (Trousdale 2012, 161).

Conclusion

Any movement results from three factors: the sovereignty of God (which eludes human analysis and understanding), the receptivity of those who hear the gospel, and the pioneer who is responsible to share the gospel wisely. As the Apostle Paul experienced in the city of Corinth, some situations may manifest significant opposition to the gospel (Acts 18:6), yet the perspective of God's eternal election reveals "many in this city who are my [God's] people" (Acts 18:10).

The data of the research demonstrate that movements may happen irrespective of the receptivity of the overall population. This underscores the role of the pioneer, adding weight to the part he or she plays in catalyzing a movement. The data suggest a tentative hypothesis that certain pioneer leaders can become effective in catalyzing a movement, irrespective of the receptivity of the overall population in that community.

Since the divine element eludes human investigation, our understanding of the factors that contribute to movements leans even more heavily on the person of the catalyst. This focus confirms Greg Livingstone's premise: "The human factor will be the variable between effective and ineffective church planting efforts" (Livingstone 1993, 26). Through demonstrating that neither length of prior gospel proclamation nor gospel receptivity are normative factors, this study points to pioneering movement catalysts as a key factor in catalyzing movements. This study and corresponding research (Prinz 2021) verify this conviction, showing a strong association between a catalyst who exhibits certain traits and competencies and the effective catalyzing of movements.

This article should encourage expectant faith and boldness among those the Lord is calling to catalyze a movement among the unreached. Neither limited length of gospel proclamation nor apparent lack of receptivity among a people group should diminish anyone's faith that a movement breakthrough is possible and indeed may be imminent. The great need is a catalyst equipped with a set of particular traits and competencies who works in synergy with God as skilled master builder.

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