

**EVALUATING ANGLICAN CHURCH OF
MELANESIA SUNDAY SCHOOL MINISTRY IN
ASIFOLA ZONE OF THE NORTHERN
REGION IN THE DIOCESE OF MALAITA,
SOLOMON ISLANDS**

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by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis evaluates the current situation of Children Sunday school ministry in Asifola zone of Northern region in the Diocese of Malaita of the Anglican Church of Melanesia, Solomon Islands. Under the current Anglican Church of Melanesia administrative and/or mission structure, Sunday school ministry in the Parishes is administered and coordinated by the Renewal and Evangelism Department based at the Church Headquarters. From this study has emerged a picture of the relatively constricted coordination between Renewal and Evangelism Department and Parishes of the Diocese of Malaita. Consequently, Sunday schools have been operating in isolation for many years without any direct contact and liaisons with the Renewal and Evangelism Department. Given then that a much active coordination could have occurred one must ask of the quality of Sunday school teaching, what indications it may show of the approach that is responsive to the learning needs of children. The present study results show that the overall approach to teaching is of low level and in isolation of the learning needs of children, and thus ineffective.

Children Sunday school is an important ministry of the church which requires effective teaching and learning approach to nurturing children's spiritual life in the Christian ideal in such a way as to live a wise life, a righteous/upright life and a holy life in a community of faith. In terms of nurturing children's life in the Christian ideal as integral part of life in the community, a relevant approach to Sunday school teaching and learning process is crucial. Hence, crucial to teaching and learning process, is the development of an alternative approach. This is centred in an Asifola language concept, hence the name: *Kwaifamantai*. The concept is examined in the context of instructions given by a person of recognizable status in the family or community. It has three components employed as teaching frameworks or methods: *Faa'tolomai manta* (teaching

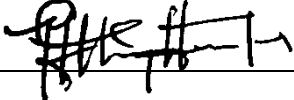
for a Wise Living), *Faa'tolomai oolo* (teaching for righteousness or upright living) and *Faa'tolomai abbu* (teaching for a Holy living) as a way forward in strengthening teaching and learning processes. The concept chosen brings Sunday school teaching right into the centre of taught and learning patterns of children and the community of Asifola zone in the diocese of Malaita.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis, which is 31,485 words in length (excluding the bibliography and front matter), has been written by me, that it is the result of work carried out by me, and that it has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, in any previous written work for an academic award at this or any other academic institution.

I also declare that this thesis has not used any material, heard or read, without academically appropriate acknowledgment of the source.

Name: Charles Fox Anita

Signed:  _____

Date: 10th September 2019

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved father and mother,

the Late Robert R. Anita and Late Janet Falute

and

in memory of my two late brothers,

Henry Tagini Anita and Michael Tome Anita.

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“Rakediana baita, ma fanualama, God ka too fai gamu sui, laona manta mamana gamu gi, Amen.”

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

i. Maps

Figure 1: Map of the South Pacific Ocean (Solomon Islands)

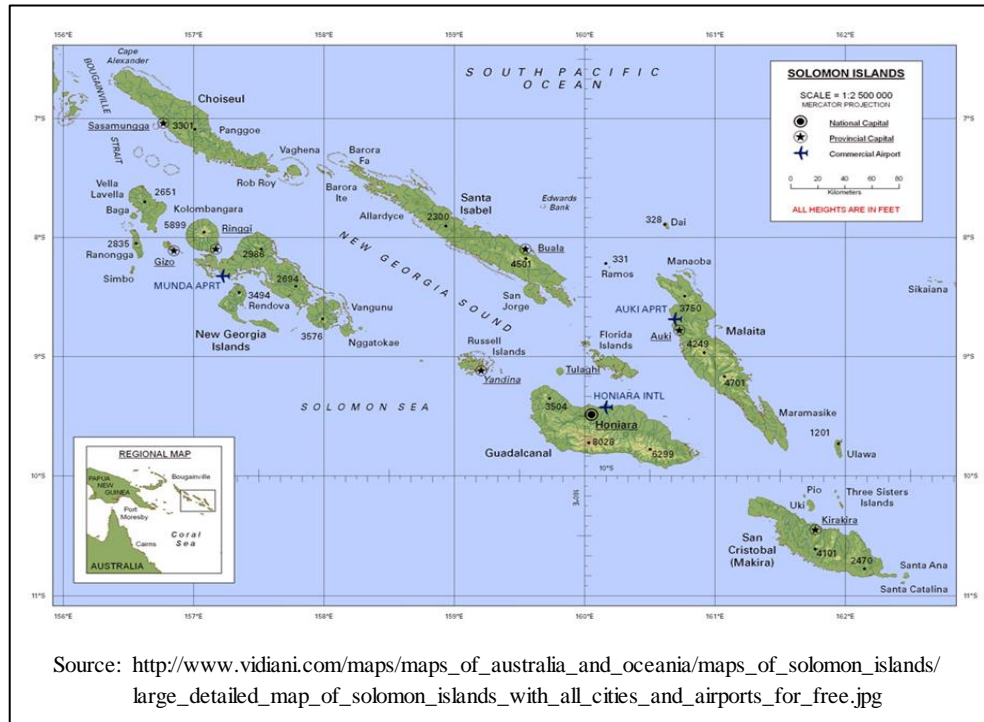


Figure 2: Map showing Malaita - The Shaded area in the map is the area of Research. The areas circled are Congregations 1, 2 and 3 in Asifola zone.

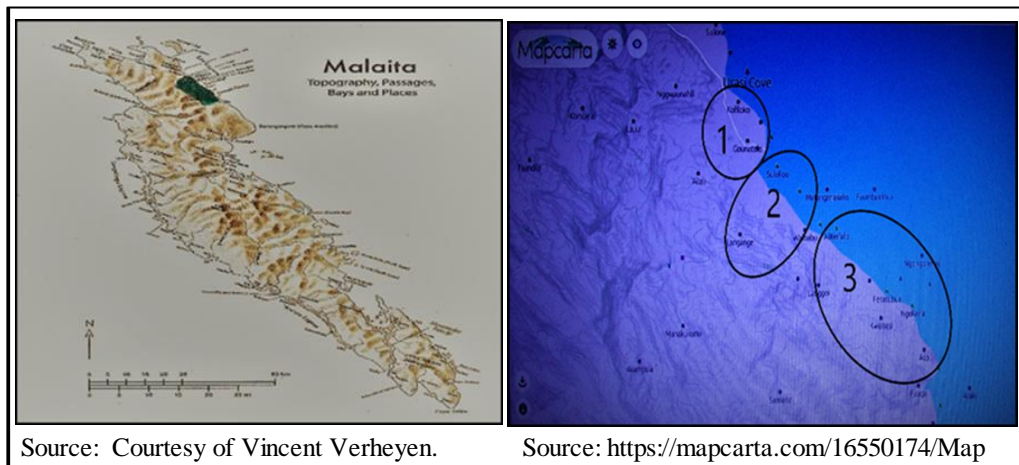
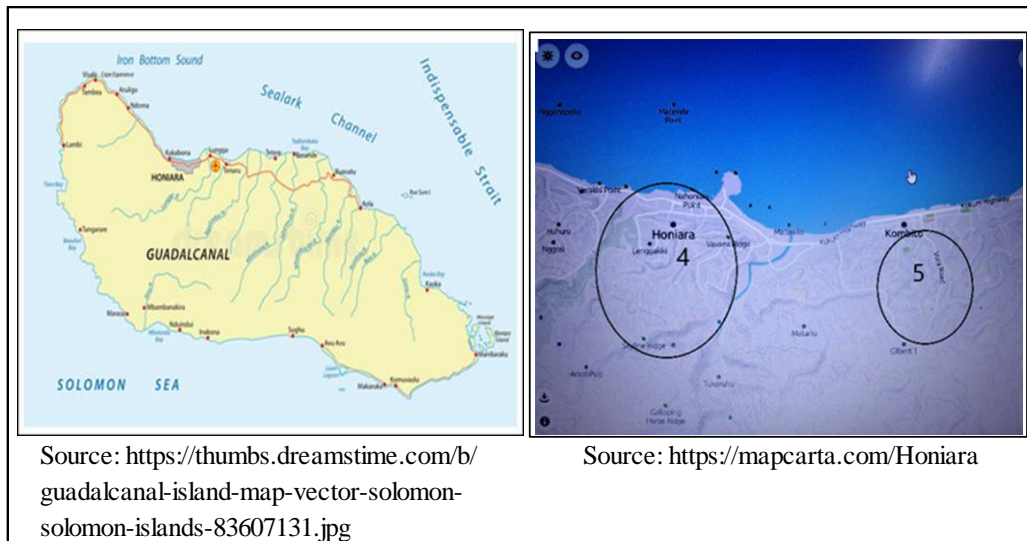
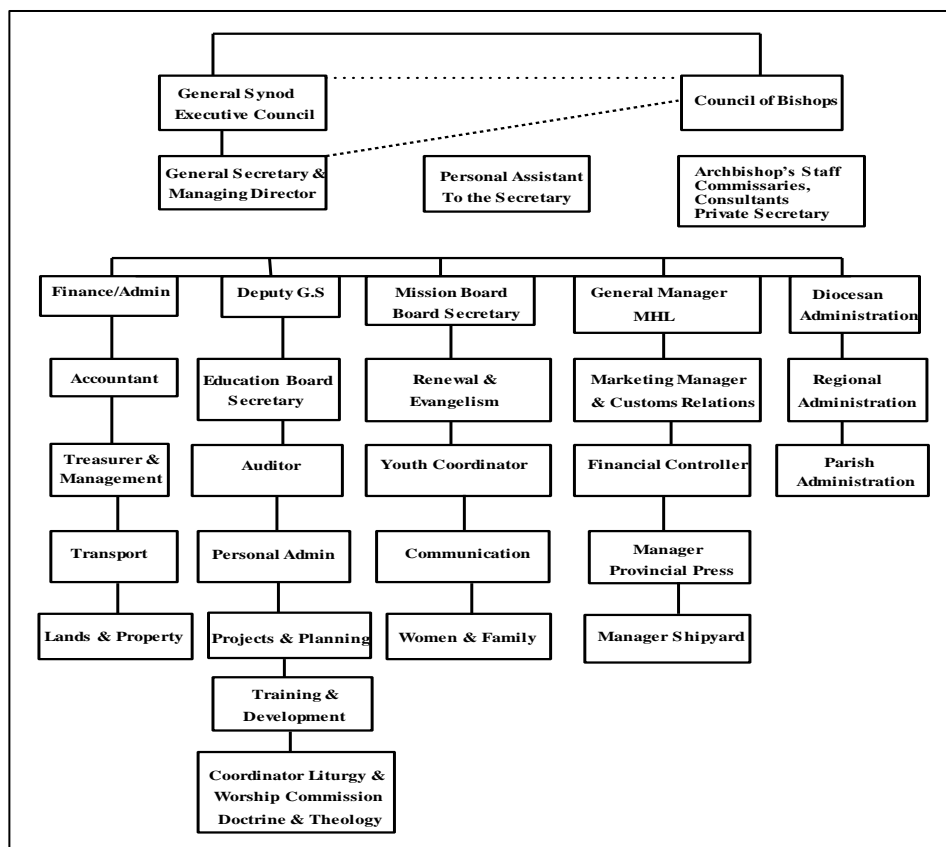


Figure 3: Map of Guadalcanal in which Honiara city is situated. The circled areas are congregations 4 and 5 (in which Research is done) in Honiara city.



ii. Structure

Figure 4. ACOM Administration structure



Adopted from: Kapu, Stephen Vinale. 2014

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACOM	-	Anglican Church of Melanesia
Congr	-	Congregation
CSS	-	Children Sunday School
DOM	-	Diocese of Malaita
DSSC	-	Diocesan Sunday School Coordinator
NRSV	-	New Revised Standard Version
PSSC	-	Parish Sunday school Coordinator
Qtn	-	Question
S.S.	-	Sunday School
SSM	-	Sunday School Ministry
ST's	-	Sunday School Teachers
ST	-	Sunday School Teacher

INTRODUCTION

This thesis seeks to critically evaluate the effectiveness of the Sunday school ministry in the Anglican Church of Melanesia (ACOM)¹, focusing particularly in *Asifola*² ‘Anglican villages’ (Anglican congregational homes)³ in Northern Region⁴ of the Diocese of Malaita. The study identifies some of the prevailing issues that contributed to the non-effectiveness of the Sunday school ministry. The intention is to examine the ineffectiveness of the teaching and learning programs for three to twelve years old in the Sunday school.

Like other Church ministries, the Sunday school ministry is established in the ACOM mission structure. It is a ministry of the Children (particularly from age three to twelve)⁵ and comes under the auspices of Renewal and Evangelism department of ACOM. However, there seem to be very little, if not, no attention is given to this ministry by the church. The evidence can be seen in the way the Ministry has progressed over the years in the rural areas such as Asifola in the Diocese of Malaita. The author, a Priest serving in the diocese of Malaita from 2002 -2014 noticed that Sunday school ministry is not very active in the villages within Asifola Zone. In some areas, the Sunday school ministry is suffering from what the author called, ‘high and low attendance.’ That is to say, in each year, it started off with very high attendance of children but then reduced to only few children to complete the year. Moreover, there is lack of resources and proper

¹ The abbreviate ACOM for Anglican Church of Melanesia will be used from now on throughout the paper.

² Asifola: Name given to those living on the coastal area of Lau and Baegu of Northern Region of the Diocese of Malaita.

³ Worth noting is that “Anglican villages” here will be used through the thesis and refers to Anglican Congregational homes.

⁴ Northern Region is a term used by the Diocese of Malaita of the ACOM for the region of North Malaita Province.

⁵ Worth noting is that the aged group of 13 and above is another category regarded as youth and is excluded in this research study.

administration and coordination of such programme from the diocesan offices to the parishes by those responsible. Furthermore, the program was not taught by trained Sunday school teachers but by primary or secondary school ‘dropouts’ with no teaching experiences. As a result, most if not, all Sunday school ministries within ACOM, let alone in Asifola zone seemed to be run in isolation from the mission office.

The authors’ examination of the issues facing Sunday school ministry is based on three Anglican rural parishes in Asifola zone of Northern Region, namely, *Fouia, Sulufou and Ngorefou* parishes. For a comparative perspective on the issues, the examination includes two urban parish churches in Honiara city, namely, All Saints and Vura. The three rural parishes, Fouia, Sulufou and Ngorefou (See figure 2 map, illustration p. xi) are situated apart from each other on one end of the Lau lagoon and as well as on the Baegu coast of Malaita Province. To travel from one village in Asifola zone to the other, one has to paddle a canoe or travel by out-board-motor. Asifola is also situated in the centre of Baegu-Asifola constituency, and has been one of the first landing spot of the early missionaries. Asifola was one of the historical places of the Anglican church of Melanesia and was known to be the center of the Anglican Congregations in the Northern region of Malaita.

Research Problem

The focus of this study is to investigate the underlying causes for the ineffectiveness of the Sunday school ministry. What drives the author to undertake this study is Bishop Terry’s⁶ statement in a Mission consultation held in Honiara, Solomon Islands in 2003. He said:

⁶ Bishop Terry Brown: An expatriate from Canada, and former Bishop of Diocese of Malaita for thirteen years (1995-2008).

The weakness in mission in the ACOM is the lack of teaching on the local level – including lack of programmes for training lay ministers at the local level, lack of involvement of clergy in teaching, lack of Sunday school and youth teaching programmes (over against musical programmes, for example), lack of Christian education materials for children and youth and ineffectiveness of some diocesan programmes in addressing these issues because of lack of resources (Brown 2003, 2).

It has increasingly become evident that leadership and the current administrative and mission structure of the church are more responsible for the non-effectiveness of the Sunday school Ministry, let alone other ministries in the diocese. This study, while seeking reasons for the non-effectiveness of this ministry also seeks to make positive suggestions that may be helpful in bringing about a revitalization of the Sunday school ministry in the diocese of Malaita in general.

Research Question

The research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What have the Sunday school teachers so far done to provide for the teaching and learning program of children between three to twelve years committed to their charge in Asifola zone of Northern region in diocese of Malaita?
2. How have the Sunday school teachers approach it? and,
3. Where does the prevailing need for strengthening teaching and learning program in Sunday school ministry with children now stand?

Research Methodology and Limitations

The author have used Triangulation as a research methodology in fieldwork component of the study. It is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research (Catherine Dowson 2009, 20). Here, the questionnaires (question sheets) were either given out to interviewees to answer the questions by filling up the question sheets or questions read out to interviewees to answer. The interviewees were asked with the given

questions either directly or the questions were translated or simplified in the appropriate language for clarification purposes. The answers to the questions were from their own congregational experiences and feelings.

The field research study is actually based on both semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The interviews focussed on information which can be compared and contrasted with information gained in other interviews (Dowson 2009, 28). The questionnaire is the combination of both open and closed questions. It begins with closed questions with boxes to tick followed by the respondent's reasons for the answer, and then finishes with open-questions for detail responses (2009, 31).

In terms of limitations, the whole research study was not hundred percent (100%) successful due to reasons such as; Firstly, the research was carried out on a busy Christmas season, thus, most people were not available for interviews. Secondly, the full estimated research amount of money was not given by the sponsor due to financial constrain, thus, depth-research work was not covered by the author himself. Thirdly, most people in the Congregations were illiterate, so the answers given to the interview questionnaires were incomplete and confusing to them. Fourthly, the study focuses on three areas: Teacher and children relationship, quality of teaching, and link between the mission statement of Sunday school and its implementation as stated in the organizational structure of ACOM.

Purpose and Significance of the Thesis

The purpose of the thesis is to evaluate the teaching and learning approach in educating children through Sunday school in the ACOM. The intention is to find an approach which will strengthen children in teaching and learning in such a way as to live a 'wise life,' a 'righteous or upright life' and a 'holy life' in a community of faith. Children Sunday school is an important ministry of the church which requires effective

teaching and learning approach and guidance. The Sunday school age of children at three to twelve years is an important stage of children's spiritual growth that should not be neglected by the Church. Thus, children need relevant guidance and care through teaching and learning approach that is responsive to the spiritual upbringing of children from childhood to youth and adulthood. Accordingly, Proverbs 22:6 says, "Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray." (NRSV)

The author contents that children Sunday school programs have been neglected by ACOM for years, hence, this has been shown in children's bad behaviours in the rural villages in terms of issues relating to law and order. The law and order issues such as stealing, alcohol and drug abuse, violence, disrespect of family and community rules displays lack of Christian principles in children's upbringing through Sunday school ministry. The study is significant for the strengthening of children Sunday school ministry in ACOM.⁷

Field Research and Data Collection

A field research was carried out in the months of December 2018 and January 2019 and data were collected from three Anglican villages (congregations) in Asifola zone of Northern Region of the Diocese of Malaita. There was also a field research data collected from two urban Anglican congregations in Honiara city. A total of five Anglican Congregations were covered in this fieldwork research. Interviews were done using both the quantitative, qualitative as well as recordings in the research work. Three sets of (but similar) questions were issued to the focussed groups. One was meant for the ordinary

⁷The author in his experience have seen the importance of children Sunday schools and seen the trainings of children Sunday schools especially during his pastoral duties in ACOM and thus he decided to do research study on this.

congregations and the Sunday school teachers, the second was for the church leaders in that particular congregation such as the priests, the catechists, and chairpersons, the ministerial leaders and so forth. The third question sheet was specifically for the older children of age 9 to 12 who are actually attending Sunday school classes. Those that are interviewed are ordinary persons in the congregations, Sunday school teachers, church leaders in the congregations, children who are attending Sunday school and other ACOM workers.

Chapter Overview

Chapter one will discuss the issues concerning the progress of children Sunday school in Asifola zone in the Northern Region of the Diocese of Malaita. This Chapter contains the ACOM mission structure, purposely to understand the hierarchical and the system in which Sunday school is positioned in all ACOM congregations. The chapter discusses the status of the Sunday school ministry of the Church within the overall mission structure.

Chapter 2 focuses on literature review of books that are relevant and corresponding to teaching and learning in children Sunday school. The chapter discusses concepts and models that involve teaching and learning which relates to the community of faith approach. The discussion built on the insights from Christian educators such as Donald E. Miller, Norma Cook Everist, Charles R. Foster, Maria Harris and Gabriel Moran to name but a few.

Chapter 3 discusses the findings and analysis of the results from field data collected through interviews and questionnaires in both rural and urban congregations of ACOM. From the analysis provided, it intends to develop a framework toward a method of teaching and learning that is responsive to the learning context of Sunday school children in Asifola zone of the diocese of Malaita.

Chapter 4 discusses a way forward to strengthen Sunday school teaching and learning in the ACOM congregations. It puts forward the Asifola concept: *Kwaifamantai* as a framework for developing a method of teaching and learning in Sunday school. The chapter offers some recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM OF SUNDAY MINISTRY UNDER THE MISSION STRUCTURE OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF MELANESIA

This chapter will examine the current issues relating to the status of Sunday school ministry in the overall mission structure of the Church. The discussion focuses on three sections under the subtitles: the Anglican diocese of Malaita, the Sunday school ministry in ACOM, and challenges facing Sunday school ministry in the diocese of Malaita.

1.1. The Anglican Diocese of Malaita

The Anglican Church in the Solomon Islands was inaugurated as ACOM on 26th January 1975 after seceding from the Anglican province of New Zealand. Hence, Malaita became an ecclesiastical diocese of ACOM and the Sunday school ministry was established under the Renewal and Evangelism department within the ACOM administration and/or mission structure.

The Diocese of Malaita (DOM) is comprised of 6 regions, namely, Northern Region, which stretches from *Ataa* river to *Kwainafala* river; Central Region which runs from *Kwainafala* river to *Gwounaru* airport, *Keava* region begins at *Fiu* river to *Fo'au*, and including Lord Howe atolls, *Arekwa* region which goes from *Olomburi* to *Hauhui*, Small Malaita region which covers the whole of small Malaita including *Sikaina* outer island and the Eastern region which runs from *Ataa* river to *Sinaragu*. In the ACOM mission structure all dioceses come under leadership of Bishops¹. Hence, all church

¹The diocese was under the leadership of five Bishops and two assistant Bishops: Leonard Alufurai (1975-1981), Willie Pwaisiho (1982-1989), Raymond Aumae (1990-1994), Dr. Terry Brown (1995-2008),

ministries under the mission structure adhere in general to the authority of the Bishops. In his thesis of 2014, Stephen Kapu critic the ACOM mission structure in which he said that “ACOM has inherited an authoritative structure that was part of the old Catholic Church, where the Pope wields a lot of political and religious power” (2014, 46).² In terms of institutional structure, ACOM is very much the church of the Bishops, and they not only control the mission of the church but hold all the powers regarding the way the church is run.

Consequently, attempts to contextualize the Anglican Church mission structure and make it a Melanesian Church that is responsive to the cultural, social, and spiritual context of the people have not succeeded. Accordingly, moderating the powers of a bishop has not been effective given the double roles that they play in the ministry and administrative structure. For instance, the Diocesan Bishop is the supreme head of the diocese (assisted by the Vicar general).³ He not only holds positions at the top of the church ministry and administration structures but also serve on all the major boards and committees of the church both in the provincial and in the diocesan level (Kapu 2014, 46-49).

Having said that, the Mission Secretary looks after the Clergy who are holding Coordinator’s post of Renewal and Evangelism ministry, Sunday school ministry, Youth Ministry, Healing Ministry, Mother’s Union ministry and all religious institutions in Malaita. The mission Secretary is both a mission administrator and a mission field officer at the same time. The challenge for the mission office, however, is that, responsible personnel are not equip enough to handle all the Church ministries (including Sunday

Alfred Hou (2005-2016), Sam Sahu (2008-), and Rickson Maomaoru (2017-). These bishops were men of good standing both in the Church and in their local communities. Their wealth of experience, both in secular and in sacred ministry, has accorded them the highest position in the Church.

² This statement applies also to the Diocese of Malaita as seen generally in all ACOM diocese.

³ In areas of supervision, the Vicar General is responsible for all the Senior Priests in the regions and the institutional chaplains in the Diocese (ACOM Church Constitutions and Canons, 2014, 61).

school) given under his/her care. The evidence is seen in the way Sunday school ministry is operated in DOM. In this context, Sunday school teachers and children lack Christian Education materials for all the levels in Sunday school ministry. There is also lack of programmes for training of Sunday school teachers by those responsible for administration and mission in the Church. Sharing a similar sentiment, AC5⁴ said, “ACOM does not do justice to Sunday School Ministry (SSM), it has not been given all the resources and equipment needed to really address the holistic upbringing of the children in faith development” (AC5, 2019).

Moreover, the mission office is not free to run or do mission outside of ACOM’s authoritative structure. What this means is that, the ACOM’s authoritative structure seemed to shallow the mission structure of the Church. While this is good on one hand, on another, it can lead to what Kapu described as “deviation from its mission motives to one that is structured for preservation and continuity” (Kapu 2014, 53; see also Riddell 1997, 12). The statement by Kapu seemingly affirms this deviation from mission motives as evident for all the Church ministries in DOM. Today, Sunday school ministry is suffering from what the author termed as high and low attendance, in terms of teacher and children participation. That is to say, in each year, it started off with very high attendance of teacher and children but then reduced to only few teachers and children to complete the year. This scenario thus points to the importance of Sunday school in ACOM and the place it occupies in the ministry which will be discussed in the section that follows.

⁴ AC5: See Appendix 4. (Codes are used in interviews to protect their identities).

1.2. The Sunday School Ministry in ACOM

The Sunday school ministry (SSM) was originally started in England in 1780 (Larson 2008).⁵ Accordingly, this religious institution was established to help the poor children working in the factories. The aim of the SSM at that time was to teach proper behaviour, enforced cleanliness, provide clothing and to reprimand children from lying, swearing and for talking in an indecent manner. The programme also comprised teaching about the Bible, Christian faith and God's love (Larsen 2008). The ACOM is no exception for it has adopted this ministry because of its significance to children's Christian growth and discipline. The SSM as a ministry is an opportunity in which children are taught about moral values and holy living under God's love. It is primary mission of the Church to give proper religious instruction to all children.⁶ Hence, SSM is an important ministry of the Church. Notice this quotation:

Sunday school is most often perceived as a major teaching arm of the Protestant churches. It has been viewed at various times as the school for the poor, the evangelistic outreach of the church, the exclusively educational unit of the church, and a church growth organization. In most denominations the primary function of the Sunday school is stated as being for the communication of the faith (Borchert, 1990, 623-624).

Like in most Protestant churches, SSM in ACOM is generally organized for children at the age of 3 to 12 years and they often meet on Sunday mornings immediately after the morning worship service. This is an hour of teaching given to children. In terms of the Sunday school classes, they are divided into six groups/classes (the sixth class is for confirmation)⁷ and that the classes are classified according to their age groupings as shown in table 1 below.

⁵ When did Sunday school start: <https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/2008/august/when-did-sunday-schools-start.html>

⁶ Worth noting as the book of proverbs said, "My child, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the Lord reproves the one he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights" (Proverbs 3:11-12).

⁷ Confirmation Class: A separate class preparing for confirmation of Holy Communion from the bishop.

Table 1: ACOM Classification of Age Groups into Classes

Class	Age Range
1	3 to 4 years
2	5 to 6 Years
3	7 to 8 Years
4	9 to 10 Years
5	11 to 12 Years
6 (Confirmation Class)	13 and above

Each class is taught and looked after by one or two teachers. The classification of children in class may not be accurate according to the ages but are also done according to their learning abilities due to other considerations such as cultural situations⁸ in the Solomon Islands (AC4. 2019).

Having described in the above statements the establishment of Sunday school ministry in ACOM and its importance, currently it has encountered many challenges. Since its development at the ACOM in 1975, Sunday school ministry program has been implemented in the dioceses of Malaita. There have appeared reports in mission consultation⁹ and current study related to Sunday school teaching and learning, its techniques and effects, and even more anecdotal descriptions of its implementation in varieties of congregational settings in the ACOM. From this current study several important considerations relating to the challenges facing Sunday school ministry of teaching and learning are immersing in the DOM. The section that follows proposes to direct attention toward these considerations and offer a prospective for their examination.

⁸ In Solomon Islands some children (with parents) entered church from heathenism when they have reached a grown up age so needs to be taught like a child due to newness in Church/gospel.

⁹ Bishop Terry Brown: An expatriate from Canada, and former Bishop of Diocese of Malaita for thirteen years (1995-2008).

1.3. Challenges Facing Sunday School Ministry in the Anglican

Diocese of Malaita

Sunday school ministry in the Diocese of Malaita (DOM) is faced with many internal and external challenges, ranging from lack of teaching resources to lack of qualified teaching personals. For this paper, three local churches in Asifola zone were used as a case study for Sunday school ministry. Generally, in any type of educational research there are a number of potential issues that must be considered and resolved. Three issues which have special significance for research into Sunday school ministry are (i) teacher and children relationship, (ii) quality of teaching, and (iii) poor coordination from ACOM mission office.

1.3.1. Teacher and Children Relationship

Teachers play an important role in children's¹⁰ learning. The relationship between teacher and children refers manly to the positive bonds that connect them together through friendship. When there is friendship and trust between both teachers and Children, learning settings become supportive spaces in which children can participate in productive ways academically and socially. Hence, positive relationship is expected in the Sunday school teaching and learning environment.

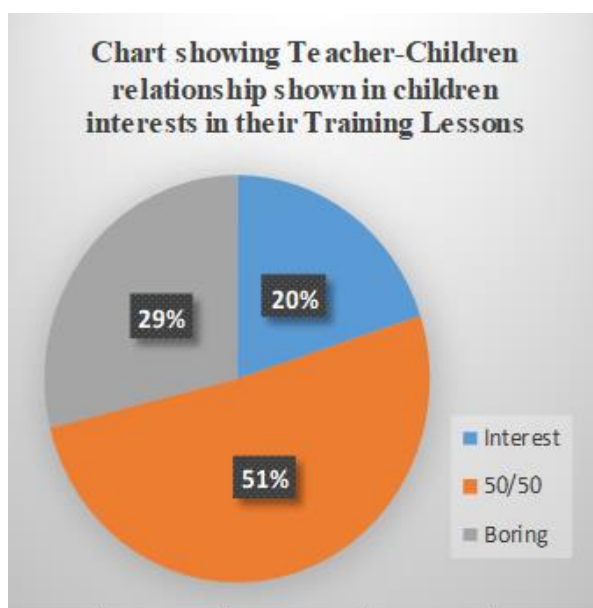
Moreover, the positive relationship in terms of associations, connections and links helps develop friendship and trust between teacher and with peers, and hence is secure. In the sense of this study, the question asked to the children was, how interesting was the training lessons and here the children answered the questions by referring to the teacher who presented the lessons. In fact, the children were referring to the relationships of the teachers (meant here) in connection to the lessons presented. (For example; on the one

¹⁰ Children's used here refers to Sunday school children and also refers to students or learners.

hand, a lesson is interesting because it is presented by a very generous and a friendly teacher of the children. On the other hand, a lesson is boring because it is presented by a boring and cruel hated teacher). In this case, when children in these congregations answered the questions on training lessons, they in fact were referring to the teacher who actually was presenting the lessons. The lessons are connected to their teachers.

The question asked was based on this relationship and the question was (Appendix 3: Q1), “What can you say about your training lessons?” The answers to the questionnaires were; “Interesting,” “50/50” (or average) and “Boring,” as shown in the results on graph 1 below.

Graph 1: Showing Teacher-Children relationship as shown in children’s interests in their Teaching Lessons



According to the graph 1 above concerning teacher-children relationships, 20% of children in the five congregations pointed to “interesting” lessons, 51% of the total children stated a 50/50% and 29% pointed to boring lessons delivered to them.

1.3.1.1. Teacher-Children Interaction

The term interaction used here refers to the act of communicating with somebody, especially while you work, play or spend time with them (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2015). In this sense, the Teacher-Children interaction is a very important approach in which there is an interconnection between teacher and children especially in a learning environment.

In terms of the interconnection, there is also a spiritual interaction between the teacher and the Children. Hence, such interactions are encouraging in Sunday school learning settings. These areas are important in relation to teacher – children interaction. Thus is evident in the current study as shown to be lacking and hence, contributed to the current issues of Children Sunday school teaching and learning.

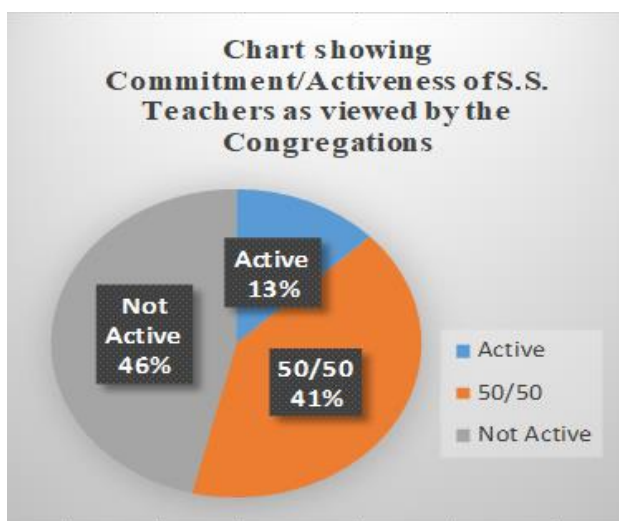
1.3.1.2. Teacher Commitment and Activeness

One of the important factors contributed to the teacher-children relationship is the teacher's commitment and activeness in children's learning. As noted from this study, teacher commitment and activeness is seen by the congregations as related to teachers' actions in terms of willingness in preparation and in actual teaching.

Moreover, in this study, the author has questioned few persons through interviews, in 5 congregations as to how they see the activeness of Sunday school teachers towards the children and their learnings. One of the questions asked was the activeness of the teacher, believing that it also relates to the question of commitment thus; [Appendix 1, Q4] "In your observation and experience, are the teachers of children Sunday school active in teaching/training children in your local church?"

The responses of the 5 congregations to the question of commitment and activeness of teachers are shown in graph 2 below.

Graph 2: Showing Commitment/Activeness of S.S. Teachers



The graph shows that a majority of 46% from all 5 congregations pointed to non-activeness of teachers to children, 41% of the total congregations pointed to the average of 50/50 and only 13% of the total congregation stated activeness by the teachers.

Some factors that contributed to the results of graph 2 above such as the high percentages of non-commitments and inactiveness as stated by the congregations during the research interviews were in terms of administrative work in dealing with the children. The other factor was that the teacher's desire in spending more time with the children was not seen. This non-commitments and inactiveness of teachers to children were displayed by their actions and their ways of doing things. All these were seen by the congregations as the issues of Teacher–Children commitment and Activeness in children Sunday schools.

1.3.1.3. Teacher Approachable

The use of the word approachable here as an adjective refers to someone who is friendly and easy to talk to and easy to understand. For example, despite being a big star, she's very approachable (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2015).

The approach that teachers and children have on one other in their relationships matters in the teaching and learning setting. The availability, the accessibility, openness, open-minded, and welcoming are what referred to in approachable. The approachable here is important in terms of teacher and children relationship in Sunday school ministry. In a similar vein, Shelly H. Cunningham speaking on the humanistic approach in one of her six applications of human approach said that approachable is to “[c]reate a warm, positive and accepting emotional climate to enhance the learning environment” (Cunningham 1992, 98).

From this study, children seemed to see that the qualities of approachable (mentioned above) in teacher and children relationships is there in the learning environment. In this sense, children are free to present their thoughts and have open questions and discussions on lesson topic taught in class. From this study, two questions were also asked to the children concerning teacher approachable thus; [Appendix 3: Q2] “Do you like your class lesson?” and [Appendix 3: Q3] “Do you like how your teacher teaches you?” The questions were not directed on the personality of the teacher but framed in such a way to question how the lesson was presented by the teacher to children. In fact, these questions refer to a teacher’s approach towards his/her student as seen and experienced by a child in class as shown in the results on graph 3 below.

Graph 3: Showing Teacher-Children Approachable

