

**ADVENTIST MEDICAL MISSION IN BOTSWANA:
TOWARD AN EFFECTIVE AND
APPROPRIATE MODEL**

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Since holistic health is central to Africans, they will seek it from all possible health-care systems that include (1) African traditional medicine, (2) Western-oriented medicine, (3) Christian medical mission, as well as (4) African Independent Churches (AICs) with emphasis on spiritual healing. However, at times this comes with negative consequences.

This research sought to understand why medical pluralism exists in Botswana and the rest of southern Africa, and why it finds concurrent use by Africans; solutions can help Christian medical missions develop more effective and holistic ways to serve Africans. The research can also help Christian medical missions understand how they can especially engage with the African traditional and spiritual healing systems.

This qualitative research conducted a missiological historical study of the origin and development of Adventist medical mission in Botswana. By analyzing and comparing the Adventist methods with those of other Christian medical missions and traditional medical systems, the research developed guidelines for a suggested alternative model for Adventist medical mission in Botswana and beyond. In addition, it provides a documented history of Adventist medical missions in Botswana.

This study examined written and oral sources for research and data collection in order to discover the history of Christian medical missions, the biblical medical mission models, and the present health-care models that exist in Botswana. Thus the data collection process was a combination of documents and texts, as well as interviews with various Botswana government Ministry of Health (MOH) officials, Christian medical mission directors, senior nurses, current and retired chaplains and missionaries, village elders, traditional doctors, and prophet-healers.

This research showed that Africans have a holistic worldview. Any imbalance in the physical, social, mental, emotional, relational, environmental, or spiritual spheres of their lives constitutes illness. The biblical medical mission model revealed that God viewed humanity holistically and desired to restore them in all the aspects of life in the truism of shalom. By engaging in medical pluralism, Africans are attempting to optimize their opportunities to restore the imbalance they experience.

However, Western-oriented medicine, including Christian medical missions, was found lacking in this holistic view ideologically and/or practically. Therefore in the conclusion, I develop a suggested alternative biblical model for Adventist medical mission that offers a more holistic approach to health care. In order to serve Africans more effectively, I recommend that Adventist

medical missions consider opening dialogue with African traditional health-care systems. In addition, this research contributed to the body of knowledge on the socio-history of Adventist medical mission in Botswana.