



Togetherness Mission with the Disabilities

As a Complementarity Approach for Today's Mission

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Abstract. Mission is an extraordinary endeavor in performing God's love for all the people. God reveals Himself through the personhood of Jesus Christ, which is the fundamental stage of the gospel proclamation. This exertion is a prime invitation for all believers, non-disability people, and people with disability. The purpose of this writing is to propose the togetherness mission using a complementarity approach framework. It was Fanny Jane Crosby's salvific hymns, as well as the believers, who echoed the endeavors that had an impact on the mission field. We will develop our thoughts with a qualitative descriptive method complementarity concept. There is evidence in this study that persons with disabilities can develop into partners in many ways as part on missiological enterprises instead of simply serving as mission targets.

Keywords: complementarity, Disability, Fanny Crosby; Salvation hymns, Togetherness Mission

1 Introduction

The Gospel depicts a geographical expansive horizon of the Christian goal of mission, which is making all people disciples of Jesus (Mat.28:19-20). It is bolstered by a territorial outreach strategy that begins with the city of Jerusalem and extends to Samaria overseas, the entire province of Judea, and the world's edges (Acts 1:8). The focus of the following part is on ethnic groups that the gospel has not yet reached (UPG). Ethnical mission movement noted that about three billion people in the world need to hear the gospel. Approximately seven thousand diverse ethnic groups comprise this category, representing more than forty percent of the world's population [1]. Three hundred ethnic groups are thought to need the gospel, most of which are scarcity Christians and mission workers [2]. In response, churches and Christian organizations strive to share the gospel with the unreached people group.

The previous data profoundly encouraged Christians to work for missions. However, an interesting aspect is that the facts failed to represent outreach people with disabilities in any particular way. Luke, the gospel author with a medical background, expresses an insightful perspective in one of his chapters. In the parable of a supper, the master instructs his servants to send out invitations for a feast that will be hosted in the

kingdom (Luk.14:13, 21). This passage argues that the good news of Jesus should be made available to people with various disabilities.

World Health Organization reported that over one billion people are estimated to experience disability. This corresponds to about fifteen percent of the global population [3]. Data concerning the proceeds of the disabled are seen as mission purposes through numerous "models" of approaches such as studied by Marno Retief and Rantoa Letšosa. A moral-based mission emphasizes prayer, for instance, to escape the disabled group of people from the deity curses. The mission in the medical model seeks physical, mental, and social healing. An economic-based mission model for the disabled will assist jobs that support their income [4].

The people with disability, however, have not participated in or provided leadership for these initiatives. Tim Rourke, who opposed the church's approach in England, expressed same concerns. Rourke asserted that it is challenging to assess the representation of disabled individuals in Church of England leadership. Disability makes it more difficult for disabled persons to serve in ordained or lay leadership roles, and they may never be given a chance to do so in the first place. Disability is marginalized and treated differently due to this lack of involvement [5].

We have an argument that togetherness mission with disable people are noble attitude on celebrating the saving grace of God to all the creatures. This study will focus on the Christian mission with disabled individuals. There are some features that writers will convey. First, the mission was a target. Second, the inclusive mission for disabled individuals. Third is the mission of togetherness with disabled individuals. Fanny J. Crosby and her works will enhance this article.

2 Method

This writing utilizes a complementarity framework approach. There are several definitions regarding complementarity. However, this section refers to its common notion based on the interpersonal circle [6]. In *Interaction Concepts of Personality*, Robert C. Carson established an empirical work to analyze, describe, and explain interpersonal transactions from a personologist's perspective. His work integrates modern behavior theory, personality, and social psychology. Carson observed that interpersonal relationships gain an impact on social life. He stated the preceding considerations that the "preferences" of persons for adopting given interpersonal styles will significantly affect their choices concerning interacting with other persons. The rewards and costs associated with complementarity and anti-complementarity in interaction. The conceptions of complementarity intended to suggest that these factors are more or less constantly in the background as reward and cost features of human interaction and that they form something of a baseline condition with respect to the outcomes derived from the interaction [7, pp. 151–153]. The values of respect, interpersonal relations, and reward described by Carson in the concept of complementarity are the approaches that will develop this writing.

3 Findings and Discussion

Some interesting aspects should be considered to understand the concept of disability. Retief and Letšosa attempt to investigate it from a historical perspective, focusing on the moral aspect. In a moral sense, disability is related to divine acts. A person who is affected by a god or goddess will have extraordinary abilities. Conversely, those who are touched can also cause physical and mental devastation. Diseases, curses, and tragedies were frequently associated in the Old Testament with God's punishment of particular sins committed by man. Prayer and repentance eliminate the curse on one's path to greatness [4].

Retief and Letšosa represent transcendental dichotomies; infirmities are frequently stigmatized as divine blessings or curses. Nevertheless, disability can also be observed in horizontal aspects of human life. Bones et al. referred to Erving Goffman, who went so far as to define disability as the ultimate stigmatized identity, degrading a person's actual being. This understanding highlights the social and psychological dimensions of disability. Obviously, disabled individuals were excluded from this meaning-making process. Most recent definitions of disability rely on compliance with legal formalities or official certification by an institution such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) [8].

According to the ADA: "a person with a disability as a person who [is] a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. This includes people who have a record of such an impairment, even if they do not currently have a disability. It also includes individuals who do not have a disability but are regarded as having a disability" [9].

Indeed, the above definition of disability is relatively brief in terms of its comprehensiveness. Nonetheless, some of these concepts determine the attitudes of diverse groups toward people with disabilities. Regarding mission attitudes, some make people with disabilities the mission's goal, whereas others are more accepting of them by not making them targets alone.

3.1 Target-based Mission

This feature appears to demonstrate an impressive mission expression but a lethargic attitude. People without disabilities tend to display that they are able to assist those with disabilities. A supply-demand constellation indicates a close linkage with the mission. People who are "able" should demonstrate success in giving acts, whereas people with disabilities will be taught to behave in a receiving mode. For those with disabilities, this style of missiological approach results in long-lasting impairment.

It is interesting to examine Retief and Letšosa's studies on disability with the target-based mission approach. Research indicates that moral, medical, economic, and charity models are the most effective means of achieving a mission for those with disabilities. They are recognized as fragile, impoverished, and urgently needed and treated accordingly. Deliverance from the curse calls for both deliverance prayers and spiritual growth. It is thought that the mission of treatment and assistance of medical experts extends to individuals with various physical and mental diseases. People with

disabilities require economic and other assistance due to their poor income, poverty, illiteracy, and social position [4].

One of the United Kingdom disability organizations shows the same gesture in target-based missions. The Disability Resources Centre, for instance, has a goal to enable disabled people and those with long-term health conditions to take control of their own lives and to actively seek out opportunities to perform at a high level as individuals within mainstream society by constructing a financially viable business. This will be accomplished by providing disabled people and those with lasting health conditions with the tools they need to build a sustainable business [10].

We argue that when the mission is defined as a core demographic, it indicates that missiological endeavors are utilized as an instrument and that persons with disabilities are merely objects.

3.2 Inclusive Mission

In theology, the notion of inclusion may have various connotations. This understanding is widely viewed as a compromise [11]. However, the authors highlight the mission's positive and appreciative features of the concept of inclusivity. Referring to the "model" approach in the Retief and Letšosa study, an inclusive mission method can be categorized into five types. Related to society, identity, human rights, culture, and limits. A mission with a social and identity orientation highlights the positive features of social construction. The effort is carried out by identifying groups of people with disabilities according to their type of limitation and then considering how they might be integrated into the larger social sphere [4].

Usually, the condition of the disability is treated destructively, observed well by Carrie L. Shandra [12]. They are discriminated against, exploited, and marginalized; nevertheless, they have the same right to life as the typical non-disabled person. A mission approach that is inclusive attempts to uphold the dignity of people with disabilities on par with other people around the world. People with disabilities also inherit the concept of God's image, which is not hindered by their particular condition. The inclusive mission from a cultural perspective and limitations emphasizes the levels of acceptance and embraces the reality of the disabilities' limitations. This mission is achieved by developing concepts that aim to encourage acceptance of people with disabilities by not considering their various "limitations" as defects but as social diversity [4].

The Christian communities are not the only organizations promoting the inclusive mission. The Disability Rights of Washington also have a similar mission. Their mission is to promote the dignity, equality, and self-determination of people with disabilities. They strive for justice in areas involving human and legal rights [13]. The ultimate goal of the inclusive mission is to recognize all human beings, regardless of disability status, as God's equal creatures. They hold the same human rights and dignity, which need to be acknowledged and cherished. The right attitude in carrying out the mission for people with disabilities is based on acceptance.

3.3 Togetherness Mission

Gabriele Chiari and Maria Laura Nuzzo embrace the development of the concept of complementarity. They conducted a study into the client-therapist relationship. In the therapeutic relationships "domain of between," the client and the therapist have an excellent opportunity to explore new conversational patterns. The therapist's role is to create new choreography, but they must "dance" together [14]. Together mission elaborates the complementarity concept in several features such as biblical principle, Fanny J. Crosby life and works, and today's mission challenge.

Biblical Perspective. The emphasis of mission efforts will pivot from inclusiveness to togetherness. John Swinton referred to Frances Young's idea of prophetic vocation and urges that the advent of God's Kingdom has a unique perspective for a togetherness mission with disabled people. This attitude provides a calling for each part of the church membership to engage in the ministry, not merely the church leaders. Swinton adds his intention based on Jesus' attitude, which comes to us and embraces us in friendship [15]. The friendship pattern, rather than a slave (Joh.15:15), represents a unity and partnership involvement of ministry in the Kingdom of God (1 Cor.1:9).

Hector Avalos brought attention to Mmapula Diana Kebaneilwe when he asserted that Jesus sees disability as a task that can be embraced but not a tragedy. She exemplifies a paradigm alteration in how people with disabilities are handled. Jesus prioritizes the needs of individuals with disabilities within his ministry. Therefore, if the church and the rest of the community in this day and age could embrace the paradigm of compassion that Jesus demonstrated, they could engage with individuals with disabilities [16].

Paul's "thorn in the flesh" has drawn a significant amount of attention in disability studies (2 Cor.12:7). Avalos highlights Kar Yong Lim observe example of how historical research on Paul's health has consistently placed more emphasis on his "suffering" or sickness than on his status as a person with a disability. Avalos claims that few academics and Christians recognize Paul as a disabled person who established one of the world's most influential religions [16]. Adela Yarbro Collins explores the interpretations of Paul's suffering from Irenaeus and Tertullian. Context and evidence indicate that Irenaeus regarded Paul's "thorn in the flesh" as a physical disability. Tertullian asserted that the broader context of the second passage, concerning to persecution, implies that the "stake" or "thorn" is some form of bodily and/or mental adversity [17, pp. 165–166]. Biblical perspectives indicate that the togetherness mission with disabled people has a solid foundation for today's mission. Jesus loves all people, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. He transformed our identity so we are now his friends and no longer slaves. This condition empowers us as God's co-workers to complete the mission of togetherness.

Complementarity Mission with Disable People. The historical fact that values on considering togetherness mission have corresponded to the complementarity aspect was in Fanny Jean Crosby's life and works. Crosby (1820-1915) was blinded at an earlier

of her age, yet she began writing hymns at age six. She had a productive life, though she was in a disability condition. Fanny devoted regular hours at The Biglow & Main Co., where she wrote most of her hymns. Her best hymns were written on the spur of the moment, without any specific inspiration. She learned guitar, piano, and has a good soprano voice at the institution. On February 5, 1864, she began writing Sunday school hymns for William B. Bradbury. Her first hymn, *We're Going Home*, sung at Mr. Bradbury's funeral in 1868 featured this hymn. She had a motto. Her words: "I'm so happy! Despite my blindness, I'm determined to remain happy." [18].

There are numerous songs composed by Crosby that relate to salvation by faith in Christ Jesus. In the span of nine years, she composed *Safe in the Arms of Jesus*, *Blessed Assurance*, *Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour*, *Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross*, *I Am Thine, O Lord*, *All the Way My Saviour Leads Me*, *Close to Thee*, *Praise Him! Praise Him!*, *To God Be the Glory*, *Every Day and Hour*, and *Rescue the Perishing*. With more than two potential instances, none of her following hymns would rival these in favor [19, p. 93].

One of the phenomenal "mission" hymns is *Blessed Assurance*. When Mrs. Joseph Knapp, the wife of the company's founder, played the melody and asked Crosby, "What was conveyed through this melody?", the song *Blessed Assurance* was produced. She observed Fanny Crosby pleading on her knees. Mrs. Knapp replayed the recording twice more. Crosby concluded by stating, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! What a glimpse of divine glory [20, p. 94].

The following song is titled *Rescue the Perishing*. This song was written while Crosby was ministering in Manhattan. Crosby performed a special prayer to invite the youth to the occasion. Crosby was approached by a young man who prayed with her. The young man left the event with conviction, remarking, "Now I can meet my mother in heaven because I've discovered her God." At that time, Crosby also recognized her mother's Christian teachings. From these experiences, Crosby composed a hymn based on his mother's teaching experiences [21, p. 109].

The next hymn is *Jesus, Keep Me Close to the Cross*. This composition was created as a result of Crosby's reflections on the cross of Christ and its significance in human life. She believed that the cross of Christ was the defining moment in history. There would be no salvation, no eternal life, and no hope without the cross [22, p. 129]. Another missiological hymn of Crosby is *To God Be the Glory*. It became an integral feature of the 1954 Billy Graham Crusade in Nashville, United States. Doctrinally sound, the hymn begins with "To God be the glory," which leads one to believe that the word "him" [Jesus the Son] refers to God. He deserves to be glorified [23].

Crosby and Phoebe Palmer, the pioneer of the Methodist holiness movement, supported the "rescue mission" (sometimes termed "city" or "gospel" mission) movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Some of her institutions, such as the Bowery Mission in New York City, still exist [24]. The songs listed above represent a small part of the eight thousand hymns Crosby composed during her lifetime. There is a significant amount to study in her musical work, particularly in the hymn genre, regarding the doctrines of salvation. The hymns of Fanny Crosby are significant to the global church's liturgy. It promotes the spiritual growth of Christians and provides Christ's salvation to

those who desire it. These hymns are sung regularly at Sunday services and other Christian events.

3.4 Today's Mission Challenge

Working with disabled individuals demonstrates the believers' complementarity attitude. The mutual efforts reflect their companionship and missionary endeavors. Joni Eareckson Tada established the Joni and Friends Foundation for missionary work. Their homepage depicts the global population of individuals with disabilities. It is stated that many of these people and their families are impoverished, in pain, and despondent. Their motto, "Together we can change this," envisions a society in which every individual with a disability finds hope, dignity, and a position in the body of Christ [25].

Nick Vujizik's life and efforts provide further evidence of challenging the Christian mission paradigm. Despite being born without limbs and legs, Vujizik has become one of the most admired communicators in the world. Even more, he founded "Nick's Evangelical Organization." Its mission and objective are clear and motivating. It retrieves: "Our mission is to cross boundaries and break down barriers, to build bridges that bring people to the love and hope found in Jesus Christ. Our goal is to share the Gospel with one billion more people by 2028. We do this through Live and Digital Outreach Events, Outreach and Discipleship Training, Digital Ministry, Prison Ministry, and Prayer and Encouragement Ministry." [26].

Jennifer Lee decided to develop a network for Asian Americans with disabilities after being diagnosed with Crohn's disease. Lee created the Asian Americans with Disabilities Initiative (AADI) in July 2021. AADI is a youth-led non-profit that advocates for disabled Asian Americans. Lee, AADI's executive director, said she founded the organization to make friends with disabled Asian American teenagers going through similar circumstances and "discuss about intersectionality." AADI released the Asian Americans with Disabilities Initiative Resource Guide in January, a key milestone in its first year [27].

Some of the above instances are merely a tiny part of how the mission to bring people together has been and is being accomplished. The big goal for each person is to celebrate God's saving grace, live and work together, and spread the gospel of God's Kingdom. When making a joint mission with people with disabilities, it is essential to have appreciative, embracing, and mutually supportive attitudes.

4 Conclusion

For every believer, mission work becomes a noble and glorious calling. They are no longer mission targets or accepted inclusively but are rewarded and empowered to discover mission-related breakthroughs and diverse endeavors. In addition, there are numerous mission patterns and foci; mission work with people with disabilities is a critical challenge that needs to be incorporated into the current mission paradigm. The togetherness mission with a disability has a firm biblical foundation, a cross-perspective theoretical framework, and adequate contemporary tangible evidence. Therefore, everyone

recognizes that this togetherness mission approach needs to be adequately comprehended and developed.

Research Contribution: The purpose of this research is to increase the awareness of the believers and motivate them to realize that Christian missions need to involve a multifaceted approach. The love of God is unconditional for all people. A person with a disability or other condition has the same privilege as a person without a disability of serving God's kingdom as a fellow worker.

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