

AFRICAN AMERICAN UNDERREPRESENTATION IN
INTERCULTURAL MISSIONS: PERCEPTIONS
OF BLACK MISSIONARIES AND THE
THEORY OF SURVIVAL/SECURITY

by

James W. Sutherland

B.A., Hope College, 1968
M.Div., New Brunswick Theological Seminary, 1972

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in Intercultural Studies
at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

Deerfield, Illinois
May 1998

Accepted:

Dissertation Director

Second Reader

Third Reader

Program Director--ex officio

ABSTRACT

African American mission executives helped to refine a survey that was sent to African American cross-cultural missionaries to determine reasons for the underrepresentation of Blacks (African Americans) in intercultural missions. One hundred and two surveys were returned.

A theory is proposed and supported from findings that the core worldview value of survival/security in current African American culture explains the underrepresentation.

Implications for recruitment of African American missionaries are given for both Black and White mission recruiters as well as recommendations to the Church to remedy deeper issues of racism.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT. iii

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS xii

LIST OF TABLES. xiii

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS xvi

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS. xvii

Chapter

1. RESEARCH CONCERN. 1

 Estimates of the Current AFAM IC Population. 4

 Earlier Estimates of AFAM IC Missionaries. 5

 Research Purposes. 7

 Major Research Question. 8

 Definition of Terms. 8

 Assumptions. 10

 Issues of Validity 11

 The African American Population: Research
 Limitations 13

 Research Limitations, Addendum. 16

 Overview of Procedures 19

 Significance of the Study. 20

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE. 24

 Author's Theoretical Model 24

 Diagram Explanations. 29

A Historical Perspective	33
Colonization Phase, Late 1700s-1865	33
The Independent Phase, 1865-1914.	36
The Modern Period, 1914-Present	37
Foreign Colonial Resistance.	37
White Missions and AFAM Missionary Advancement	39
The Race Factor in AFAM Missions.	40
A Historical Perspective on Recruiting Sheds Light.	41
The Southern Baptist Convention	44
Other Independent Missions.	44
AFAM Missionary Education	53
Are Mission Educational Requirements Too Difficult?.	54
Educational Requirements Impacted Recruitment	56
Historical Summary.	58
A Moment of Opportunity for AFAM Missions	59
The Impact of the AFAM Church upon IC Missions	61
The Black Church and IC Missions.	61
Self-preservation.	62
Ethnocentrism.	65
AFAM Theology of Providence.	68
AFAM Pastors.	69

AFAM Pastors and IC Mission Education.	69
AFAM Pastoral Authority.	71
Liberal Theology	73
Orthodoxy and Consequentiality.	77
AFAM Church Summary	82
Missionary Motivations	84
Racial Affinity	88
Racial Affinity and Westernization.	90
AFAM IC Missionary Role Models.	93
Who Will Be the Missionary?.	94
Motivational Summary.	97
AFAM Giving.	98
Giving to Missions and "The Image of the Limited Good".	98
Past AFAM Support of IC Missions.	103
Contemporary AFAM Giving: Individuals	105
AFAM Contemporary Giving: Local Church.	109
AFAM Contemporary Giving: Denominational Level.	114
Materialism and the AFAM	121
Inferences from Social Psychology.	124
African American Worldview.	124
Group Orientation	125
Integration Point	125

Organizational Implications	128
Personal Efficacy/Locus of Control.	130
Locus of Control/Risk Taking	130
High Self Esteem/Low Self Efficacy	132
Self Efficacy and Past Performance	134
Self Efficacy and Ideology	135
Self Efficacy and Political Efficacy	137
Personal Efficacy and System Blame	138
Summary of Social Science Findings.	140
Demographic Survey Questions	142
3. RESEARCH DESIGN	144
Descriptive Research	144
Population	144
Sampling Method	146
Phase One: Survey Development.	146
Phase One: Stage One.	147
Phase One: Stage Two.	149
Phase Two: AFAM IC Missionary Survey	151
Research Design Summary	155
4. DATA ANALYSIS	157
Survey Question 1–Domains.	157
AFAM Church/Pastor Domain	158
Financial/Material Domain	166

Lack of Financial Support.	167
AFAM Materialism and Unwillingness to Sacrifice	170
Ethnocentricity Domain.	175
Mission Board Hindrances.	178
Applicant Pool Difficulties	180
Risk and Fear Issues.	182
Impediments Concerning the Missionary	183
Impediment of Racism.	184
Summary of Survey Question #1	185
SQ 2, Change of Views.	188
Identifying the Missionary Respondents	189
SQ G, Mission Agency Affiliation.	189
SQ H, Current Denominational Affiliation.	190
Missionary Demographics.	192
SQ I, K, Age and Years of Service	192
SQ 3, Current Field AFAMs?.	194
SQ 7, Those Not IC.	195
SQ J, Gender.	198
SQ 41, Secure Family Background	198
SQ L, Level of Education.	200
SQ 42, GPA of Missionaries.	201
SQ 43, Is Jesus the Only Way?	202
Missionary Motivations	203

SQ 35, Biblical Exposition.	203
SQ 8 A, Motivated by Short-term Trip?	205
SQ 8 B, Motivated by a Person?.	206
SQ 36, AFAM Risk Perception.	209
SQ 22 A, Anticipation of Risk, by Age	211
SQ 22 B, Risk in Retrospect	212
AFAM Worldview	213
SQ 4, AFAM Under-50 Worldview	213
AFAM Under-50 Worldview: Materialism	216
AFAM Under-50 Worldview: Inward Focus.	218
AFAM Under-50 Worldview: Parochialism And Xenophobia.	220
AFAM Under-50 Worldview: Unspiritual Worldview	221
AFAM Under-50 Worldview: AFAM Church Uninterested.	221
SQ 30, Perception of U.S. Oppression.	222
SQ 32, Worldwide Racism and AFAMs	223
SQ 34, Ethnocentricity	224
SQ 16, AFAM Theology of Survival.	225
SQ 14, AFAM Ethnocentricity	227
SQ 17, Criticism for Serving IC	228
SQ 34, Going More to the Westernized?	229
SQ 38, God Our Servant?	230

AFAM Churches.	232
SQ 24, AFAM Church IC Missions Exposure	232
SQ 37, Doctrine of Missions	233
SQ 31, Materialism in the AFAM Church	234
SQ 39, Coldness in the AFAM Church.	239
AFAM Pastors	240
SQ 28, Pastor's Global Vision	241
SQ 20, Faith Support/AFAM Pastors	241
Missionary Finances.	242
SQ M, How Many Raised Their Support?.	242
SQ 10 A, Longer Fundraising Time?	243
SQ 10 B, How Much Longer for Support?	244
SQ 18, 19, Origin of Funds.	246
SQ 19, Percentage of Funds from AFAMs	247
SQ 6, Factors in AFAM Church Giving Or Withholding	248
Mission Boards	253
SQ 26, AFAM Denominational Agencies	253
SQ 21 A, B: Comfort in White Missions	255
SQ 27, Educational Requirements	258
SQ 25, Language Requirements.	258
Recruitment Issues.	260
SQ 33, Recruitment: White Missions	260
White Missions and Racial Issues.	261

SQ 15, Mistrust of White Missions.	261
SQ 29, Racism and White Missions	262
SQ 5, Effective AFAM Recruiting	265
SQ 11, Advice to White Recruiters.	269
SQ 12, Advice to Black Recruiters.	274
SQ 9, What To Do First	281
AFAM Church Category	282
AFAM Missionaries Category	285
SQ 40, What Was Overlooked In This Survey?	286
SQ 40, Missions Education	288
SQ 40, Family and Personal Hindrances	289
SQ 40, Mission Agencies	290
SQ 40, Larger Social Issues	292
The Future	294
SQ 13, The Future Trend	294
5. IMPORTANT FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	296
Sliding Into Soliloquy	296
Survival Theory: Why So Few AFAM CC Missionaries.	297
Important Findings	300
Suggestions For Recruiters	303
Further Research Suggestions and Needs	304
The Image of the Solution.	308

Conclusion	311
Appendix	
A. SURVEY INSTRUMENT	313
REFERENCE LIST.	321

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure

1. AFAM Church Core Value: Survival → Ethnocentricity	31
2. AFAM IC Missionary Core Value: CHRIST	32
3. AFAM Church Pastors' Ministry Priorities --Barna Research.	74
4. Perceived Materialism in the AFAM Church.	238

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1.	"Schematic Diagram of Ethnocentric Attribution Bias"—Weber	13
2.	1998 Budget of a local African American church in Chattanooga.	112
3.	A Comparison of Selected AFAM and White Per Capita and Per Church Denominational Overseas Ministry Income.	118
4A.	SQ 1. Categories of Domains For Question #1.	158
4B.	SQ 1. Inadequate Missions Education.	160
4C.	SQ 1. Financial Hindrances to Missions	167
4D.	SQ 1. Ethnocentric Hindrances to Missions.	175
4E.	SQ 1. Mission Board Hindrances to Missions	178
5.	SQ 2. Change of Thinking Regarding SQ 1.	189
6.	SQ 3. Those Serving AFAMs, by Age Range.	195
7.	SQ 41. Secure in the Family of Origin?	200
8.	SQ 35. If the Missionary's Pastor Preached Expository Messages When the Decision Was Made to Become a Missionary	204
9.	SQ 8 A. Persons Motivated by a Short-term Mission Trip, by Age Category	205
10.	SQ 8 B-1. Motivation by Persons?--Categorized by Age Range	207

11.	SQ 8 B-2. Categories of Missions Motivators-- Persons	207
12.	SQ 8 C. Other Motivators into AFAM CC Missions	209
13.	SQ 36. Perception of AFAMs of Risk, by Age Range	210
14.	SQ 22 A. Anticipated Missions Risk, by Age	212
15.	SQ 22 B. A Comparison of Risks in Prospect and Retrospect, by Age Range.	212
16.	SQ 4, Perceived AFAM Under-50 Worldview.	215
17.	SQ 30. Perception of Oppression by Age	223
18.	SQ 16. Perception of a Theology of Survival by Age	225
19.	SQ 14. AFAM Ethnocentricity Hinders CC Ministry by AFAM People?	227
20.	SQ 34. AFAM Missionaries and Westernized Target Groups.	230
21.	SQ 24. Exposure of AFAM Churches to CC Missions.	233
22.	SQ 37. "Local AFAM Churches Neglect the Doctrine of Global Christian Missions"	234
23.	SQ 31. Perception of Materialism in the AFAM Church, Hindering Supporting AFAM CC Missionaries.	235
24.	SQ 39. Is Spiritual Coldness in the AFAM Church a Major Factor in not Supporting AFAM CC Missionaries?	240
25.	SQ 20. AFAM Pastors do not Seem to Understand "Faith" Missionary Support.	242
26.	SQ M. The Relationship Between Age and Whether or not a Respondent Raised Personal Support.	243

27.	SQ 10 A. Age Range and Perception of Time to Raise Support	244
28.	SQ 10 B. Estimated Number of Months Required for Blacks to Raise Their Financial Support, Averaged by Age Range.	245
29.	SQ 18. More Comfortable Going to the AFAM Community for Funds?.	246
30.	SQ 6. Categories of Responses--Why AFAM Churches Give or Withhold Funds	249
31.	SQ 26. AFAM Denominational Mission Agencies Do a Good Job.	254
32.	SQ 21 A. Those Who Have Served in White Missions, by Age Range.	255
33.	SQ 21 B. Comfort Levels Within White Missions.	257
34.	SQ 27. Educational Requirements of White Missions Discourage AFAM Candidates--Agreement?.	258
35.	SQ 25. Are Mission Language Requirements Too Difficult?.	259
36.	SQ 15. Mistrust of White Missions.	262
37.	SQ 29. Perception of Racism in White Missions, by Age Group	263
38.	SQ 5 A. General Recruitment Suggestion Categories.	265
39.	SQ 5 B. General Recruitment--Mission Education Sub-category.	266
40.	SQ 5 C. General Recruitment--"Recruiters Identify With AFAMs"	267
41.	SQ 11 A. Main Categories of Advice to White Recruiters.	269
42.	SQ 11 B. Sub-categories of White Identification with AFAMs.	270

43.	SQ 12 A. Main Categories of Advice to a Black Recruiter	275
44.	SQ 9. What AFAM Missionaries Would Do First to Remedy Under-representation	281
45.	SQ 40. Categories of Perceived Omissions in Questionnaire Topics.	287
46.	SQ 13. How Optimistic are the Missionaries?.	294

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFAM	African American
CC	cross cultural
IC	intercultural [For purposes of this dissertation, "intercultural" and cross cultural" will be used interchangeably. The latter term was used in the survey research for the sake of clarity.]
NIV	New International Version, The Holy Bible
SES	socio-economic status
SQ	survey question

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A 10-year sojourn in academia, including over a year away from home, requires longer acknowledgment. Thanks to my wife Judi and our four children who accepted my absence. Thanks also to Dr. Lois McKinney--great encourager, dissertation advisor, and friend; Dr. Paul Hiebert, for stretching me, Dr. Crawford Loritts, who gave insight and an open door; Drs. Ken Carson and Doug Sizemore--patient statisticians; my Promise Keeper group, especially Ron Fitch, who twice loaned me the use of his mountain home, as did Henry Henneger, who graciously prepares the *Ebenezer House* for those needing solitude; donors who paid for studies at TEDS, regular supporters who prayed and gave, AFAM CC missionaries who kindly assisted and encouraged. Thanks also to Al Chapman, former Director of Inner City Ministries and to Dwight Zimmerman, General Director of Cedine Bible Mission, who allowed time for study and research.

This work has been a demonstration of God's ability to open doors, to bring in data, to give favor, and to provide financially. Dr. George Washington Carver is a hero, to whom,

by his testimony, God gave wisdom early in the morning in the woods, which Carver then took to his lab. He prepared well academically, but took no books into his lab. If there is *any* profit at all from this study, it comes as a result of time spent quite literally in other woods, crying out for insight, confessing ignorance, and imploring God for help. There should be no bifurcation of mind and spirit, and the soundest wisdom comes from the Creator of the mind itself. "I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please." (Isaiah 46:9b-10, NIV). May it please Him to use this for His glory.