CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

In this research, I intend to find out whether or not the Reformed Evangelical

Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar is child friendly in the following aspects: church

culture, church program, church compound, and church staff. I believe that these areas

are crucial in the holistic development of children. This research seeks to enhance the

child-friendly aspects of the ministry of this local church in Myanmar so that children

will have the best opportunity to grow holistically.

**Background of the Problem**

In May 10, 2002, at the 27th special session of the United Nations (UN) General

Assembly, the document entitled "A World Fit For Children" (AWFFC) was reviewed;

however, the original document has been created in 1991. Imbedded in this document are

the "Millennium Development Goals." By 2015, all 189 UN Member States (Myanmar

included) pledged to unite with the rest of the world to achieve eight goals namely: to

eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, to achieve universal primary education, and to

reduce child mortality among others (UNICEF 2006, 4-5). At the World Summit for

Children, world leaders made a joint commitment and issued an urgent, universal appeal

to give every child a better future (UNICEF 2006, 12). The Convention on the Rights of

the Child demonstrates the widespread commitment that exists for the promotion and

protection of the rights of the child. Both Myanmar and the Philippines are signatories to this commitment. I have written this background to say that children are now part of the world's agenda. UNICEF is calling all member nations to develop a global partnership for the sake of the children (UNICEF 2006, 6).

In the United States, Europe, South America, Africa, and Asia, there is a trend on competing for child friendly spaces, child friendly cities, child friendly villages, child friendly beaches, child friendly schools, child friendly barangays (in the context of the Philippines), and others. These global trends project a commitment to make the world a better place for our children.

On the part of the global church, a good example is the Church of the Nazarene. The Board of General Superintendents of the Church of the Nazarene calls the church to a "Decade of Emphasis on Children and Youth—Connecting a New Generation." The original plan was to proclaim January 2002 through January 2012 to be a decade for connecting a new generation within the Church of the Nazarene. But at the meeting of the Board of General Superintendents in December of 2007, the leaders of the church agreed that this emphasis should continue beyond 2012 and that, this should be a continuing part of each local church's DNA. The name of the emphasis was changed to "Connecting a New Generation—Foundation for a Lifetime" (cited in Vail 2008, 21).

Dan Brewster, a missiologist and a staunch advocate for children says that caring for children is the "particular responsibility of the church" (Brewster 2011, 93). He quotes Malachi 4:5-6, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with

a curse" (KJV). Brewster then concludes that "only the Church can respond to the problem of a curse, and turn a curse into a blessing" (Brewster 2010 Child Church and Mission Class Powerpoint Presentation, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary).

Now I will turn to my own childhood experience, particularly to the nurture I wished I had received from my own local church. I grew up in a Christian family and it was fun and enjoyable to attend the Sunday School at the first church where I belonged. I attended that Sunday School for around four years. When I was eight years old, our denomination had some problems and split into two different churches. My parents decided to join the new church and we were less than 25 families. Our church is a small church located in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, the place where I was born.

The new church had to start everything from the beginning and it could not focus on the children's ministry, especially on the Sunday School ministry. There were 20 children. We only had two teachers, and they were not well-trained in the area of teaching methodology and other areas on the spirituality of children among others. I was really disappointed because it was very different from the first Sunday School that I attended. It was missing something, and I could not find out what it was. The elders from the church where I grew up did not want to spend money for the children's ministries as they assumed it was not worth investing.

I cannot say the teachers did not have passion for the children, but they did not pay attention and did not have enough preparation for the lessons that they were going to teach every Sunday. Without being well prepared it is difficult to teach effectively, and there is no benefit for the learners either. After many years passed, I had a chance to be

involved in the Sunday School program because the church did not have enough teachers. It was a big challenge for me.

As I think about it now, I realize how important the church is in my growing up years. The church is one of the main components in the holistic development of a child (Brewster 2005, 84). The church is important in communicating God's grace to the children. This is why it has to be child friendly. It has to open its doors wide for the children to come. The church has to be a safe place for children to grow and develop their full potential. The church should acknowledge that children are important to God and a priority in His kingdom. Brewster has talked about the concern of the church for children and emphasized that "only the church can respond to the needs of the whole person" (Brewster 2011, 93). The church should be the place where children discover that the kingdom of God belongs to them. And also the church is a special place where children can be partakers of the community.

Brewster and other advocated suggest that the church should be a child-friendly place that welcomes children and treats them and their families with respect, equipping them for lifelong Christian faith. The children need a church which understands their development and creates appropriate environments and activities for them to grow. The church needs to be friendly enough to the children to provide the spiritual protection, nurture, education, and support needed until the child can enter into self-chosen Christian discipleship.

The United Nations International Children's Educational Fund (UNICEF) has the so-called "protective environment framework" (UNICEF 2007, n.p.). This framework shows that children are entitled to grow up in an environment that ensures they are

protected and the church is one of the places which could serve as "safety net" for children. George Barna insists that most of the churches are too focused only on the adult services and did not have intention about their ministries with children (Barna 2003, 39). If the church had intentionally focused their ministries with children, I might have had a better experience in my spiritual life during my childhood. There is a need for the church to focus more on the way that children are welcomed and treated in the church, and in so doing, make the church child friendly.

The church is the body of Christ composed of people who profess and practice their faith on Him. When we say church, most of us may think it is a place where we worship God once a week, and it is only related to the persons who can be involved in the church's activities. But there is one thing that it is very important to know for each and every one of us, the church can shape the life of a child whether to become a good Christian or not. And through the church the children must feel that they are loved and valuable. If a child is happy at the church, I do believe that it will bring him or her to a healthy spiritual life.

Some people may think childhood is not essential because it is just for a short time of life, but we must be aware that it has a great value in itself and is the foundation of what kind of person we may become. Catherine Stonehouse explains, "The children are being formed through what they experience in their homes, schools and the faith community" (Stonehouse 1998, 62-63). Children learn more from what they see and observe around them than from what they are taught. The church has the opportunity to introduce Christ to the life of the children.

**The Context of the Ministry with Children in Kalaymo, Myanmar**

In Myanmar, ministries with children, Sunday School in particular does not hold much attraction to the children because they do not have opportunities to participate, and the teachers use only one teaching style which is teaching without using visual aids and letting the children memorize everything in the lesson book instead of sharing their own thoughts and opinions. Ro Thuam Liana, in his Master's thesis entitled, "The Perceived Influence of the Church upon Spirituality Among Selected Children Ages 8-14 in the Selected Churches of the Nazarene Congregations in Kalaymyo Area, Myanmar," indicated that in Myanmar, the teaching of Sunday School teachers does not include much interaction from the children. It only emphasizes instruction because the teachers thought that would be enough for children. It hinders the relationship between the children and teachers because the teachers do not give time to the children for sharing their thoughts (Liana 2016, 3). In some ways, the Sunday School has the same system as government education; it is only teacher-centered. The students do not have a chance to participate and share what they have in their mind or what they want to learn, know, and share with the teachers. This is one of the weaknesses that Liana has found in his research regarding some churches in Kalaymyo.

This research will focus in studying a Reformed Evangelical Church congregation in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar. This particular church is founded on August 8, 1998, by local pastors. I am choosing this particular church because this is the church where I grew up and I really want the church to see that children are very important and that at a very young age children need to experience a wonderful time filled with memories of proper nurture so the children now who are attending this church will have deep understanding

of the love of God and His people. The congregation has approximately 50 to 60 adult members. There are about 25 to 30 children. The church has a Sunday School, summer school, summer camp, and children's spiritual convention each year (Mawia 2017, email).

### Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the concept that a child friendly church welcomes and embraces children as they are and helps them develop through the various areas of the church's ministries. This framework is adapted from Viva Network Toolkit (Viva Network 2013, 1-5; and cited by Brewster 2010, 169-188). Figure 1 provides a framework for understanding the characteristics of a child friendly church. It discusses how a child friendly church includes the church culture, programs, compound and staff.
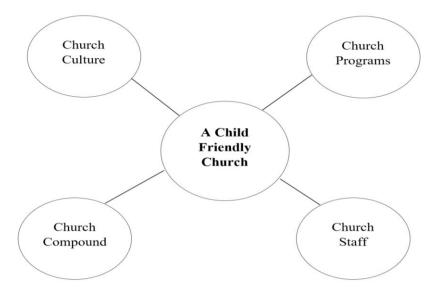


Figure 1: Characteristics of a Child Friendly Church (Brewster 2010, 169-188)

Seeing this framework gives a picture of how a child friendly church is characterized. Firstly, the church culture should be child friendly to allow children to

blossom and feel welcomed. This relates to the ethos or DNA of the church itself. Child friendliness should be imbedded in the heart of the church people. In other words, children's work is regularly on church leadership agenda. Children have spiritual needs and the church needs to acknowledge that and also the church need to have a vision for the children. Brewster states that "the church has a biblical responsibility" and "churches should think carefully about children's needs" (Brewster 2010, 122-125).

Secondly, the church programs should be child friendly. The church has to provide opportunities for children to engage in worship, outreach programs, and other avenues for children participation. Brewster expounds that the worship services should be meaningful and the church should include the programs like Christmas, Easter, birthdays, Sunday School graduations and other special church events. This is another avenue that Brewster is talking about. This is providing regular Sunday worship service for children which is different from Sunday School (Brewster 2010, 179). The worship service should be meaningful to the children and the church should make a genuine effort to place the children in the midst. The children must know they are welcomed to the church. Brewster also mentions that the church should have regular family get-together activities to provide intergenerational interaction, and to avoid overscheduling children's or youth activities at the expense of family time (Brewster 2010, 179).

Thirdly, the church compound should be child friendly. When we say church compound it includes the buildings, grounds, furniture and facilities of the church. Brewster enumerates that for the church compound to be child friendly, there should not be sharp corners or objects in the compound, building, or furniture; the meeting place should be safe, clean, attractive, welcoming and friendly to the children; and the church

should be decorated with colorful or attractive classrooms for the children for Bible classes. Brewster mentions we must think of that which we are called to be responsible for holistic Christian ministry to the children whom God so highly values.

Finally, the church staff should be child friendly. Brewster emphasizes that church leaders and staff must understand that they are modeling all the time, whether their example is positive or negative. Regarding this, Bandura has mentioned that "Modeling influences can strengthen or weaken inhibitions over behaviour that observers have previously learned" (Bandura 1977, 49). Children learn more from what they see because they are always watching. Lawrence Richards thinks the same on this issue. He writes, "In ministry with children, we should pay close attention to building relationships between adults and children that will incorporate the factors enhancing modeling" (Richards 1983, 79). Brewster states that the staff members are the main key to have a meaningful program for its children. They should pay close attention to the recruiting, equipping, and supporting the caregivers in charge of ministry to children (Brewster 2010, 125). Again he strongly states that "the success of the church in fulfilling this obligation is dependent on the quality and commitment of the staff teachers and other caregivers" (Brewster 2010, 89).

This study explored the perceptions of the respondents who are the selected children and the staff regarding the child friendliness of the church in four areas: church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff. After identifying the perceptions of the respondents, I have identified recommendations so that the church could enhance its endeavors towards holistic ministry with children.

## Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 below describes the framework that was followed in terms of the research flow of this particular study in relation to Brewster's checklist for child friendly churches.
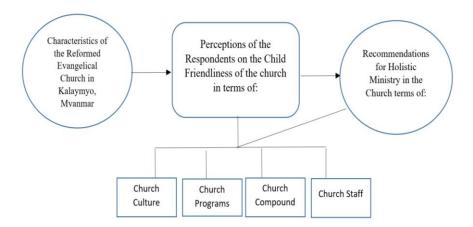


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

First, I explored the characteristics of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar, by asking the staff about the current programs and other activities of the church as it engages in ministries with children, especially on the efforts that the church is making on the child friendliness of the church. This was incorporated in the questionnaire that the staff answered. Then, I was able to identify the perceptions of the respondents who are the selected children and staff of the church on the four aspects of child friendliness as identified by Brewster. After gathering all the perceptions of the respondents, the study offered recommendations to the church to enhance the ministry with children.

## Statement of the Problem

This study asks, what are the perceptions of selected children and staff from the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, towards child friendliness in terms of church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff? The following are the sub-problems of the research:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the selected children and staff from the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, in terms of:

   a. Age

   b. Gender

2. Are there significant differences in children's perceptions on child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, based on the following demographic factors?

   a. Age

   b. Gender

3. Are there significant differences in the staff's perceptions on child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, based on the following demographic factors?

   a. Age

   b. Gender

4. How do the children perceive the patterns of evidence on child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, as regards to?

   a. church culture

   b. church programs

      c. church compound

      d. church staff

5. How do the staff perceive the patterns of evidence on the child friendliness of the

Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, as regards to?

      a. church culture

      b. church programs

      c. church compound

      d. church staff

6. On the basis of responses, what recommendations can be offered to the Reformed

Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, to enhance child friendliness in

terms of the following?

      a. church culture

      b. church programs

      c. church compound

      d. church staff

**Null Hypotheses**

This study is based on the following null hypotheses:

1. There is no significant relationship between the demographic characteristic in

      terms of age and gender of the children and their perceptions on the child

      friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar,

      concerning church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff;

2.  There is no significant relationship between the demographic characteristics in terms of age and gender of the staff and their perceptions on the child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar, in terms of church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff;

3.  The four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff are "never evident" as perceived by children in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar.

4.  The four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff are "never evident" as perceived by staffs in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar.

## Significance of the Study

This research is significant because it shows the current status of the Reformed Evangelical Church congregation in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, as perceived by those who are involved in the ministries of the local church. The study can be helpful in discovering the strengths and weaknesses of the church to enhance the holistic ministry for children. The findings of the study could also strengthen the existing efforts of this local church and if possible, effect change in the attitudes of the church leadership towards holistic ministry with children especially in the area of church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff. The findings from this research could be significant for the leaders in this local church to establish a culture within the church that gives utmost priority to children. Finally, this research could also add to the knowledge on ministering with children especially in Myanmar, where very few empirical studies are conducted.

**Definition of Terms**

**Child Friendliness** refers to the ability to welcome, engage, embrace all children regardless of race, economic status, physical or mental ability, or family history as well as the capacity to provide programs and events that allow children to build lifelong, intimate relationships with other children and their families (Creasy 2014, 2).

**Child** means every human being below the age of eighteen years (UNICEF 2006, 57). In this study, "child" respondents would refer to persons who are eight to eighteen years of age.

**Church compound** in this study refers to the physical facilities in the church.

**Church culture** is defined as placing the child in the midst of the church in order to bring them to Jesus. In the same way, the church is willing to teach and serve the children as disciples of Jesus Christ (Brewster 2011, 121).

**Church Program** refers to all the activities that are being done in the church. For Brewster, church refers to the church's checklist on experiences that will stimulate thinking and respond to children's needs in its own culture (Brewster 2011, 123).

**Church Staff** in this study refers to all the selected pastors, Sunday School teachers and other workers in the church that minister with children.

**Holistic** refers to the whole being of a person. It refers to a person's spiritual, emotional, social, physical, and intellectual or mental being. It is discarding the dichotomy between a physical body and a spiritual soul to understand completely human nature (Dialing 2013, 13).

**Perception** is the way someone thinks and feels about something (Girod 1973, 2). It includes someone's assessment as to whether to accept or reject an object, concept, or set of belief (Solito 1994, 6).

### Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study has four limitations. First, I only studied the Reformed Evangelical Church congregation in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar. I chose this particular local church because this is my local church, and I want to help enhance the nurture of children in this church. The challenge on subjectivity on data gathering was eliminated because I am not the one who   administered the questionnaire or the drawing activity with the children. I had a research assistant who conducted the study.

The second limitation refers to the respondents of the study. There were three groups of respondents to this study: (1) the children who were between eight-to-twelve-year-old children for the drawing activity, (2) the children who were 13-to-18 years old who answered the questionnaire and (2) the staff of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar. The criteria for choosing the children respondents are the following: they should be between eight to 18 years of age and they should have at least attended the ministries in the church for at least one year before the questionnaire is conducted so in a way they would have familiarized themselves with the activities and culture of the local church. The criteria for choosing the staff are the following: they could either be pastors, children's teachers or anyone who has worked with children for at least two years before the conduct of the study so that they would have the experience with children and with the total situation in the church.

The third limitation of the study is on use of the questionnaire. On the questionnaire, I used the toolkit provided by Viva Network called "Child Friendly Churches" (Viva Network 2013, 1-5). I only explored the responses of the respondents on the following items in the questionnaire: church culture, church programs, church compound and church staff. The other aspects of the church's ministries with children were not be studied. All of the selected respondents, namely, the children who were and the staff, answer the same questionnaire, which was translated in to the Mizo dialect. (See Appendix A for the questionnaire).

The final limitation of the study is on the application and generalization of the findings. The results of the study cannot be applied or generalized to other contexts because the number of respondents in the current study is quite small compared to the general population of children in the whole country of Myanmar. It should also be noted that culturally, Myanmar people do not express what is really in their minds (Channaibanya 2010, 5) for the sake of harmony.

This chapter discussed the problem and its background. The next chapter will present the related literature and studies which could give more understanding on how churches could be child friendly, what is the importance of having child friendly churches, and what is the biblical perspective of a child friendly church or ministry among others.

CHAPTER II

SURVEY OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This study deals with identifying the perceptions of the selected children and staff of the local Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar. Tahan is one of the major areas in the Kalaymyo Area. This chapter discusses the review of related literature and studies to know the context of my research locale, what is a child friendly church; what are the characteristics of eight-to-18 year-olds, the respondents of this current study; the biblical background of a child friendly environment; and, finally, a discussion on the four ways in which churches can incorporate child friendly practices in the church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff.

**Context of Kalaymyo Area, Myanmar**

Kalaymyo is an area located in the North-West of Sagaing Division (Province) and at the edge of Chin State. Kalaymyo is situated about 450 above sea level and the drainage pattern of Kalaymyo is like a lattice. Its area is about 13 miles from East to the West, and 72 miles from South to North. Its square mile is 902.606 (577, 674 acres) in width. The airport is in the heart of the town. The climate of Kalaymyo is tropical monsoon. It has three different seasons: winter, rainy and hot. May is the hottest month and January is the coldest month. There are over 80,000 paddy-planting fields, more than 10,000 pea-planting fields and 40,000 cooking oil crops acres and above. Kalaymyo is a

city and there are 116 Buddhist monasteries, 508 churches, a mosque, two Hindu

temples, two Buddhism seminaries for nuns, five Buddhist nunneries and a joss house

(Chinese communal temple). Regarding the nationalities and religion, there are about

400,000 residents in Kalaymyo. Fifty-five percent of the population is Buddhist, 40% of

the population is Christian and 5% of the population is made up of other religions.

Kalaymyo is economically essential in Myanmar because it is a gateway to the Chin Hills

and also it is a town close to India-Myanmar frontier. Products of India and products of

China are purchased and traded in Kalaymyo and it is a town of solid economy (Linn Thit

Mon 2015, n.p.).

Zo Mawii in her Master of Arts in Religious Education (MARE) in Holistic Child

Development thesis, conducted in APNTS entitled "A Study of the Children's Perception

of Kids Klub in Correlation to Their Spirituality," said that according to Myanmar

demographers in 2011, only 6% are Christians, and 89% percent are Buddhists, including

children (Mawii, 2012, 10). This encouraged Zo Mawii to engage in creative and holistic

ministries with children (Mawii 2012, 4; "Aid to the Church in Need" 2011, n.p.). In her

thesis, Zo Mawii indicated that because of this situation, she wants to duplicate the Kids

Klub ministry that APNTS has in her ministry in Myanmar with Buddhist children.

In Myanmar, it is expected that the children must listen to whatever the teacher is

saying or teaching. Most of the time, the teacher is the center of the teaching-learning

process. In a study conducted by Sinhaneti and Kyaw with 100 Burmese English as

Foreign Language (EFL) learners, one EFL teacher shared that the traditional style in

Myanmar is "only the teacher explains the text and all students need to go along with the

class time, just listening and waiting for the correct answers from their teachers and

receiving information" (Sinhaneti and Kyaw 2012, 990). In my experience, most of the teachers do not use visual aids for the children and it is difficult for the children to understand the lessons. In Kalaymyo, most of the churches have Sunday-school have lesson books that are prepared for each age-level, but there are no instructions on how to teach or how to use visual aids, crafts and materials that help the children to understand the lessons or Bible stories.

Children have to wake up early in the morning to join Sunday School in the church because most of the churches in Kalaymyo have their Sunday School beginning at 7:00 am and the children do not need to join the adults' service. Some children have a hard time to wake up early in the morning and, in the same way, parents have a tough time to prepare breakfast for their children and getting ready to send their children to the church because they have to prepare for their daily routine. Sometimes, parents will just say to their children that it is okay not to go to the church because they are getting busy just preparing themselves for church. Some parents send their children late for Sunday School and the children get embarrassed from their friends because they are late. Children tend to say "no" to join after being late for so many times. At every Sunday School meeting, children need to bring an offering with them. Some families have three to six children who join Sunday School for every week. It becomes a challenge for the parents to share their family monthly budget the offering. Children do not want to go to the church without bringing the offering because their friends will make fun of them for not bringing an offering (based on personal experience and observation of the researcher).

Moreover, parents are too much focused on the education of their children in Kalaymyo. Education is always their first priority in the life of their children even amongst Christian parents. Most of the parents do not really want to send their children to the church for spending too much of their times for worship, fellowships and so on. Not only that, children are always told to only focus on their education. Studying is the only task for them to do until they finish their high school and it is one of the reasons why children have less participation in the church activities and programs (Liana 2016, 2-3). These are some of the challenges in the context of Myanmar.

Looking at the context of my country, there are churches in Myanmar which celebrate "Children's Day" each year. My church in Tahan, Kalaymyo is one of them. This day reminds the people in the church that children are precious and that in one way or another, the future is in their hands. On Children's Day, we might hear how the children are precious in God's sight and how He uses them for doing miracles and healing through the Scriptures. We can see the healing of God on Naaman's leprosy through the young girl who is the servant. Naaman was a commander of the army of the king of Aram and as we know he had leprosy. God used the servant to show Naaman where the man of God is and how he can be healed from his leprosy (II Kings 5). A valiant soldier could not find who could cure him of his leprosy but God used a girl to show that He who created the universe is the Healer. As God used a servant girl, He could also use children to show the people who He is and what He would like to show in their lives. Yes, the children must know it, and I believe the children could be God's instruments to accomplish His plan.

On Children's Day, we might hear from the gospel of John, Jesus fed 5,000 people with the five small barley loaves and two small fish from the boy (John 6:5-10). The small boy was the one who brought the food and he became the instrument for Jesus Christ to do His miracle for 5,000 people. God has done many miracles in the Bible and He has included children in these areas.

On Children's Day, we might be reminded that Jesus did not reject the children but He openly said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:14, NIV) that children are precious in the sight of God and the church can provide ways for the children to know this truth. On Children's Day, we might sense that children have a responsibility too. Paul wrote Timothy, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity" (I Timothy 4:12, NIV). We might stress to youth that having faith in God, living a holy life, showing the truth which is living in us, the way we love and react to others are good examples for others, or that we must dare to show what we have. To be able to live that kind of life, we might emphasize to children that they need a healthy spiritual foundation and that the church is one of the avenues where they could build their spiritual life. Through Children's Day, we might realize that the church has to be child friendly in its approach for this nurture to happen.

The daily instructors for the children are their parents and for many children, their Christian faith is nurtured in the home. Most children are spiritually attentive and open to God. They need to grow in Christlikeness and adults are essential to make use of this potentiality. The goal of spiritual development is "a maturing faith and a deepening

relationship with Jesus Christ through which we become more like Christ in the living of our everyday lives in the world" (Stonehouse 1998, 21). Given this situation, now we turn to the discussion on what are the general characteristics of eight-to-18-year olds who compose the respondents of this current study.

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**Characteristics of Children Between
Eight to 18 Years of Age**

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I have chosen this age group because by this age, they would have the capacity to express themselves. Although children's characteristics vary in every age group, there are general characteristics of children across the life span. So, in this section, I will discuss some general characteristics of children who belong in this age bracket. The eight-to-18 year-old age group covers late childhood and adolescence stages in the Myanmar context. In this section, I will cite some general background regarding their physical, socio-emotional, mental, and spiritual development.

The childhood years are crucial to spiritual development and children need trainers to train them. Proverbs 22:6 says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (NIV). Children usually trust and believe what adults tell them. In order to train the children, the adults have to learn how they grow and develop physically, emotionally, mentally and socially. Through an understanding of developmental tasks, adults can be alert at appropriate times to challenges and encourage children in their spiritual development. A child has to progress systematically through the stages and periods. A child will normally be operating at the highest stage he or she has achieved; however, if a child is not getting any stimulation in a particular area, he or she may regress back to a lower stage. This point shows the importance of the environment in

Piaget's stage of development. It is the environment that provides the stimulation for the development of the mind and for sustaining that development (Sutherland 1992, 22).

Physically children who belong to the late childhood stage experience slow and relatively slow growth (Hurlock 1982, 191). But after that, a growth spurt comes. Thus Piaget believed that thinking develops from inside out, that is, from physical changes in the developing brain and its related cognitive functions (Piaget cited in Johnson 2014, 6). Furthermore, physically, children in this age group are curious about differences in skin color, hair texture, and facial features. There are lots of big changes during this time. Children's bodies change in different ways in different times. Changes in body shape, height, and breast development may be seen as physical development of girls. Physical changes include growth in height, changes in body shape, growth of body and facial hair and changes to voice (Kemple 2016, 97-105). Given this, church programs need to be friendly enough to meet these varying needs.

According to Piaget, changes in our thinking occur because of internal changes in the way our brains grow and mature (Piaget 1952, 25; cited in Johnson 2014, 7). Mentally, children in the late childhood as well as those below 18 have developed self-help skills, social-help skills, school skills, and play skills (Hurlock 1982, 191). This is why I chose this age group to answer the questionnaire, because they have already developed the ability to work without close supervision from adults.

Socio-emotionally, according to Anna Hampson Lundh, children between eight and 18 years old already have the ability to experience, regulate and express emotions (Lundh 2016, 1-3). They are eager to learn and acquire skills and at the same time. They are good in memorizing. She explains that children form close and secure interpersonal

relationships, and explore the environment and learn all in the context of family, community and cultural expectations for them. Children between eight to eighteen are usually emotionally sensitive and they can easily become discouraged. Sometimes, their moods might seem unpredictable and their emotions fluctuate. Those emotions can lead them to increased conflict. In this stage, children are still learning how to control and express emotions in a grown-up way. This age group is called the "gang age" (Hurlock 1982, 157). They are interested in activities with their peers and want to belong to a gang, which expects them to conform to the patterns of behavior and to the values and interests of its members (Hurlock 1982, 191).

When we refer to social development of children, Strehler explores that children seek more independence and more responsibility both at home and at school. The decisions they make influence family and friends. They also seek out new experience and engage in more risk-taking behavior. On the upside, children start developing a stronger individual set of values and morals. They will question more things. The words and actions of adults shape the children's sense of right and wrong. Children get influenced more by friends, especially when it comes to behavior, sense of self and self-esteem. Technology can significantly influence how the children communicate with their peers and how they learn about the world (Strehler 2010, 1).

When it comes to morality, Kohlberg believes that most moral development occurs through social interaction (Kohlberg 1964, 384). Kohlberg's conventional level of moral development states that children believe that it is necessary to ensure positive relationships and social order because an individual's sense of morality is tied to personal and social relationships. Children want the approval of others and act in ways to avoid

disapproval. Kohlberg continues to state that "when it comes to moral judgment, people consider stages of moral development, their determination by forms of social experiences, role-taking, and their relationship to moral conduct" (Kohlberg 1964, 384-385). In addition, regarding the socio-emotional life of 13 to 18-year-old youth, Erikson identifies this age in a person's life as a crisis between industry and inferiority. Erikson writes that the child "develops industry, i.e., he [sic] adjusts himself to the inorganic laws of the tool world. His ego boundaries include his tools and skills: the work principle . . . teaches him the pleasure of work completion by steady attention and persevering diligence" (Erikson 950, 259. The basic strength of this stage is, therefore, competence.

According to Vygotsky, thinking begins on a social level and is then internalized (Vygotsky 1997, 350). So what you say to young children and how you say it is important. As children interact with others, as they hear the words around them, and as they observe the interactions of others they internalize language patterns. These gradually evolve into thought patterns or ways of thinking. The same thing happens as children are immersed in a particular culture with its vast array of symbols, values, and ways of viewing reality. Through this immersion they gradually take on the thought patterns of their culture. Thus, children's social and cultural interactions shape and help to develop their thinking (Johnson 2014, 7-8).

Spiritual development becomes crucial at this stage. James W. Fowler points that faith becomes a matter of reliance on the stories, rules, and implicit values of the family's community of meanings and children in this stage routinely take the perspectives of others on matters of mutual interests, and they recognize other's perceptive as different from their own (Fowler 1984, 55-56). Shelly has also pointed out that at the age of 8-12,

children begin to understand God as Creator. The meaning of prayers and prayer rituals becomes important to them. Their conscience begins to emerge. Simple Bible stories with one clear theme become understandable and major spiritual growth is informing these attitudes toward God, the Bible and the church. Seeing God as their personal friend and confidant begins at the age of 12 and children are able to deal with the meaning of biblical material beyond facts, and see God's overall plan. They begin to be concerned about meaning and purpose in life and the significance of God's grace becomes meaningful in their life. From this stage to 18, children become more interested in a personal relationship with God and often begin deep religious questions. They can now distinguish between God and parents or other adults and they are growing in their understanding of sin and forgiveness (Shelly 1982, 17-24).

This general background of this particular age group implies that churches need to be child friendly to meet this particular need so that children will be nurtured in an age-appropriate way. Now we turn to the discussion on what is a child friendly church.

### What Is a Child Friendly Church?

A child friendly church is a church that shows high regard to children. A child-friendly church helps children sense that they are a part of the church—not apart from the church (*Children's Ministry Magazine* 2010, 1). Philippine Methodist theologian Elizabeth Tapia mentions that a child friendly church is the one that welcomes children, listens to the wisdom and spirituality of children, brings healing to children, blesses children in the sense of faith nurturing, provides age-level program participation, and includes children in the mission of the church (Tapia 2014, 1). Being welcomed by someone makes one feel happy and helps one to engage in a new environment.

Welcoming the children allows the children to act like children and enjoy being in the

company of adults who treat them with love and respect. Being welcomed and accepted

into the fellowship enhances self-worth, allowing the believer to approach God in more

intimate terms. When the church is a source of belonging and knowledge, persons can

feel secure (Green 2007, 1). The believer is formed in Christ via participation in the

Christian community.

Research shows that children receive social support from a variety of sources,

including parents, teachers, classmates, and close friends (Harter 2012, n.p.). However,

the local church may be a particularly important yet understudied source of social support

for school-aged children, especially given the difficulties of other institutions to fully

address the social needs of the child (Crosby, Smith, and Frederick, 2015, 3). Crosby,

Smith, and Frederick in their study of selected children ages of six and 13 in Southern

California argue that the home and school have some limitations in meeting the needs of

the child, so the church can provide emotional support and nurturance to the children.

Furthermore, educational research shows that schools are not well structured to provide

children with access to caring adult relationships (Osterman 2000, 323). The adult-child

relationships that are established are typically disrupted at the end of the school year

before long-term benefits can accrue (Jose, Ryan, and Pryor 2012, 235). This is why the

church can come in when both the school and the families break down. It may be the only

place where children can feel emotional support and nurturance. According to

Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, the values and beliefs of the culture in a child is

growing up or their families, schools, religious institution and neighborhoods (which are

the environmental factors) influence the individual thinking of the children

(Bronfenbrenner 1979, 258; see also Bee and Boyd 2005, 50-51).

According to Research and Development (RAND) Corporation demographer

Peter A. Morrison, in a 1991 report, "Urban childhood is deteriorating in the United

States as seen in the change in poverty rates in the last 20 to 25 years" (Child Friendly

Cities 1991, 50). Morrison explains, "Poverty has declined only among the elderly.

Among children, it has grown worse" noting that impoverished children are

disproportionately concentrated in urban areas (Child Friendly Cities 1991, 50). Many

people think that poverty can solely be experienced in Asia, but given these statistics, we

observe that even in developed countries, poverty exists. Now the author of this magazine

article tells the readers that "saving children's future may thus require a fundamental

redesign of cities" (Child Friendly Cities 1991, 50). The writer provides some "family-

friendly" features of a city that is child friendly. First, shopping malls (the "new

downtowns") transformed into family centers, including play areas, children's museums,

teen centers, day-care centers, and counseling and parenting-information centers. Second,

large cities decentralized into clusters of urban villages that allow families to work, attend

school, and shop closer where they live. And finally, more houses designed with front

porches, so that neighbors can get to know one another and watch out for each other's

children. If this is a picture of a child friendly city, how wonderful it would be if churches

could also place in the leadership agenda this idea of "redesigning" practices that are not

working and build new ones that would allow children and families to be supported!

Another concept of being child friendly in the church is listening to the children's

views and experiences. This can make a lot of difference to our understanding of

children's priorities, interests and concerns. It is a vital part of establishing respectful

relationship with the children we work with and is central to the learning process.

Building confidence in children is one of the benefits of listening to the children (Clark

and Moss 2011, 3). Jesus Christ healed not only adults but also children. The Bible

mentions that God used children as instruments to make many of His miracles to take

place. The church should be the place where the children find healing on their physical

and spiritual sickness. Children need adults to bless and nurture their lives. Richards has

mentioned about the nurturing of children in the Jewish communities as the following:

"Children were intended to be brought up as participants in a loving, holy community

that was shaped by the Law which unveiled a loving lifestyle that God could and would

bless" (Richards 1983, 18). Children will not grow in a vacuum. They need a community

who will act as a "safety net" from the evils of the environment.

In an exploratory qualitative study done in Southern California by Crosby, Smith,

and Frederick in 2015, 20 church-going children between the ages of six and 13 were

interviewed to find out what makes them feel loved, valued, and part of the church

community (Crosby, Smith, and Frederick 2015, 109). The following are some of their

findings: (1) children feel loved when we listen to them; (2) children feel valued when we

recognize their abilities; (3) children experience community when they "hang out" in an

emotionally safe space or community (Crosby, Smith, and Frederick 2015, 109). The

study emphasized the need for the church to provide a space where these needs could be

met.

I think Brewster would agree with the findings of the study conducted by Crosby,

Smith, and Frederick. In fact, Brewster notes a child friendly church as a place which is

not only safe but also meets the children at the point of their development with their needs for taking a step forward with Jesus Christ. Children who receive from their church the provision of love, empathy, caring, trust, a sense of community are more likely to internalize the church's values regarding prosocial behavior. They are also more likely to experience God as close and responsive, which in turn predicts increased prosocial behavior. Knowing God as a member of this committed community was the primary issue for the Jews in nurturing the children. A child friendly church, like the godly Jewish community could be a blessing to the lives of the children (Brewster 2011, 121).

A child friendly church is also a church that not only treats children with respect but does the same with the children's families. A child friendly church is also a family friendly church since children belong to families. This kind of church equips the lifelong Christian faith of the children as well as that of the parents. A child friendly church understands that children belong to God and parenting is stewardship not ownership. Furthermore, a child friendly church understands that the church needs the children as much as the children need the church in order to fulfill the commandments of God in the context of the church. Children need protection and nurturing of their spiritual development and a child friendly church is the one which provides those needs for the children until the child can enter into self-chosen Christian discipleship. It also offers the positive views for the children to see their Christian buddies as crucial to future Christian citizenship and sharing the church as an adult. Moreover, understanding children's development and creating appropriate environments and activities with their total set of needs in mind may make the church to become a child friendly church (Danley 2012, 1-4).

To have a child friendly church one needs to be kind to children. As Jeff Asher explains the meaning of being kind, in his article, he explains, "To be kind means having or showing a tender, considerate and helping nature. Thus, one who is kind is friendly, generous, warmhearted, sympathetic, considerate, gentle, affectionate and forbearing" (Asher 2016, 1). If we do not have this trait or the fruit of the Spirit, then it can be difficult or even impossible to have a child friendly church. The Scripture shows us how kindness is essential in our lives (Ephesians 4:32).

## Biblical Background on Child Friendly Environment

The aphorisms of the world regarding greatness are directly opposing to the mind of Christ. The world might see the greatness as ruling over something and it has the ambition to obtain honor and attention while Christian greatness comprises in serving others and giving than receiving. Jesus has given us an encouragement to show kindness and welcome to the least and lowest who believe in His name. He did not say just in words what we should do but He showed us a very touching manner as we see in the Scripture. "Jesus He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them 'Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me'" (Mark 9:36-37, NIV). Jesus used a little child to teach the importance of humility and the humility of small children provides an example for us. Jesus instructed the disciples, "Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:4 NIV).

Looking at the above Scripture references, one can observe that parents, teachers, leaders and adults are taught how children should be valued, what the children should

know and their role in the Christian community. If one is receiving the kingdom like a small child, one will not do anything to hinder little children from coming to Jesus. But if one is trying to enter the kingdom in some other way than by receiving it like a child, then he or she will probably be a hindrance to children. There is a close connection between one's own humility and one's ability to lead children to Jesus. The great hindrance to effective ministry to children is pride, and the great gift for ministry to children is humility.

There are Christian parents who bring their children into the church practically from the moment they are born, as Mary and Joseph did Jesus. This expresses the parent's acknowledgment of the child as a gift of God, their thanksgiving for this new life, and their desire that the child shall grow in faith.  Such feelings and actions represent the affirmation that God is the Creator. Community worship is at the heart of the church's life. Anyone who participates in a service of worship is learning about God and at the same time expressing relationship to God. This makes worship an important way through which children grow in faith.

In this light, the church can be considered as a community of faith. It is a significant place to train and nurture the faith of children. The church is a group of people who know, love and serve Jesus and others towards their adulthood, to become devoted followers and images of Jesus (Barna 2003, 49). And Csinos also stated that "Indeed, in the Hebrew Bible, children are seen as important and necessary members of the community of faith" (Csinos 2007, 9).

The Scriptures, especially, Deuteronomy chapters 6 and 11 show that individuals as well as the community are essential to a life lived in the context of God's will. This

part of the Scriptures tells us how we have to diligently teach God's statues to the next generation. We have a saying in Myanmar that when we receive a gift, we take care of the gift very well and if we do not then the giver of the gift might get hurt and there is a possibility we will not receive anything from that person ever again. We are taught in the Scriptures that children are a gift from God and also they are a reward from Him (Psalm 127:3, NLT), this is why treasuring children is one of our God-given responsibilities.

God cares very much about how we raise our children, how we take care of them, how we treat them, what we teach them and all the things we do for them and with them. We need to think and rethink what God is telling us. I believe this is how we can help our whole family and community to live a godly way by making God's word the most important thing in our life. Like Joshua, we need to be a model for our children to serve the Lord and not false gods (Joshua 24:15, NIV).

Richards mentions that the modeling effect of the faith community is very powerful in the life of children (Richards 1983, 79). Parents and people from the community influence children and they become the most important role models for them. Children will try to copy their models; celebrities, characters from books, TV and movies for making decisions, the way how they set up their relationship and even how to behave in the presence of relatives, teachers and colleagues. Models play a vital role in their daily life. It is important for the adults to be a positive role model to the children. Paul states the importance of being a good example to Titus, which says "Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity" (Titus 2:7, ESV).  Beckwith claims that in order to grow in faith, children need to associate with others and they need people to model and guide them. Children see models

of faith when they meet with people in the faith community by participating in community life (Beckwith 2004, 66). Bandura's social-cognitive theory also states that people get influence from what they see and it influences their behavior (Bandura 1977, 22). And he mentions that what people learn from a model depends on how they interpret the situation cognitively and emotionally (cited in Bee and Boyd 2005, 36).

James 2:1-9 tells us that we should not have favoritism in church. We often see how our church members give more importance and respect to people having high standard, the fellow elders or the seniors while the children, and the poor are mostly neglected. We ought to be friendly to children in the same way that our heavenly Father is to us. To do this we need to consider our past as to how unclean, worthless we were and that we were lost but God brought us not looking and for our standard, rather He showed us kindness on the contrary. We can see the kindness of God in all His doings that He has done for us and is doing for us and will be doing for us. We need to be kind as our Father in heaven is kind to us without being partial as we see it in Matthew. 5:44-45, treating all children as they are our children is one of the best ways to be a friendly church for children. The benefit of being kind to children is that they learn to be kind from your example. Children are an important and valuable part of God's Kingdom. Knowing what the Bible says about children will help us connect with God's heart and the children in our lives, which is always a good thing. Being among God's people was significant for the spiritual formation and nurture of those children. Jesus himself viewed children highly by welcoming them and, significantly, by telling the adults to become like them for their own spiritual health. In the gospel of Luke, Jesus Christ said to his host for inviting the poor for dinner (Luke 14:13). God is willing to take care His children

(whether you are rich or poor) every day and we should be willing to take of His children too (Luke 14:13-14).

## Avenues Where A Church Can Exercise Child Friendliness

Brewster has indicated that there are four possible ways where the church can show child friendliness. They are in the areas of church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff. Related literature and studies are incorporated in this section to give more light to the issue. After going through search engines like ebscohost, the Wesleyan Holiness Digital Library, google scholar, and APNTS OPALS and I have not found any related study conducted in my research locale, Myanmar, regarding child friendly churches and other pertinent topics on this same issue. In the library of APNTS, I have found the theses of Ro Thuam Liana and Zo Mawii, who were students from Myanmar. I have used their studies here to give some light upon the realities of the Myanmar context. This lends to the idea that the current study might be the first of its kind in terms of taking a look at how a local church in Myanmar shows or does not show evidence of child friendliness.

### The Church's Culture Must be Child Friendly

The first avenue where a church can exercise child friendliness is through its culture. The church has an important role in the life of every child that is a part of it. Every child brought into the church comes under the influence of the entire fellowship of faith. It is the task of the entire congregation to pray, work and live in such a manner that these children come to know the Lord and His ways. The church should realize that the most important thing in children's life is for them to receive the spiritual light whether

they are happy or quarrelsome or playful. Children must love and be loved in the church.

Loving children by taking intentional efforts to meet their needs should be in the church's

DNA.

There is an interesting magazine article about Pope Francis. It is entitled "Family-

Friendly Francis" (*America* 2014, 4):

"Let them eat; no worries." Pope Francis spoke these words not in support of the
poor in the streets, as is his custom, but on behalf of infants in the Sistine Chapel.
On January 12, 2014, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, Francis described the
32 infants presented for baptism there as "the main focus" and, noting that the
children might grow hungry during the lengthy ceremony, he urged the mothers to
feel free to breastfeed them during the liturgy. Breastfeeding in public has long
attracted controversy in the United States, so many U.S. Catholics have found
Francis' frankness on the matter to be a refreshing acknowledgment of the
practice as a natural part of motherhood (*America* 2014, 4).

Frankly speaking, this is so encouraging for me. As a Protestant, I am amazed at

the gesture of this Roman Catholic leader. And then the magazine continued to report the

event:

Many also have been encouraged by Francis' response to one of the couples who
presented their child for baptism but reportedly are not married in the church. The
baptism of this child by Francis reflects a loving and pastoral decision, but not a
remarkable one, canonically speaking. Francis made clear during his homily that
he expected parents to pass on the faith, calling it a "duty" and "the most beautiful
inheritance they will leave" their children. In his Angelus message, he also
expressed hope that the parents' encounter that day would help them to rediscover
their own faith "in a new way" (*America* 2014, 4).

This article shows how a church leader shows love and real concern to children

and families. It is a gesture worth of emulation on the part of leaders in our so-called

Protestant circles. The church's culture needs to embody the principle of acceptance and

belongingness. In the same vein, Michelle Leise in her article, "Kids in Church," in

*Christian Parenting Today* emphasizes the vital need of the culture of the church to be

love oriented. She discusses the following in her article. First, children should see church

as a caring community that attends to their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Second, children grow in their faith by observing adults worshiping God. Finally, children should understand that God has a purpose and a plan for each of them in the church (Leise 2003, 18). This is a tall order for the church. This carries a lot of commitment on the part of church leadership. A child friendly church plans on intentional ways to let children grow in their spiritual life as well as other aspects of their personality.

As the Bible clearly teaches that God certainly is serious about children and we need to be serious about children. Jesus says that "But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea" (Matthew 18:6, NIV). Evidently, Jesus has no patience or sympathy of any kind with anyone who would do such a thing. And He wants us to have a heart that He has for the children.

The church should be the place where the children build their right relationship with God. Brewster points that "a right relationship with God implies a right relationship with all of His creation. Clearly no secular interventions can address these issues from a biblical standpoint" (Brewster 2011, 95). I may say the church itself should have the right relationship with God. This way the church can help the children build the right relationship with God. Children observe what we do. When they see us they try to imitate us. So, when our relationships are right, and we walk with God's way, our children too will follow the same. Iris V. Cully in her article, "A Theology of Children" in *Review and Expositor* states that "The church is the community designed for nurturing this God-given life. And every child should be able to grow into the person God intended" (Cully 1983,

201). The church is required to teach and help the children in the process of their faith development. Children should get a chance of being participants in the life of the church and in this way they will feel welcomed and loved and valued for themselves.

There is research that can substantiate this need of children to feel loved and valued. Adrienne Katz surveyed 3,000 young British women and then presented her findings in the book, *The Can Do Girls: A Barometer of Change*. She found out "how high self-esteem projects young women from the low body image that plagues women in our world. It gives them the confidence they can make it, in spite of the difficulties and competition, and hopefully the resilience to bounce back if they slip on the way" (Katz 1997, n.p.; cited in Miles and Stephenson 2000, 5). The study concluded that "relationships rather than structure have a greater impact on the ability of children to grow spiritually, emotionally and socially" (Katz 1997, n.p.; cited in Miles and Stephenson 2000, 5). In the church, love relationships between families and members in the community of faith matter a lot. This is where children thrive and grow to know God deeper through concrete encounters with people who embody the love of God.

Richards says the children's spiritual growth can be affected by various processes such as a sense of belonging to fundamental faith communities based on building loving relationships that participate in the life of vital faith communities. Particularly in times of social faith community in God, modeling that Scripture taught an interpretation of the life lived by members of the faith community give Bible instruction that interpretation of life, and provides opportunities to exercise personal choice (Richards 1973, 76). Regarding a Christian environment, Brewster makes the claim that, "Most children growing up in a Christian environment make their first significant faith decisions between four and

fourteen" (Brewster 2010, 157). Having a good relationship between family and community is helpful in the children's spiritual development.

In the book of *Child, Church and Mission*, Brewster has mentioned that churches feel that there are no resources in them to meet the needs of the children (Brewster 2011, 98). Brewster believes that God will provide the resources if the church is really willing to meet the needs of the children as what He had done in the life of Hagar. He is the God of impossible and He can surely open the church's eyes to resources and provide the resources that are needed that the church did not know existed. Brewster continues to mention that Christians are the only ones who have the spiritual truths and resources to help children grow like Jesus did in this respect (Brewster 2011, 101). Secular people may not have any idea about the salvation and they do not know how to address the problem of sin. The church and Christian believers are the only persons who can address all things about God to the children and the church and Christian believers are the only persons who can do true Christian holistic child development.

God wants the children to love Him. God uses the church to touch the hearts of the children. God is the friend of all children and He hears the cries of the children. He wants the Christians to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs the children because there is no one who understand the heart of God among the secular people. Christians are the only ones who understand the heart that He has for the children (Brewster 2011, 98-101).

Humans have a basic need to feel loved, valued, and part of a supportive community (Crosby, Smith and Frederick 2015, 87). Children could feel loved and valued when a church is friendly. When the children are happy, the parents are also

happy and they feel blessed. This can make a huge difference in our church as a whole community. There are at least five sets of goals, which we may call basic needs. These are briefly physiological, safety, love, 'esteem, and self-actualization. In addition, we are motivated by the desire to achieve or maintain the various conditions upon which these basic satisfactions rest and by certain more intellectual desires (Maslow 1943, 370-396). If a child is enjoying in the church, parents will make sure to send their children to the church and they will also pay more attention to the spiritual development of the children. Parents feel safe and secure when the church and the people from the church treat their children with love and care. Children are valuable to parents. Seeing the smiles on the faces of the children usually gives a big joy to the heart of the parents. Moreover children provide socio-emotional benefits to parents, such as, love, play and fun, and distraction from worries (Salvador 1998, 55).

The Psalmist said, "Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward" (Psalm 127:3, KJV). God wants us to nurture the children. Proverbs 22:6 points that it is important to train the children during their childhood because it helps them to avoid getting lost from the way that they should go when they become adult.

In order to do that the church has the responsibility to treat the children as real people. Treating them as a real people infers giving them time to express their feelings and let them share and ask questions. Too often children do not even have a right to wonder and decide what they have in their mind at the church. Children should be talked to and listened to before, during or after church. Children have spiritual needs as adults and also they are important to the church. The church could provide a role for them to

play in the church according to their willingness and capability (Brewster 2011, 123-125).

Children need support and encouragement in their daily life as they take each significant step to know Jesus Christ, to accept Him as their own Savior and to follow His steps. Surely, the direction and encouragement that the children receive will impact in their journey of their spiritual life to grow more and more like Jesus Christ. Some people may think children are not proficient to understand and obey but many biblical instructions to parents to nurture their children's faith makes it clear that children are capable of understanding and obeying the commandment (Brewster 2011, 110-111).

A child has an opportunity to learn not only cognitively but also spiritually if he or she has a time of active learning. In order to have this opportunity, the collaboration between church, family and school is required for a child to be well shaped physically, emotionally, and spiritually (Shipman 2012, 5). Through the relationship that the children with friends, teachers and pastors help the children's religious development and a child makes good decisions in life if a child is emotionally, mentally and spiritually stable.

<div align="center">The Church's Programs Must be Child Friendly</div>

The second characteristic of the child friendly church is having programs for children beneficial for their spiritual growth, mental development and building relationship with others. Sheldon Shaeffer prepared a book for UNICEF Education Section and entitled it *Identifying and Promoting Good Practice in Equity and Child-Friendly Education*. He has written, "The essential principles of child-friendly education include child-centredness, inclusiveness, democratic participation and protection (Shaeffer 2013, 4). Child-friendly education (CFE) has two major characteristics, both of

which relate directly to the right to education and to equity: (1) it is child-centred; and (2) it is child-seeking, trying to ensure that all potential learners, whatever their background and ability, have an equal chance to enter the education system (Shaeffer 2013, 4). This can also be applicable in the educational practice of the local church.

In the context of the church, Karen-Marie Yust explains how church programs are centered on a once-a-week base. This is also true in Myanmar. Yust tries to tell us that these programs are very short times. As we see today, many churches spend very little amount of time with children. There is no emphasis on children. In Myanmar, I observe that there are churches who would just ask anybody to teach just because that person has a degree in education, for example. These educated people do not always have biblical background or they are not even regular church attenders. Many church leaders and pastors have this idea in their mind that they think that children will not need someone who is educated to teach them or they have Sunday Schools just because they think children are a nuisance in the church service (Yust 2002, 4).

Ivy Beckwith in her book, *Postmodern Children's Ministry: Ministry to Children in the 21st Century* views the church as broken when church leaders and church pastors see children's ministry primarily as a marketing tool" (Beckwith 2004, 13-14). Children do like games, activities and rewards and they strive hard to receive one. So our activities should not be just to make them happy with rewards but to use this opportunity to teach them and fill them with spiritual knowledge and also giving heed to their needs.

The Sunday School should be divided according to the age level and maturity of the children and the church should provide budget for children ministries in order to do children ministries and the outreach program which include the opportunities for the

children to participate through in any way that they are capable for (Brewster 2011, 125).

Children learn differently according to their age and educational grade level so they gain

a better understanding of what is being taught if the teaching is geared to their level of

understanding. Not only that, the children could enhance their Christian foundation

according to their age level while they are in Sunday School. Children discover the

characteristics of God event by event through the biblical stories. By doing this, children

experience God and they could even hear God speak to them through the story

(Stonehouse and May 2008, 5). The daily experiences of children confirm who they are

and what they are capable of doing.

A case study conducted by the staff of the Resource Strategy and Development

Unit in consultation with the Reverend France-Williams, Curate, St. Francis Church,

Diocese of London entitled, "Successful Church Planting: A Case Study" tells of how a

church plant has helped to revitalize the ministry and mission of a certain church

(*Resourcing Mission Bulletin* 2012, 1). The interesting thing about one of the many

factors leading to the growth of this church plant is their emphasis on identifying values.

St. Francis church has identified its three key values as being: (1) Playful–the church's

congregation take themselves lightly. They have chosen a kite as the symbol of this value

– it is strongly built but can soar; (2) Hospitable–the symbol here is a cup of tea. The

congregation have time for one another and they welcome strangers; and (3) Responding

to God's love and to God's world. The church is trying to be as close to Christ and to the

community as it can (*Resourcing Mission Bulletin* 2012, 2). And part of their distinctive

programs is a "children's church on a Sunday and has hosted a family Fun Day. A small

team of volunteers also engage in outreach with disaffected children and young people.

The church also has a good relationship with the local secondary school and is in the process of establishing a relationship with the local primary school (*Resourcing Mission Bulletin* 2012, 3). This case study is a good example of how a church should create programs to reach out to the children and families so they could experience the love of God and be nurtured holistically.

A case study written by Reverend Nicholas Pye, Vicar of St. Paul's Church, and Ro Willoughby, Children's and Families' Community Worker tells of how the church grew among children and families (Pye and Willoughby 2012, 1). The case study mentions the summary of working practice that led to the success of this church. First, building relationships is at the heart of children's and families' ministry, seeking to grow faith and build trust with people of all ages, at all stages, walking with them. Second, provide a range of training opportunities for those working with children, recognizing that this training may also have direct relevance to the faith development of adults on the team. Third, a holiday club and other 'adventures' in church with their non-churched peers encourages children to invite friends and provides opportunities to challenge children to share and grow in their faith. Fourth, children are effective natural evangelists; It is absolutely essential not only to nurture the faith of children but also to 'grow' the faith of their parents–this is for the sake of parents themselves and for the sake of their children. Finally, children become young people almost overnight so plan long-term. These best practices done in the United Kingdom could prove useful for any church that desires to minister with children and families even in Myanmar.

In Myanmar context, we can see in a number of churches that adults seek only their own benefit. Many pastors in my country feel that children must do and obey

everything whatever activities or programs that the adults feel is right. Whatever the adults think is appropriate for children, then that is carried. All too often, the decisions are made in such a way that children are kept away from the main services so that they do not disturb the service. Importance is not given to children. Most of the time the children's spiritual growth is not taken into consideration. In some churches, it is believed that they are still young to understand anything about the Bible, so they are left just by themselves out of the church building to play. There are yet other churches whose services are longer than three hours with a lot of preaching. Those churches make the children sit throughout the church service and later have Sunday School for an hour. I cannot imagine the pain they go through during this time. Keeping children silent for three hours, not allowed to talk or move, does not seem like a child friendly church at all. There might be a time that they feel they do not want to go the church but at the same time, there is the pressure from parents to go to church so children just go to church for the sake of obeying the adults (personal observation of the author).

This article from *Christianity Today* shows a different scenario from what I share in the previous paragraph regarding the context of churches in Myanmar. It tells of a local church in Columbus, Ohio that fought community decay with a friendly recreation area and Bible studies (Boyd 1999, 18). What the church did was to close the "crack houses" in Windsor Terrace, Columbus, and the dwellings were refurbished by the church's remodeling and construction ministry, called Hope Builders. What used to be a place where drugs and crime thrived became a place where Bible studies are going on and after-school homework and one-on-one language arts tutoring are conducted. This is

evidence that churches can really offer community transformation by providing child friendly programs and spaces.

Brewster reflects that "worship services in the church should be meaningful to children and not just adult experiences in which children must conform to adult standards" (Brewster 2011, 125). Many churches, especially in the "majority world" do not have the luxury of space and facilities to accommodate children in the main service. Many, however, make a genuine effort to place the children in the midst. For example, some have designated a family worship service on a communion Sunday. The important point is that the children know they are welcome. The church should emphasize rituals – Christmas, Easter, other special church days, birthdays, Sunday School graduation, anniversary and remembrances–and make them a big deal for the children. Also, the church should have designated days and time to bless children in its annual program" (Brewster 2011, 125).

Anyone who participates in a service of worship is learning about God and at the same time expressing relationship with God. This makes worship an important way through which children grow in faith. Worship is also one way which people learn what it means to be a Christian. Children learn about worship by worshipping with their church family Sunday by Sunday (Ng and Thomas 1981, 18, 23). It helps them to learn that they belong to God and they are valued as persons by God and by God's people. Children build memorable moments; sharing experiences of Christian community from which they may draw upon when they are order. Yust states that serving in reaction to God's love stands a factor for their spiritual growth (Yust 2004, 34).

There is regular prayer with and for children and young people in the church. The prayers can be offered moment by moment and day by day. The person who takes time to pray can realize the presence and the Word of God. Prayer is powerful and it encourages anyone who seeks Him. People from the church have to pray for each other. In the Scripture, James correctly states "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective" (James 5:16, NIV).

Brewster states the importance of addressing children's spiritual needs. He writes, "Most child development workers can describe the process of mental, social, or emotional development that we expect as children grow. However, child development is not holistic unless it addresses spiritual development as well" (Brewster 2011, 107). Addressing the holistic development of a child is the most important thing that the church has to fulfill in the life of the children as Brewster mentioned. Experiencing the love of God at a very young age is a precious gift for the life of children. God used the children to do miraculous things as we see in the Bible and the church also see them as a person who can bring miracles and blessings to friends, family, church and community.

The Church's Compound Must be Child Friendly

The third characteristic of a child friendly church is compound which is friendly enough to the children in order to meet their needs. The child friendly should ensure every child an environment that is physically safe, emotionally secure and psychologically enabling. Brewster mentions that "the church facilities should be safe and attractive to children and childhood. There should be safe places for children to play and be childlike–if possible, even with playground or play areas" (Brewster 2011, 124).

A study done by Tim Gill entitled, "Space-Oriented Children's Policy: Creating Child-friendly Communities to Improve Children's Well-being" reviews different perspectives of the changing nature of childhood (Gill 2008, 136). The paper discusses that children today grow up faster than they used to, but for the past 30 years or more, childhood prior to adolescence has been marked by shrinking freedom of action for children, and growing adult control and oversight (Gill 2008, 136). What is the reason why parents are getting so scared to let their children out of their sight? I believe the reason is unsafe environment. Gill observes that communities are becoming more fragmented. Children nowadays tend to stay inside the homes because communities are no longer safe for children to play. Gill documents that in England in 1971, 80 per cent of seven- and eight-year-olds went to school on their own; by 1990 just nine per cent did. In 1971, the average seven-year-old was making trips to their friends or the shops on their own but by 1990 that "licence" was being withheld until the age of 10. Gill also mentions that a more recent survey (2007) commissioned by the Children's Society found that nearly half of adults think children should not be allowed to go out with their friends unsupervised until they are 14 years old—even though in their own childhoods, almost half held this "licence" by the age of ten. Gill then concludes that despite public perceptions to the contrary, children today spend much more time than previous generations being looked after by their parents (Gill 2008, 136).

The study concluded with the statement that taking a long-term, value-based perspective—a space-oriented approach to children's well-being will support all children, including those vulnerable to poverty, antisocial and criminal behaviour, abuse, ill health and neglect, by making the community a safer, more accessible and friendlier place (Gill

208, 140). This could be applied to the compound of a local church. If a local church has a space where children can be safe, it would provide opportunities for children to engage in outdoor play and information recreation for their holistic growth.

One good idea for a church to consider is to build a facility that perfectly fits the ministry model. When it comes to meeting areas, the church has the option to think about facilities that would be comfortable for the children and their parents. Sometimes, children live in a world of imagination. The church could make the church as a place filled with bright colours. Even in a small church, walls can be painted with colorful murals of Bible scenes. In this way, the church could decorate its facility and compound to project a friendly atmosphere and make the total environment warm and inviting. An eye-catching environment could draw children to want to come back to the place. When children really enjoy usually they would not hesitate bringing their friends to the church, too. With this in mind, Brewster reminds his readers that there should be safety training, cleaning, maintenance and safety training for the church employees or volunteers. It will help them to work safely and free from injuries (Brewster 2011, 123-126).

An article entitled, "No Children Allowed," in *The Children's Ministry Magazine* emphasizes that for the church to be child friendly, "our building is designed with children in mind" ("No Children Allowed" 2010, 3). The writer of this article asks, "Do our buildings and furnishings nullify our teaching that children are important?" This is a question worthy of reflection especially in the context of Myanmar. The following are some suggestions that the author identified as "uncommon family-friendly ideas:" (1) Provide a small exterior door that children can open on their own to go into your church building. (2) Add child-size furniture to areas normally used by adults. (3) Establish

reserved parking spaces close to the church door for mothers with babies (and tons of baby paraphernalia). (4) Create a staffed drop-off zone to help families with small children into church. (5) Set up changing stations in women's and men's restrooms. (6) Hook up video transmissions in the mothers' cry room and the fathers' cry room so parents don't have to miss the service when the baby needs attention. (7) Put in child-size restroom fixtures-especially sinks and drinking fountains. Or, at the least, provide step stools. (8) Hang paintings and art work at a child's eye level or children's artwork at an adult's eye level. And (9) Create a children's space with Lego tables, books, toys, and children's and adults' furniture ("No Children Allowed" 2010, 4-5). The church in Myanmar could consider these things to provide children with a stimulating environment for learning.

The church must keep alive the biblical and human vision of the significance of the family. Some parents may not realize themselves as important as in the life of their children, especially, in the holistic development of the children. The church could help parents understand the importance of their role in shaping the consciences of their children. Parents need the church to support them in fulfilling their role in the life of their children more effectively. Donald Joy advised that "Ministries of the church for children must be creatively planned to take maximum advantage of Christian fellowship with peers" (Joy 1969, 121-123).

In the Old Testament we read of Nehemiah's story as he worked hard to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. He inspected Jerusalem's wall and by doing so he came to know more about what he could do for Jerusalem as God had put into his heart. A study of Nehemiah offers an opportunity to invite some of the church leaders to see the

importance of a well-built facility, how to enhance the compound of the church to attract and reach more people for Jesus Christ. The leaders of the church should arrange to take time for inspecting the compound and facilities and improve them to become friendlier to not only to the children but also to their parents (Mize 2012, 161).

On the discussion of providing safe spaces for children, a study conducted in Bandung, Indonesia provides evidence that children long for environment that allow them freedom of movement as well opportunities to enjoy open spaces of recreation. Drianda, Kinoshita, and Said in their study entitled, "The Impact of Bandung City's Rapid Development on Children's Independent Mobility and Access to Friendly Play Environments," explored the extent to which the enormous development in Bandung City, Indonesia has some bearing on local children as the youngest inhabitants (Drianda, Kinoshita, and Said 2015, 637). In particular, it focused on the issue of children's independent mobility and the availability of friendly play environments in children's neighbourhoods. The researchers worked with three groups of children 8–11 years of age who attended three different schools in Bandung. The result of this study showed that the development of Bandung City has created a disparity in access regarding children's opportunities for mobility as well as participation in friendly play environments. This study recognized children's desires to have appropriately designed play spaces, such as parks that are equipped with play equipment and rich in nature. Thus, this study argues the necessity to preserve the remaining and add a significant number of new, free, outdoor play spaces in the city" (Drianda, Kinoshita, and Said 2015, 637).

This particular study used drawings of children as one of the methodologies for identifying the perception of children. One drawing (Figure 3) below. This is a drawing of a child which is a representation of commuting children's safe and fun play space.
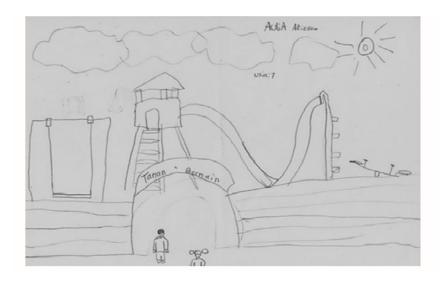


Figure 3: A representation of commuting children's safe and fun play space
(Drianda, Kinoshita, and Said 2015, 643).

The researchers analyzed this particular drawing in this fashion: When asked about the reasons, some children described that they had sketched commercial play spaces that offered them specific and attractive themes that could not be found in the other places. Along with this, children also conveyed their trust in the safety of those play spaces. Interestingly, we discovered that the gated play area became the most frequent feature appearing in children's drawings (See Figure 3). Then they explained:

> This finding might signify the habit of commuting children to play spaces under strong supervision and access control; thus, they perceived the gate as the common feature possessed by the safe play space. Other than gate, the most frequent features appearing in the children's drawings were natural elements, such as trees, bushes, flowers, clouds and the sun. From children's drawings, we identified that a safe and fun play space for these children is the place that has strong access control and offers outdoor, natural play (Drianda, Kinoshita, and Said 2015, 643).

In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, this notion of Child Friendly Cities (CFCs) was first developed during the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II), held in Istanbul in 1996. The concept is based on four general principles of the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child: (1) fair treatment of every child, regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, socioeconomic background etc.; (2) top priority of the best interests of the child; (3) the child's right to a better life and development; and (4) respect of children's views (Nour 2013, 490). This particular paper addressed the issue of CFCs and the nine building blocks or steps in building a child friendly city. This then became the framework for UNICEF in their implementation of the project. The nine building blocks are: (1) Fostering children's participation; 2) Establishing a municipal child-friendly legal framework; (3) Framing a city-wide children's rights strategy; (4) Institutionalizing a children's rights unit or municipal coordinating mechanism; (5) Carrying out a child impact assessment and evaluation; (6) Developing local children's budgets; (7) Creating a regular report on the state of the city's children, and monitoring progress of the children's strategy; (8) Making children's rights known: Raising awareness on children's rights among young people and adults; and (9) Promoting independent advocacy for children (Nour 2013, 495). The paper concluded that this is an important step for cities in the MENA region to build safe and conducive living and learning environments for children and youth, to tackle the challenges of rapid urbanization and social transformation. If the organizations outside the church are aiming to do these, how much more the church who is called to be the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27, NIV). These

could be some aspects that the church in Myanmar could consider to enhance the holistic ministries with children.

In summary, children, whether they are in Bandung or in Southern California or in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region or in Myanmar, desire for safe places where they could just be themselves. The church has to realize that having a safe compound and building, well-prepared classes for the children with colorful decorations, suitable tools for teaching, a proper chair and table are not a waste of money. Instead, the church is investing for its future and more than that those things are vital for building a relationship between the church and children. Children are an needed part for the congregation.  It is necessary for the children to have a positive relationship with the church because it requires in their path to spiritual transformation. The church should know that God's calling for them is to provide holistic Christian ministry to the children whom God so highly values.

<center>The Church's Staff Must be Child Friendly</center>

The fourth characteristic of a child friendly church is staff members (teachers, workers and pastors) who are working with the children in the church. Firstly, the staff members have to recognize that they have a responsibility towards children (Brewster 2011, 127-8). The staff needs to understand that nurturing is feeding, nourishing, training and educating the children. Nurturing is important because "it acts like water for a growing plant." The growing plant needs water to grow and bear fruits. Likewise, children need support in order to grow physically, mentally and spiritually. The teacher may find teaching to be a positive experience because it enhances the relationship between teacher and student. The children can acknowledge a healthy learning

environment through the positive experience and relationship that they build with their teacher (Burba 1985, 53-55).

Robert G. Crosby III, Erin I. Smith, and Thomas V. Frederick conducted a research entitled, "The Kid-Friendly Church: What Makes Children Feel Loved, Valued, and Part of a Supportive Church Community" and published in *The Journal of Family and Community Ministries*. In this research, they explore the local church as a potential source of social support for school-aged children. They interviewed twenty church-going children between the ages of 6 and 13 to find out how they experience social support at church. Then they categorized and summarized their responses to offer thought-provoking insight to ministry leaders who desire to create a "kid-friendly" church community. Among others, the following were the implications that they offered for children's ministry workers. They enumerated that children's workers should (1) make a priority of listening to children, (2) look for opportunities to esteem children in unexpected and unconventional ways consistent with the emotional language of the child, and (3) strive to construct an emotionally safe environment wherein children have the opportunity to build community with their peers (Crosby, Smith, and Frederick, 2015, 14).

In the Scripture, God commands not only to the parents or families but to all the whole community of Israel, "Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads" (Deuteronomy 6:5-9, NIV).

This passage suggests that children are to be taught through their interaction with the adult in their community. It also tells us how we are to love God with our whole being and God's word should be a part of everything we do. Once I visited my friend's house and to my surprise all the wall of their house were filled with Scriptures. She shared with me how her father loves to have Scriptures on the walls so that they could read them every day, mediate on them while they sit doing nothing and also helped them to memorize the Scriptures. I am a witness to her life as how she knows a lot of Scripture and apply them in her daily life.

Children need the adults to show and guide them the way that they should go in order to avoid turning to the wrong path (Proverbs 22:6). In order to train the children, the adults should be trained themselves first as we see the first sentence in Deuteronomy 6. The adults have to love the Lord first and then put everything that God has commanded in their hearts and only after that they can train, teach and nurture their children. Emotional and social supports are needed commodities by growing children.

In light of emotional and social support, there are two separate studies conducted by (1) Osterman and (2) Furman and Buhrmester which documented that boys generally report receiving less social support than girls from teachers, parents, and friends (Furman and Buhrmester 1985, 1016-1024; Osterman 2000, 323-367). Crosby, Smith, and Frederick commented that "this observation has led some to speculate that boys have less need or desire for relational support. However, there is no evidence to support this claim. In fact, the researchers found out that boys were just as likely as girls to say that they felt loved and esteemed when adults listened and attended to them" (Crosby, Smith, and Frederick 2015, 106). With this evidence from an empirical research, there is a need for

the church staff to allow children the opportunity to feel loved, welcomed in the church, and to have their social and emotional support needs met.

In Myanmar, when it comes to teaching the children, generally, the teachers have a harder time handling boys than girls in the Sunday school because boys are very active and, mostly, they do not pay much attention to the lessons. In my context sometimes, the teachers just let them play outside of the church so that the teacher can teach the lesson to the rest of the children. With this, I am afraid it could give children some misguided perception about the church. Boys and girls are different in some many ways. Regarding with the differences of boys and girls, Gurian and Stevens state that "girls are generally better listeners than boys. It gives the girls great security in the complex flow of conversation. Regarding with movement, girls do not generally need to move around as much while learning. Movement seems to help boys not only stimulate their brains but also manage and relieve impulsive behavior. Boys become bored more easily than girls; this quite often needs more and varying stimulants to keep them concentrating. Girls are better at self-managing boredom during instruction and all aspects of education. This has a profound impact on all aspects of learning. Once the child has become bored, he is likely not only to give up on learning but also to act out in such a way that class is disrupted and he is labeled a behavioral problem" (Gurian and Stevens 2011, 37-51).

Dan Brewster clearly states, "True holistic development can only be done by a Christian or a church. It is only Christians who have understanding of the nature of sin, God's intention for His people and His creation, and the power of the gospel to bring a substantial healing to the whole person" (Brewster 2011, 80). It is important to have a Christian teacher in the church. A Christian teacher, who is really dedicated to God, who

prays for the children, who loves the children, who knows how to spend good quality time for the children and who grows together with the children in faith, in relationship and in love of Christ.

Children are spiritually aware and open to God. They need to grow in Christlikeness. Westerhoff has said, "We should think of childhood as a characteristic of life; we should be doing things with children, creating a relational model equals-model in which all of us have something to offer each other. Adults need children, children need adults. We all need each other. The child is a pilgrim; the adult is a co-pilgrim; and the process is shared journey together through life" (Westerhoff 2008, 359). Children are designed to be a blessing. Not only the parents teach a child but also the child teaches the parents; while the parent studies a child studies them. Adults learn lessons of trust, faith and selfless love which they cannot be taught in different area but only in the process of nurturing the child. In that way, a child becomes teacher of the adults.

Church leaders and staff are models for the children. Children learn and copy what they see in their surroundings and they are always watching (Brewster 2011, 127). Cully agrees and says that people who work with children in church need to be role models. Young children can get self-assurance from them as the family of God in the church. Cully continues to say that teachers should be forgiving and understand the capabilities of young children (Cully 1983, 202). Moreover, the teachers should be opened to the children and the teachers should encourage the children to speak of their experiences, expressing their feelings, affirming their decisions, and providing opportunities for growth invite the child to come gladly into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (Chapman 1983, 211).

Taking this opportunity one should also keep in mind to communicate with every child and make friendship with them. We need to know them better so that we can help them in their difficult part of life. We fail to realize that these little children need us to show them the love of God. We fail to give them the right teaching. We fail to pass on the message of love. There are so many children who want us to listen to them and all this is not at all possible in a short time. Children have an interest in God and they are capable to learn about God even in a very young age. As adults, it is very important to know that we are the one who introduce the love God and help the children determine their spiritual development (Shelly 1982, 34).

Corbett and Fikkert elaborated that "God created us to live in loving relationship with one another. We are not islands! We are made of know one another, to love one another, and to encourage one another to use the gifts God has given to each of us to fulfill our callings" (Corbett and Fikkert 2009, 58). Loving and caring may help in building relationship with children in the church. Smiling and greeting to the children, starting conversation take place to start building relationship with the little children. As a researcher, I believe the staff who are working with children need to learn how to have a warm welcoming face and heart that reaches out to the children. As children are watching all the time, eye contact is an important part in listening to the children. Listening carefully shows that you want to listen to the person who is speaking. Through eye contact adults can let children know "I am here for you or you have great value to me." Children will know that your attention is on them. And looking into the eyes of a child helps you to access a deeper level of communicating.

Ross Campbell, in his book *How to Really Love Your Child*, emphasizes "The important of eye contact, physical contact, and focused attention. Through frequent encounter, focused attention, and loving care young children come to know their primary caregiver as a powerful being. Later these positive feelings established in the beginning weeks and months of life will flow into the deepened understanding and relationship with the Heavenly Father" (Campbell 1981, 37-65). As the author said not only eye contact but also physical contact is important to the children to feel connected and welcomed.

Tiffany Field has also observed the important of physical contact upon the infant: "Infants who attend lower quality institution daycare tend to receive minimal touch, which is associated to long-lasting cognitive delays in the future" (Field, 2011, 367-383). Children need to be held, hugged and embraced. In the context of Myanmar, most mothers carry their babies using a piece of cloth which serves as a carrier, beginning at birth until the baby becomes four years of age. This is one of the reasons why mothers cannot work and do other things while their children are still young; however, this provides a bond between mother and child. The children feel loved, safe and secure when they receive touch from the mother and it is vital for the children as touch is one of the non-verbal communication.

Jesus made time to do it for the children and we must do the same. James Dobson relates:

> It has been known for several decades that an infant who is not loved, touched, and caressed will often die. Evidence of this fact was observed as early as the thirteenth century, when Frederick II conducted an experiment with fifty infants. He wanted to see what language the children would speak if they never had the opportunity to hear the spoken word. To accomplish this dubious research project, he assigned foster mothers to bathe and suckle the children, but forbade them to fondle, pet, or talk to their charges. The experiment failed because all fifty infants died. Hundreds of more recent studies indicate that the mother-child relationship

during the first year of life is apparently vital to the infant's survival. An unloved child is truly the saddest phenomenon in all of nature (Dobson 1970, 33).

Teaching the meaning of prayer and the purpose of prayer to a child is vital in process of their spiritual development. Children should learn how to pray beginning at a very young age. In saying this, church staff could model the habit of prayer. The staff should be prayerful themselves so children can follow their example. Encourage them to use their own words and to talk to God about things that concern them. Children need to see us at home and church as we pray out loud and kneel or sit in silence as we pray and listen for God's guidance. Teach them to thank God and to pray for others (Sanders 1967, 75). I believe prayer is the most powerful weapon to change the lives of people. It always helps us to have hope for the future, it gives us inner peace which we cannot get from anywhere else and praying for others is the most supportive thing that nothing can replace in our lives. John Maxwell wonders about the power of prayer and marks that "God's hand moves when people and pastors pray together. And through prayers, God makes the impossible, possible" (Maxwell 1999, 7).

Proverbs. 19:18 tell us that we should correct our children while there is still hope. It is really important too train the children and young people in the church. Only when the young people in the church are trained to walk obedient to the biblical truth, and then will they will be able to lead the church in turn according to the will of God when they become mature. Therefore, if the children's ministry of the church is doubtful and unreliable, then the future of the church will also be uncertain (June 1999, 174-176).

The church staff should realize that the ability that they have is a gift from God to be exercised for the good of humankind and the kingdom of God. God has entrusted them with the ability to nurture the children. In order to use their ability wisely, they may seek

the help of God. Harper explored that "wholesome Christian humility is an honest appreciation of personal talents, combined with the recognition that all such talents are gifts of God to be decided to the service of men [*sic*]" (Harper 1994, 210).

Children should experience a holistic development in their childhood. The church should meet the physical, spiritual, and other aspects of the person. God wants the church to take responsibility to bless and care all of His creation (Holmes 1985, 20). Brewster also strongly stated that "There is no more important role for the church than the careful, consistent, and systematic program of religious training for children and young people" (Brewster 2011, 112).

Child friendly churches are the need of the hour. While it is true that many children suffer from all kinds of abuses, struggles, and conflict, child friendly churches could offer avenues wherein each child could be made whole and nurtured in the life of faith. Child friendly churches are family friendly. Child friendly churches are safe, warm, colorful, and inviting. The culture, programs, compound, and staff are avenues where churches could exercise child friendliness in various forms. This chapter discussed all these aspects of child friendliness as well as the context of Kalaymyo Myanmar. The next chapter contains the research methodology and procedures.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

This study aimed to find out what are the perceptions of the respondents from the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar on child friendliness in terms of church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff. This chapter contains the method of study, sources of data, research-gathering procedures, data-gathering instruments, and statistical treatment of data as well as the feasibility of the study. The study aims that the findings of the research could help improve the ministries in the local church in such a way that the children will experience a positive environment that is so needed for holistic growth.

**Method of the Study**

This study was descriptive in design using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative in its approach utilizing the survey questionnaire as well as the drawing protocol adapted from Stonehouse' guidelines on helping children express their perceptions through drawing. Descriptive research provides information to describe "the current state of affairs" (Best and Kahn, 2006, 80). So this design would fit the objectives of the current study because the main purpose was to find out what are the perceptions of the respondents from the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar on child friendliness in terms of church culture, church programs, church compound, and

church staff. This study employed a simple descriptive design which is a one-shot survey and the data was collected at one point in time (Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle 2010, n.p.).

Quantitative research consists of research in which the data can be analyzed in terms of numbers and that the results of quantitative research are more readily analyzed and interpreted (Best and Kahn 2006, 79, 81). To accomplish this, for the selected children who answered the questionnaire, I oriented the Secretary of the church who was the assistant researcher to assist those who are 13 years old and below. The rest of the respondents can fill out the questionnaire without needing so much help.

For validation purposes, the questionnaire, which is translated in Mizo dialect, was pre-tested with at least two Myanmar children, i.e., one 13-year-old and one 18-year-old and one staff who are attending the Munlai Reformed Evangelical Church, Myanmar. In this way, I was able to make sure that all respondents, from the youngest to the oldest, were able to understand and answer every item on the questionnaire.

I did the pilot test through Skype with the assistant researcher who is the Secretary of the church. I oriented the assistant researcher on the objectives of the research as well as instructions on how to conduct the questionnaire as well as the drawing activity. For the pre-test, the assistant researcher administered the questionnaire to the two children and one staff and found out that there was no difficulty on the part of the respondents in understanding and answering the questionnaire. Before the conduct of this pilot test, I sent the letter to the pastor in Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo (Appendix B), the letter to the parents (Appendix C), Parental Consent for Research Participants Below 18 Years (Appendix D), letter to the staff (Appendix E) as

well as the Informed Consent Statement for Participants 18 Years Old and Above

(Appendix F) to secure their permission. The pastor printed all these letters and explained

the objectives of the study to the pastor in Munlai Reformed Evangelical Church. The

pastor informed me that the pastor in Munlai, the parents, the staff, and the children were

cooperative and agreed to do the pilot test.

For the drawing, the pilot test was conducted with one eight-year-old boy who is

from Munlai Reformed Evangelical Church through Skype. I was the one who converse

with him and did the drawing protocol (Appendix G). The boy was able to draw a picture

of the church building and other things that he saw around the church which was

important to him (Appendix H).

Furthermore, to insure the validity and reliability of this research, the following

strategies were conducted. First, I used triangulation using multiple sources of data which

means comparing and cross-checking data collected through surveys from people with

different perspectives (Merriam 2009, 216). In this study, the assistant researcher

distributed the questionnaires to all children and staff who were present in the morning of

March 19, 2017 in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar. She is not

involved with the ministries of children in this church so the issue of subjectivity was

minimized. The data from the children's responses and that of the staff were used in the

study. In this manner, data came from multiple sources. Lastly, I engaged in peer

review/examination. This means that I had discussions with my adviser and statistician

regarding the process of study, the congruency of emerging findings with the raw data,

and tentative interpretations (Merriam 2009, 229).

**Sources of Data**

I used purposeful sampling in this research. Best and Kahn mention that purposeful sampling is where the participants are easily selected because they are typical and it allows the researcher to select those participants who will provide the richest information and those who manifest the characteristics of most interest to the researcher (Best and Kahn 2006, 19). In this study the children and the staff who attend the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo are really the ones who are the direct recipients of the recommendations that the study will offer. They are also the ones who know the current status of the local church.

Data for this study came from the responses of the children and staff on the various items in the questionnaire. Currently there are 20 to 30 children in the Reformed Evangelical Church who are between eight to eighteen years old and then five staff who work with these children, including the pastor. These selected respondents were chosen on this requirement: they should have participated in the church for at least one year, so they have an idea on the current situation of the church especially in relation to the work with children.

It is important to note that Myanmar people do not really express what really is their mind because they always concern and think how the other people may feel if they give their bad feedback. This sentiment is explained by Hong Sar Channaibanya, a reporter of ABC News Australia who fled Burma due to the military conflict. He said that in Myanmar, "Young people and children are expected to obey their parents and elder siblings and freedom of expression is not widely practice at home. Older people always play a big role in decisions for younger people, rightly and wrongly. In fact acceptance

of difference is not commonly practiced in society at large. People rarely value different opinions and comments either at home or at workplace and a sense of compromise is seldom valued" (Channaibanya 2010, 5). This situation in Myanmar may have some impacts in giving answer to the survey questionnaires. Thus, we cannot assume that the answers of the questionnaire show the reality.

## Research-Gathering Procedures

To accomplish the objectives of the study, I engaged in the following procedures for research gathering. First, I sent an official letter to the senior pastor (Appendix B) to get his permission to conduct this research. This letter included the aspect of conducting a pilot test for the questionnaire and the drawing protocol. Once I got his permission, I did the pilot test with three children and at least one staff with the help of my assistant researcher through Skype. I have indicated how this pilot test was done in this same chapter under "Method of the Study."

Second, after the pilot test was done, I asked the pastor to let the Secretary print the letters to the parents of the children (Appendix D), Parental Consent for Research Participants Below 18 Years (Appendix E), as well as the Informed Consent Statement for Participants 18 Years Old and Above (Appendix G), Letter to the Parents Allowing Their Child to Participate in the Drawing Activity (Appendix I), and the Secretary was the one who explained to the parents and the children the objectives and procedures of the research.

Third, once I secured permission from the parents, I set a date with the pastor as well as the Secretary of the church to conduct a Food Fellowship where children could be gathered on a Sunday morning. I explained to the Secretary of the church not to let any

staff attend the food fellowship so that the responses of the children will not be hindered with the presence of the people who work with them. The Secretary of the church then conducted the questionnaire. This was just a one-time administration of the questionnaire for the children. The staff had a separate session with the Secretary of the church to fill out the questionnaire. This, too, was only administered at one time and the data was collected automatically. All questionnaires were anonymous and coded to establish objectivity as well as respect the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents.

Finally, I employed the help of the statistician to help me analyze the data from the filled-out questionnaires.

## Data-Gathering Instruments

This study employed the survey questionnaire adapted from Viva Network as the instrument for gathering data as well as drawing activity with the younger children. The data gathered from the questionnaire was used to identify the perceptions of the respondents on the child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church' culture, program, compound and staff.  The items in the questionnaire are adapted from Viva Network and are translated into Mizo language which is the language that in used in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar. Stuart S. Cook states, "The use of the fewer words in a children's questionnaire is advisable for easy understanding" (Cook 1989, 112). Fewer words are used in the questionnaire which is easy to understand and answer for the children.

The questionnaire is divided into two. Part one is "about you." It asks the following demographic information of the respondents: gender and age. Part two "about

your perception" on the four aspects of child friendliness in the church which include church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff.

In addition to the quantitative responses that were gathered from the questionnaire, the research assistant asked the five children who are eight-to-twelve-year-old children to draw. The assistant researcher se at least one eight-year-old child, one nine-year-old, one ten-year-old, one eleven-year-old, and one twelve-year old. The research assistant decided to choose only one child for each age group because of the limited number of children in the church. These children were selected based on their age and also their willingness to participate in drawing activity. The research assistant asked the selected children to draw anything to describe the Reformed Evangelical Church in terms of their experiences, relationships, and feelings in the church. Gross and Hayne suggest that the draw-and-tell technique generates more information because drawing helps children feel more comfortable and relaxed in an unfamiliar situation. Drawing may also facilitate memory retrieval. Drawing helps children to arrange and organize their narratives, giving them the opportunity to tell a better story (in Miles and Wright 2003, 4l; cited in Rodrigues 2016, 71). They were provided with rulers, colored pencils, crayons, erasers, and paper. I asked the research assistant to use a drawing protocol (Appendix G; adapted from Stonehouse 1998, email attachment). This is a "conversation" protocol for the research assistant to ask the child to do their drawing. It is helpful to give the research assistant ideas for starting conversation and asking the child to draw. The additional questions were used to probe for a little additional comment from the child to provide a deeper understanding of the child's experience and feelings. The additional questions were for the interviewer to insert as the child tells about the picture.

The interviewer worked with one child at a time. That way, the children did their own original drawing, not copying the drawing of another child. These conversations were recorded with the permission of the parents as well as the child (Appendices C and D). The whole conversation was then transcribed for data analysis.

**Treatment of Data**

This section is divided into two: statistical treatment of the questionnaire responses and analysis of the drawing activity. For the treatment of data, first, I and the statistician worked on the data from the filled questionnaire. And then I transcribed the conversation done in the drawing activity and analyzed the responses of the children.

Statistical Treatment of the Questionnaire Responses

After the administration of the questionnaire, all filled out questionnaires were coded and tabulated for analysis. I worked with the statistician on using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to the gathered data to treat the statistical aspect of the sub-problems of this study as well as the accompanying null hypotheses. Descriptive statistics organize and summarize large amounts of data that need to be interpret (Holcomb 2016, 1) and inferential statistics utilize probabilistic technique to analyze sample information from a certain population which is the known part, to improve our knowledge about the population, which is the unknown whole (Asadoorian and Kantarelis 2005, 2).

The data on demographic characteristics were analyzed and described using frequencies, averages, and percentages. The T-test and the ANOVA will be utilized to compare the perceptions of the children and the staff. The respondents were asked to rate

the statements on a three-point numerical rating scale to measure the patterns of evidence

of the four aspects of child friendliness in the church which include church culture,

church programs, church compound, and church staff. For the treatment of data, the study

will follow this statistical range. This refers to the mean scores and the probabilities at

which they would fall in any one of the categories. Range is a measure of dispersion, a

measure of by how much the values in the data set are likely to differ from their mean

(Arcidiacono 2016, n.p). The range is easily calculated by subtracting the lowest from the

highest value in the set. Particularly, the range of values of the mean was as follows:

Table 1: Range of Values

| Statistical Range | Patterns of Evidence |
|---|---|
| 1.00 - 1.66 | No; This element is never evident in the church |
| 1.67 - 2.33 | Not sure; I cannot be sure whether this element present in the church |
| 2.34 – 3.00 | Yes; This element is evident in the church |

With regards to the treatment of the null hypotheses, the following statistical

treatment was employed. For null hypothesis number one which says, "There is no

significant relationship between the demographic characteristic in terms of age and

gender of the children and their perceptions on the child friendliness of the Reformed

Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar, concerning church culture, church

programs, church compound, and church staff;" the Chi-Square test was applied to infer

whether to reject or accept these null hypotheses. A Chi-Square test is the appropriate

hypothesis testing for dependence between categorical variables (Ott and Longnecker

2010, 513-516).

For null hypothesis two which says, "There is no significant relationship between

the demographic characteristics in terms of age and gender of the staff and their

perceptions on the child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo,

Myanmar, in terms of church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff;" the Chi-Square test was used to accept or reject this null hypothesis.

For null hypothesis three which says, "The four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff are "never evident" as perceived by children in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar;" the T-test was applied to accept or reject this null hypothesis.

For null hypothesis four which says, "The four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff are "never evident" as perceived by staffs in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar;" the T-test was applied to accept or reject this null hypothesis.

The T-Test is the appropriate hypothesis testing about the average of the population when the standard deviation of the population is unknown (Rumsey 2010, 109-110). In this research, the ratings for the four elements on the child friendliness of the church are based on the average assessment score for each element, which is determined as to which scale it belongs. Since only the standard deviation of the samples (e.g., the respondents) is known, the T-Test is the appropriate hypothesis testing to determine the average.

## Analysis of Drawing Activity

To add to the quantitative treatment of the responses of the respondents, I also included the qualitative responses of the selected children through drawing. The research assistant asked the selected children what they want to communicate in the drawing that they have created. Knowing the context of Myanmar educational practices, the selected children were not really able to draw with sophisticated skill, but Collins, McWhirter and

Wetton say that even though a child may have drawn a scribble, to the child this scribble has meaning that can be discussed (in Miles 2000, 142). Stonehouse comments, that this is true, and also, we cannot be sure what even a very clear drawing means to the child. So, we need to have the child's explanation of the drawing (Stonehouse 2017, email). Shan Shan Yang in her master's thesis used drawings as part of her data. She writes, "Drawing helps children reflect on and express their perceptions" (Yang 2013, 46; cited in Rodrigues 2016, 63).

Marvin Klepsch and Laura Logie point that drawing plays a significant role in the stages of child's development as it speaks louder than words (Klepsch and Logie 1982, 6). Drawing makes a portion of the inner self visible. They continue to state that drawing communication is elemental and basic and it is also universal. In modern times, it has had a remarkable growth and can cross any existing language barrier with the greatest of ease. Wherever we travel in the world, signs, symbols, and pictures tell us where to phone, camp, eat, drink, sleep, exchange currency, and obtain information, where the washrooms and non-smoking area are–all without the aid of words (Klepsch and Logie 1982, 6-8). In this current study, I used the comments of the respondents regarding their drawing to provide insights about their varied experiences in the local church.

This chapter discusses the method of the study, sources of data, research-gathering procedure, data- gathering instruments, and the statistical treatment of data. The succeeding chapter includes the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the presentation of the drawings of the younger children, the relationships between the demographic characteristics profiles and the four characteristics of a child friendly church, perceptions of the respondents on the characteristics of the child friendliness of

Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, as well as the treatment of

the null hypotheses.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter contains the analysis and interpretation of the data findings of the current study, which explores the perceptions of the respondents from the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, towards child friendliness in terms of church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff. In order to present the data, the researcher used graphs and pie charts as they provide valuable information about the respondents and their perceptions on the child friendly church. An interpretation came along with the explanation of the purpose of the data for the figures and tables. As indicated in Chapter III, to address the objectives of the study in terms of statistical treatment, quantitative data were gathered and tabulated for analysis. Both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were applied to the gathered data to treat the statistical aspect of the sub-problems of this study, as well as to determine the answers for the null hypotheses. The responses of the younger children who are between the ages of eight and 12 are also included in this chapter. Furthermore, I have also tried to incorporate some related studies and literature in this chapter in certain sections where they add to the understanding of specific items in the research.

This chapter contains four major sections based on the sub-problems of the study as well as the treatment of the null hypotheses. The first section deals with the demographic characteristics of the respondents. For the purpose of treating the data with

statistical analysis, I and my statistician decided *not* to include the younger children, i.e., eight-to-12-year-old; instead their responses which are presented in the form of drawing are after the figures that present the demographic profile of the respondents. The second section deals with presentation of the drawings.

The third section deals with relationship of the demographic characteristics of the respondents to the four characteristics, answering (1) first null hypothesis which says, "There is no significant relationship between the demographic characteristic in terms of age and gender of the children and their perceptions on the child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar, concerning church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff;" (2) sub-problem two which says, "Are there significant differences in children's perceptions on child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar?" (3) second null hypothesis which says, "There is no significant relationship between the demographic characteristics in terms of  age and gender of the staff and their perceptions on the child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar, in terms of church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff;" (4) sub-problem three which says, "Are there significant differences in the staff's perceptions on child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar?"

The fourth section deals with the perceptions of *all* the respondents on the characteristics of the child friendliness of Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, answering (1) Third null hypothesis which says, "The four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff are "never evident" as perceived by children in the Reformed

Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar;" (2) sub-problem four which says, "How do

the children perceive the patterns of evidence on child friendliness of the Reformed

Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar?" (3) Fourth null hypothesis which

says, "The four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church

programs, church compound, and church staff are "never evident" as perceived by staffs

in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar;" and (4) sub-problem five

which says, "How do the staff perceive the patterns of evidence on the child friendliness

of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar?"

**Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

The first section of this chapter presents the demographic characteristics which

were categorized into the following: age and gender. Addition all, the four characteristics

of a child friendliness tool are categorized into the following: church culture, church

compound, church programs and church staff. Each characteristic has its own of

assessment questions, which was rated as 1 ("No"), 2 ("Not Sure"), and 3 ("Yes"),

individually. This study took place in Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan,

Kalaymyo, Myanmar.

Age of the Respondents

Figure 4 displays that the respondents represent varying age brackets. The number

and percentage of respondents are as follows: 23 respondents are aged 13 to 18 (82%), 4

respondents are aged 19 to 36 (14%) and one respondents is above 36 years old (4%).
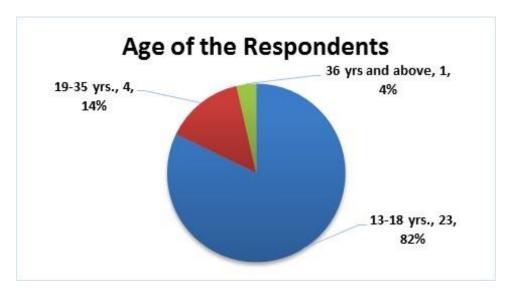
Figure 4: Age of the Respondents

Gender of the Respondents

There were 28 respondents of the study. Figure 5 has the breakdown of the number of respondents according to gender. Figure 5 shows that there were 15 males or 54% of the population, and 13 females or 46% of the population. Figure 5 below shows the breakdown of the gender of the selected respondents.
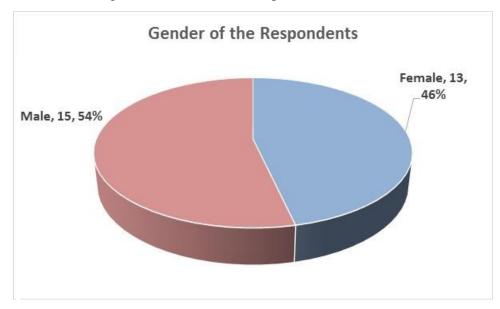


Figure 5: Gender of the Respondents

**Presentation of the Drawings of the Younger Children**

This part deals with the drawings of the younger children, i.e., children between the age of eight to twelve. There were five children who participated in the drawing activity. The names here are not their real names in order to protect their privacy and to observe confidentiality. It is important to note that "Ka Biakin" which appears in the drawings of the children means "My Church."

The first child who drew a picture is Muana. He is eight years old and is from Tahan Reformed Evangelical Church. When asked what comes first in his mind when he hears the word, "church;" he said, "God and many people." He smiled and took a short break and then he repeated that "Yes, many people because the church is meaningless without many people. And it is also boring if we are very few here in the church." In Muana's drawing below (Figure 6), one will notice that under the tree is a tiny human figure, it could be a girl or a boy. He mentioned that his favorite place in the church in under the big tree because he can play with his friends and he also mentioned that he wishes to have more big trees in the church. When asked about "How often do you come to the church?" He said, "Every Sunday morning." It is interesting to note that Muana did not mention about church programs or activities inside the church. What is most important to him were people and trees.

Figure 6: Muana's Drawing

The second child who participated in the drawing activity is Zara. He is a nine-year-old boy and joins the Sunday-school regularly. His drawing below (Figure 7) shows a church building with a tree close to it. When asked about what comes first in his mind when hearing the word "church," Zara said "God and prayer." Then he continued to explain why those two things always come first to his mind in this way: "Christian people always come to worship God in the church and I believe church is the place where God is staying. My grandparents often bring me to dawn prayer meeting and I get to see people coming to pray in the church. So, this is why when I hear the word church, God and prayer always come first to my mind." Csinos noted that in the Hebrew Bible, children are seen as important and necessary members of the community of faith" (Csinos 2007, 9). In the context of Myanmar, Zara perceived the presence of her grandparents bringing her to the fellowship of the believers, i.e., the dawn prayer meeting. Zara also said that when he comes to church, his most favorite place is outside the church: where the big tree

is. He also mentioned that "most of my friends like to play there but I do not know why."

Just like Muana, this boy Zara also mentions the tree.



Figure 7: Zara's Drawing

The third child who participated in the drawing activity is a ten-year-old boy,

Tluanga. At first, he was so hesitant to draw a picture of his church. When asked why, he

answered, "I do not like much drawing because it takes time." But when encouraged to

just try his best, Tluanga agreed to participate. When asked what comes first in his mind

when he hears the word "church," Tluanga kept silent for a few minutes and then he

started laughing. He answered, "I do not know." My research assistant tried to put much

effort to converse with Tluanga. She asked, "Where is your favorite place in the church?"

Tluanga immediately answered that his most favorite place in the church is the "vacant

place between the old and new building because I and my friends always play hide and

seek game in that place." He continued to say, "I did not include the new construction in

the picture because I do not know how to draw." Figure 8 below shows a picture of a church building. He looked feeling guilty about not including his favorite place in the drawing. But my research assistant gave him a compliment for his drawing and answering all the questions. He said, "Thank you and I am glad that I can help you."
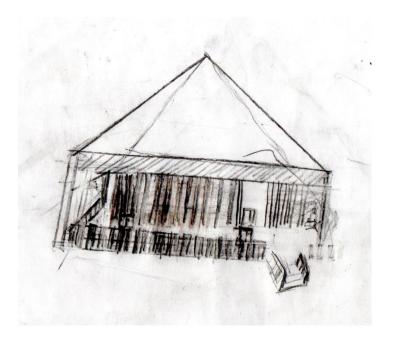


Figure 8: Tluanga's Drawing

The fourth child who participated in the drawing activity is Dika. He is eleven years old. When asked him what comes first in his mind when he hears the word "church," he answered, "Building and many people." Figure 9 below shows a depiction of a church building. When asked about the reason why he says building and many people, Dika responded, "A church is a building and people come here to worship God. That is the reason why I said building and many people." After his explanation, my research assistant asked him about his favorite place in the church. He answered, "I do not play much in the church because I only come here on Sunday morning and I go home right after Sunday-school. So, I do not know where my favorite place is." My research

assistant tried to know whether Dika enjoyed attending the church or not. So, she asked the question that she did not ask the rest of the children, "What is your favorite activity in the church?" Dika looked happy by hearing this question because he wore a big smile on his face and he said, "Learning a new song is my favorite activity in the church because I love to sing." It is documented in the book, *Myanmar—Culture Smart: The Essential Guide to Customs and Culture* that "karaoke lounges and beer gardens are everywhere, as Myanmar men and women love to sing" (May and Nugent 2015, 38). Dika is reflecting a culture that loves to sing.
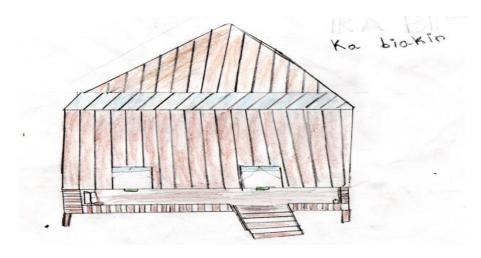


Figure 9: Dika's Drawing

The last but not the least child who participated in the drawing activity is Thari. She is twelve years old. My research assistant noted that Thari has a sweet smile and a friendly face. Thari describes the church as "a place or building in my mind where I always go on Sunday." Figure 10 depicts a building with a tree in front of it. One can notice that this particular tree is colored green with so many leaves just like Muana's tree (Figure 6).

Figure 10: Thari's Drawing

Thari noted that her favorite place is inside the church because it is colder and she does not like playing under the heat of the sun. When it comes to drawing, Thari stated that she will try her best to draw but that it might not be perfect. Figure 10 is a nice depiction of Thari's concept of the church.

## Summary of the Drawings

In summing up all the drawing and interview, I have made the following observations. First, all the five children had the same answer, "I do not know how to draw it" when my research assistant asked them to include their teachers in the picture. Second, based on the data from interview, three of the respondents like to play under the tree. I could communicate to the leaders of the church that the tree beside the church is something that means a lot to the children. Along this line, one can surmise that many children long for a place where they can play freely with their friends; however, there are also children who do not enjoy playing outdoor games like Thari. The church could consider providing both indoor and outdoor games which children can enjoy playing

according to their preference. Third, it is interesting to note that all of the children who participated in the drawing activity drew the church as made of wood and as a building with two doors. This is exactly how the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo looks like. Fourth, the positive side to the drawing is that children see the church not just as a "physical" place where they can come every Sunday, as indicated by Thari, but also a place where "God is staying," as identified by Zara and Tluanga as well as "a building and people come here to worship God," as mentioned by Dika. Looking at the drawings of the children, as a researcher, I observed that in one way or another, the children feel that the church is in the local language, "Pathian mite," means the people of God.

Finally, Table 2 is a summary of what the children indicated in relation to the four characteristics of a child friendly church. Under church culture, the children indicated that the church is a building, a place where people meet, a place where God is staying, and a place where people come to worship God. In the church program, the children indicated the following activities that they love in the church: playing under the tree, prayer with grandmother, and learning new song. Concerning the church compound, the children mentioned that they love the presence of the tree in the church vicinity, the vacant space is a place where they enjoy free play, and the interior of the church is also important because it shields them from the heat of the sun. The least aspect that the children thought was church staff. All the children who participated in the activity indicated that they do not draw how to portray the church staff in paper.

Table 2: Summary of the Responses of the Children in Light of the Characteristics of Child Friendly Church

| Child | Age | Church Culture | Church Program | Church Compound | Church Staff |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Muana | 8 | More people; church is meaningful with more people | Play under the big tree | More trees; green tree with many leaves | Do not know how to draw church staff |
| Zara | 9 | Church is the place where God is staying. | Prayer with grandmother; play under the big tree | More trees | |
| Tluanga | 10 | Church is the place where God is staying. | Play hide and seek | Vacant space – friends play hide and seek | |
| Dika | 11 | Many people; A church is a building and people come here to worship God | Learning new song; I love to sing | Building | |
| Thari | 12 | | | Building where I go on Sunday; Green tree with many leaves; Likes inside the church because it is colder (does not like the heat of the sun) | |

## Relationship of the Demographic Profile of the Respondents to the
## Four Characteristics of Child Friendliness of the Church

The second section of this chapter deals with the treatment of the first null hypothesis which says, "There is no significant relationship between the demographic characteristics of the selected respondents of Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar and the four characteristics of a child friendliness which are church culture, programs, compound and staff.

To infer whether to reject or accept this null hypothesis, a Chi-Square test is applied. A Chi-Square test is the appropriate hypothesis testing tool for determining dependence between categorical variables (Ott and Longnecker 2010, 513-516, cited in Bulies 2016, 67). The variables involved in the first null hypothesis are categorical rather than continuous; thus, this is used in this current study.

Moreover, the demographic characteristics are categorized into the following: children's age and gender, and staff's age and gender. On the other hand, the four characteristics of the church are categorized into the following: church culture, programs, compound and staff. Given the categorical variables of the hypothesis, the application of Chi-Square test is broken down into 8 combinations. These combinations involve: (a) Four combinations for age and each of the characteristics; and (b) Four combinations for gender and each of the characteristics. Please note that we used 95% confidence interval so if the rejection error is less than or equal to 5%, we reject the null hypothesis and infer that there is significant dependence but if the rejection error is more than 5%, we accept the null hypothesis and infer that there is no dependence.

Furthermore, an equally important question is whether or not (1) the responses across each perception item per characteristic, and (2) the responses across the four characteristics are significantly different. For example, the responses identical in terms of their average perceived assessment but are significantly different in terms of the variances of the responses. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test can provide inference whether or not two or multiple variables are significantly different among each other (Chandrakantha 2014, 2; cited in Bulies 2016, 68).

Tables 3 to Table 10 give the whole picture of the relationship between the categorical variables and four characteristics of the perceptions towards child friendliness in the church. Therefore, as reflected in table 3 up to table 10, the result was that *not all* of the demographic characteristics of the selected respondents of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar and the four characteristics (which are church culture, programs, compound, and staff) had significant dependence to each of the categorical variables. These are based on the frequencies of responses of the respondents and through using Chi-Square probability

Dependence or Non-Dependence Between Children's Demographic
Profile to the Four Characteristics

Table 3 presents the summary of the frequencies of responses for the four characteristics by children's age. For age versus church culture, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 100%. This error is greater than 5%. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis (that there is no significant dependence between children's age and the four characteristics of a child friendly church) and conclude that there is no significant dependence between "children's age" and "church culture." This means that the variables

age and church culture do not influence each other and are not connected in any way. By just seeing the age of the children, one cannot determine that all respondents rated church culture as a highest rating because there are also a notable number of respondents who rated church culture as low rating.

For children's age versus church programs, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 100.00%, which is greater than 5%. So, in that case we fail to reject the null hypothesis. It means that, there is no significant dependence between "age" and "church programs." This means that the variables age and church programs do influence each other and are connected statistically.

For children's age versus church compound, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 100.00%, which is greater than 5%. So we accept the null hypothesis on that characteristic. Therefore, there is no significant dependence between "children's age" and "church compound," meaning they do not relate to one another.

Finally, for children's age versus church staff, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 100.00%, which is greater than 5%. So we fail to reject the null hypothesis for this characteristic. Therefore, there is no significant dependence between children's age and church staff.

Table 3: Summary of the Frequencies of Responses for Four Characteristics by Children's Age

| Characteristic | Scale | 13-18 yrs. Old | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Church Culture** | (3) Yes | 119 | 119 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 11 | 11 |
| | (1) No | 8 | 8 |
| | **Total** | 138 | 138 |
| **Church Program** | (3) Yes | 91 | 91 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 1 | 1 |
| | (1) No | 0 | 0 |
| | **Total** | 92 | 92 |
| **Church Compound** | (3) Yes | 75 | 75 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 22 | 22 |
| | (1) No | 18 | 18 |
| | **Total** | 115 | 115 |
| **Church Staff** | (3) Yes | 77 | 77 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 19 | 19 |
| | (1) No | 19 | 19 |
| | **Total** | 115 | 115 |

Table 4 presents the summary of the frequencies of responses for the four characteristics by children's gender. For children's gender versus church culture, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 35.38%. This error is greater than 5%. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis (that there is no significant dependence between children's gender and the four characteristics of a child friendly church), and conclude that there is no significant dependence between "children's gender" and "church culture." This means that the variables gender and church culture do not influence each other and are not connected in any way. By just considering the gender of the respondents, one cannot conclude that all male respondents rated church culture as yes because there are also a significant number of female respondents who rated church culture as yes.

For children's gender versus church programs, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 33.57%, which is greater than 5%. So, in that case we accept the null hypothesis. It means that, there is no significant dependence between "children's gender" and "church programs." This means that the variables gender and church programs do not influence each other and are connected statistically.

For children's gender versus church compound, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 76.94%, which is greater than 5%. So we accept the null hypothesis on that characteristic. Therefore, there is no significant dependence between "children's gender" and "church compound," meaning they do not relate to one another. One can observe that both male and female rated church compound as both a yes and not sure, indicating that one cannot really conclude that either gender selected just one specific scale in assessing church compound.

Finally, for children gender versus church staff, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 0.22%, which is less than 5%. So we reject the null hypothesis for this characteristic. Therefore, there is significant dependence between children's gender and church staff. It means that there is connection on both genders regarding their specific perception on church staff. One can observe that both male and female rated church staff as yes, not sure and no, indicating that one cannot really conclude that either gender selected just one specific scale in assessing church staff.

Table 4: Summary of the Frequencies of Responses for Four Characteristics by
Children's Gender

| Characteristic | Scale | Female | Male | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Church Culture** | (3) Yes | 54 | 65 | 119 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 7 | 4 | 11 |
| | (1) No | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| | **Total** | 66 | 72 | 138 |
| Rejection error by Chi Square test = 35.38% | | | | |
| **Church Program** | (3) Yes | 44 | 47 | 91 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | (1) No | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | **Total** | 44 | 48 | 92 |
| Rejection error by Chi Square test = 33.57% | | | | |
| **Church Compound** | (3) Yes | 37 | 38 | 75 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 9 | 13 | 22 |
| | (1) No | 9 | 9 | 18 |
| | **Total** | 55 | 60 | 115 |
| Rejection error by Chi Square test = 76.94% | | | | |
| **Church Staff** | (3) Yes | 45 | 32 | 77 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 7 | 12 | 19 |
| | (1) No | 3 | 16 | 19 |
| | **Total** | 55 | 60 | 115 |
| Rejection error by Chi Square test = 0.22% | | | | |

Table 4 gives the whole picture of the relationship between the categorical

variables and the four characteristics of a child friendly church. Therefore, as reflected in

table 5, the result was that *not all* of the demographic characteristics of the selected

respondents of Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar when

compared with the four characteristics of a child friendly church (which are church

culture, programs, compound and staff) had significant dependence to each categorical

variable. But just a few of these based on the frequencies of responses of the respondents

and through using Chi-Square probability had any dependence.

Table 5: Summary of all the Variables for Children and all Four Characteristics

| | Variables | Rejection Error of the Null Hypothesis | Accept or Reject the Null Hypothesis | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Gender and Church Culture | 35.38% | Accept | No dependence |
| 2 | Gender and Church Program | 33.57% | Accept | No dependence |
| 3 | Gender and Church Compound | 76.94% | Accept | No dependence |
| 4 | Gender and Church Staff | 0.22% | Reject | Dependent |
| 5 | Age and Church Culture | 100% | Accept | No dependence |
| 6 | Age and Church Program | 100% | Accept | No dependence |
| 7 | Age and Church Compound | 100% | Accept | No dependence |
| 8 | Age and Church Staff | 100% | Accept | No dependence |

Here we summarize the dependence between the demographic characteristics of the children and the four characteristics of the church. Note that the results in Table 6 are based on the 5% error of rejection, where the null hypothesis is that there is no significant dependence between the demographics and the four characteristics of a child friendliness of the church.

Table 6: Dependence between Demographic Characteristics of Children and the Four Characteristics

| | Demographics | |
|---|---|---|
| **Characteristics** | **Gender** | **Age** |
| Church Culture | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Program | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Compound | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Staff | Dependent | Not Dependent |

Since *not* all four characteristics of the church have "no significant dependence" with the demographic characteristics of the respondents, we reject the first null hypothesis of this study, which says, "There is no significant relationship between the

demographic characteristics of the children and their perceptions on the child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar, in terms of church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff."

Based on the statistical computation, *there is* significant dependence between the four characteristics of child friendliness and the demographic characteristics of children which answers sub-problem 2 of this study.

<center>Dependence or Non-Dependence between Staffs' Demographic<br>Profile to the Four Characteristics</center>

Table 7 presents the summary of the frequencies of responses for the four characteristics by staff's age. For age versus church culture, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 65.92%. This error is greater than 5%. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis (that there is no significant dependence between staff's age and the four characteristics of a child friendly church) and conclude that there is no significant dependence between "staff's age" and "church culture." This means that the variables age and church culture do not influence each other and are not connected in any way. By just seeing the age of the staff, one cannot determine that all respondents rated church culture as a highest rating because there are also a notable number of respondents who rated church culture as low rating.

For staff's age versus church programs, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 86.98%, which is greater than 5%. So, in that case we fail to reject the null hypothesis. It means that, there is no significant dependence between "staff's age" and "church programs." This means that the variables age and church programs do influence each other and are connected statistically.

For staff's age versus church compound, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 85.74%, which is greater than 5%. So we accept the null hypothesis on that characteristic. Therefore, there is no significant dependence between "staff's age" and "church compound," meaning they do not relate to one another.

Finally, for staff's age versus church staff, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 100.00%, which is greater than 5%. So we fail to reject the null hypothesis for this characteristic. Therefore, there is no significant dependence between "staff's age" and "church staff."

Table 7: Summary of the Frequencies of Responses for Four Characteristics by Staff's Age

| Characteristic | Scale | 19-35 yrs. old | 36 yrs old and above | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Church Culture** | (3) Yes | 21 | 6 | 27 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | (1) No | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | **Total** | 24 | 6 | 30 |
| **Church Program** | (3) Yes | 12 | 4 | 16 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | (1) No | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | **Total** | 16 | 4 | 20 |
| **Church Compound** | (3) Yes | 8 | 3 | 11 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | (1) No | 12 | 2 | 14 |
| | **Total** | 20 | 5 | 25 |
| **Church Staff** | (3) Yes | 20 | 5 | 25 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | (1) No | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | **Total** | 20 | 5 | 25 |

Table 8 presents the summary of the frequencies of responses for the four characteristics by staff's gender. For staff's gender versus church culture, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 24.18%. This error is greater than 5%. Therefore,

we accept the null hypothesis (that there is no significant dependence between staff's gender and the four characteristics of a child friendly church), and conclude that there is no significant dependence between "staff's gender" and "church culture." This means that the variables gender and church culture do not influence each other and are not connected in any way. By just considering the gender of the respondents, one cannot conclude that all male respondents rated church culture as yes because there are also a significant number of female respondents who rated church culture as yes.

For staff's gender versus church programs, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 90.11%, which is greater than 5%. So, in that case we accept the null hypothesis. It means that, there is no significant dependence between "staff's gender" and "church programs." This means that the variables gender and church programs do not influence each other and are connected statistically.

For staff's gender versus church compound, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 69.85%, which is greater than 5%. So we accept the null hypothesis on that characteristic. Therefore, there is no significant dependence between "staff's gender" and "church compound," meaning they do not relate to one another. One can observe that both male and female rated church compound as both a yes and not sure, indicating that one cannot really conclude that either gender selected just one specific scale in assessing church compound.

Finally, for staff gender versus church staff, the rejection error using Chi-Square probability is 100%, which is greater than 5%. So we fail to reject the null hypothesis for this characteristic. Therefore, there is no significant dependence between staff's gender and church staff. It means that there is no connection on both genders regarding their

specific perception on church staff.  One can observe that both male and female rated

church staff as yes, not sure and no, indicating that one cannot really conclude that either

gender selected just one specific scale in assessing church staff.

Table 8: Summary of the Frequencies of Responses for Four Characteristics by Staff's
Gender

| Characteristic | Scale | Female | Male | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Church Culture** | (3) Yes | 11 | 16 | 27 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| | (1) No | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | **Total** | 12 | 18 | 30 |
| Rejection error by Chi Square test = 24.18% | | | | |
| **Church Program** | (3) Yes | 6 | 10 | 16 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | (1) No | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | **Total** | 8 | 12 | 20 |
| Rejection error by Chi Square test = 90.11% | | | | |
| **Church Compound** | (3) Yes | 4 | 7 | 11 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 6 | 8 | 14 |
| | (1) No | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | **Total** | 10 | 15 | 25 |
| Rejection error by Chi Square test = 69.85% | | | | |
| **Church Staff** | (3) Yes | 10 | 15 | 25 |
| | (2) Not Sure | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | (1) No | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | **Total** | 10 | 15 | 25 |
| Rejection error by Chi Square test = 100% | | | | |

Table 9 gives the whole picture of the relationship between the categorical

variables and the four characteristics of a child friendly church. Therefore, as reflected in

table 9, the result was that *not all* of the demographic characteristics of the selected

respondents of Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar when

compared with the four characteristics of a child friendly church (which are church

culture, programs, compound and staff) had significant dependence to each categorical

variable. But just a few of these based on the frequencies of responses of the respondents

and through using Chi-Square probability had any dependence.

Table 9: Summary of all the Variables for Staff and all Four Characteristics

| | Variables | Rejection Error of the Null Hypothesis | Accept or Reject the Null Hypothesis | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Gender and Church Culture | 24.18% | Accept | No dependence |
| 2 | Gender and Church Program | 90.11% | Accept | No dependence |
| 3 | Gender and Church Compound | 69.85% | Accept | No dependence |
| 4 | Gender and Church Staff | 100.00% | Accept | No dependence |
| 5 | Age and Church Culture | 66% | Accept | No dependence |
| 6 | Age and Church Program | 87% | Accept | No dependence |
| 7 | Age and Church Compound | 96% | Accept | No dependence |
| 8 | Age and Church Staff | 100% | Accept | No dependence |

Here we summarize the dependence between the demographic characteristics of

the staff and the four characteristics of the church. Note that the results in Table 10 are

based on the 5% error of rejection, where the null hypothesis is that there is no

dependence between the demographics and the four characteristics of a child friendliness

of the church.

Table 10: Dependence between Demographic Characteristics of Staff and the
Four Characteristics

| | Demographics | |
|---|---|---|
| **Characteristics** | **Gender** | **Age** |
| Church Culture | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Program | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Compound | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Staff | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |

Since *all* four characteristics of the church are "Not Dependent" with the demographic characteristics of the respondents, we accept the second null hypothesis of this study. Based on the statistical computation, *there is no* significant dependence between the four characteristics of child friendliness and the demographic characteristics of staff, which answers sub-problem 3 of this study.

**Perceptions of the Respondents on the Characteristics of the
Child Friendliness of Reformed Evangelical Church in
Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar**

This third section of this chapter presents the individual children and staff respondents' perception, and combined children and staff respondents' perception concerning the characteristics of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar. This addresses the answers to the sub-problems four and five. The statistical analysis of the study first involves a descriptive analysis. The average for every assessment item, the average of every characteristic of Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, and their associated variances and percentages are inspected first. From this descriptive analysis, the averaged assessment is drawn for each assessment item and for each characteristic as to the following scores: no as never evident, not sure, and yes as evident.

Perceptions of the Children Respondents on the Four Characteristics

Firstly, Figure 11 is a picture of how all the respondents assessed church culture as a characteristic of a child friendly church in Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar. It is set in a percentage format. One can see that most of the children rated church culture as a yes given the average of the rating with all six

statements under church culture. This infers that Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan,

Kalaymyo, Myanmar: (a) Had a special consideration for children, b) pastor and teachers

had a plan for the children in their mind, c) gave children a chance to participate in

planning, d) helped children connect with God, e) welcomed families, and f) supported

parents in how to care for children. In Figure 11, C stands here about church culture and

the number highlights the sequence of the element from a child friendly church tool

survey data like for example C1 means question one for Church culture from the Part II

of the survey questionnaire which deals with the four characteristics of a child friendly

church. Then the number 3, 2 and 1 are children answered based on the following

questions.
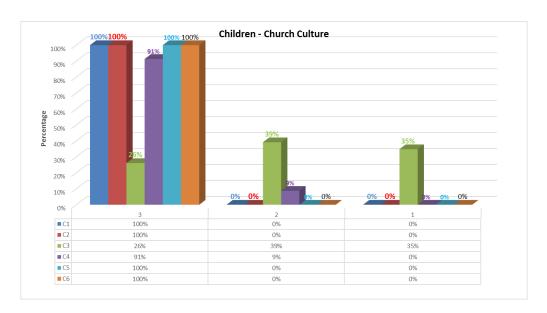


Figure 11: Children' Perceived Answers in Percentage Form for Church Culture

Table 11 presents the averaged assessment for church culture. The code C1 means

statement 1 for church culture; C2 means statement 2; C3 means statement 3, C4 means

statement 5 and C6 means statement 6. The averaged perceived assessment for the six

assessment items (C1, C2, C3, C4, C5 and C6) for "Church Culture" is shown in this table.

Table 11: Averaged Assessment of Children's Responses for Church Culture

| Church Culture | Count | Average | Assessment |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| C1 | 23 | 3.00 | Yes |
| C2 | 23 | 3.00 | Yes |
| C3 | 23 | 1.91 | Not Sure |
| C4 | 23 | 2.91 | Yes |
| C5 | 23 | 3.00 | Yes |
| C6 | 23 | 3.00 | Yes |

The assessments for C1, C2, C4, C5 and C6 is a "Yes" as the average of the children' rate are in that scale and noted that for 2.50-3.00 is a "Yes," while C3 is "Not Sure" as the average of the respondents' rate are that scale and noted that for 1.50-2.49 is "Not Sure."

Secondly is the characteristic of a child friendly church according to Viva which is Church programs. Figure 12 contains the children' perceived answer in percentage form. Please note that this figure shows the percentage form of the children' answers in each of this dimension's questions from C.P7 to C.P10 (meaning statements that refer to church program) using the scale of 3 as yes, 2 as not sure and 1 as no.
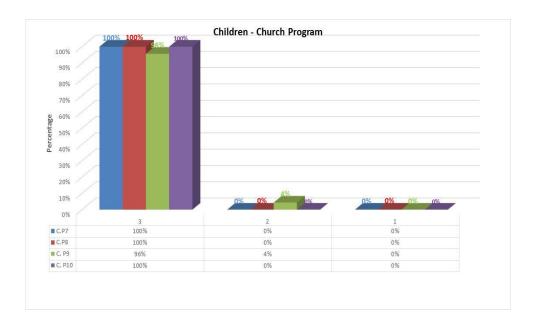
Figure 12: Children' Perceived Answers in Percentage Form for Church Program

Table 12 shows the summary of the children' perceived assessment for Church

Program from C.P7, C.P8, C.P9 and C.P10 and the 23 children rated all as a "Yes."

Table 12: Averaged Assessment of Children's Responses for Church Program

| Church Program | Count | Average | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| C.P7 | 23 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C.P8 | 23 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C. P9 | 23 | 2.9565 | Yes |
| C. P10 | 23 | 3.0000 | Yes |

Thirdly is the characteristic of a child friendly church which is church compound.

Figure 13 represents the children' perceived answer in percentage form. It offered the

percentage of respondents who answered the scale of 3 as a yes, 2 as not sure and 1 as no.

The bar which has a blue color is for the percentage in C.C11 question, maroon for

C.C12, green for C.C13, velvet for C.C14 and cyan for C.C15 wherein all of these

highlighted the status of the church compound of Reformed Evangelical Church in

Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar according to the adapted Viva tool questionnaire.
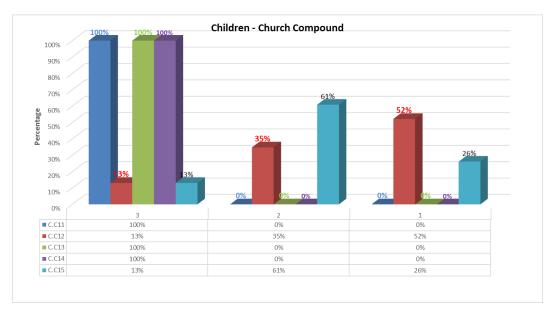


Figure 13: Children' Perceived Answers in Percentage Form for Church Compound

Table 13 presents the average and the result of the assessment for church culture

in C.C11, C.C12, C.C13, C.C14 and C.C15 in 23 respondents.  The average result is not

sure for C.C12 and C.C15, while C.C11, C.C13 and C.C14 are a yes of church

compound.

Table 13: Averaged Assessment of Children's Responses for Church Compound

| Church Compound | Count | Average | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| C.C11 | 23 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C.C12 | 23 | 1.6087 | Not Sure |
| C.C13 | 23 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C.C14 | 23 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C.C15 | 23 | 1.8696 | Not Sure |

Finally, the characteristic of a child friendly church which is according to Viva is church staff. Figure 14 will show the percentage of respondents answers in each of the questions referring to C.S16, C.S17, C.S18, C.S19 and C.S20 of the Viva toolkit that talks about church staff as the fourth characteristics of this study in the corresponding scale of 3 as yes, 2 as not sure and 1 as no.



**Children - Church Staff**

|  | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|
| C.S16 | 87% | 0% | 13% |
| C.S17 | 61% | 9% | 30% |
| C.S18 | 74% | 13% | 13% |
| C.S19 | 61% | 17% | 22% |
| C.S20 | 52% | 43% | 4% |
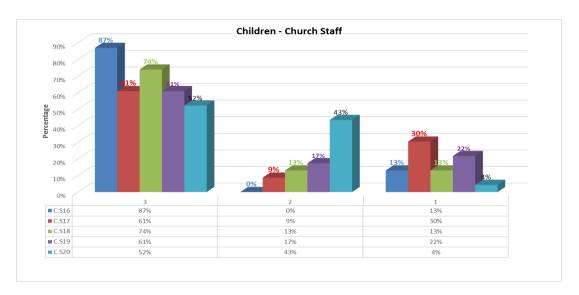
Figure 14: Children' Perceived Answers in Percentage Form for Church Staff

In table 14, only C.S16 and C.S18 are "Yes" in terms of their averaged assessment scores which all fall within 2.50 to 3.00, while C.S17, C.S19, and C.S20 are not sure in terms of the assessment score which fall into 1.50 to 2.49.

Table 14: Averaged Assessment of Children's Responses for Church Staff

| Church Staff | Count | Average | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| C.S16 | 23 | 2.7391 | Yes |
| C.S17 | 23 | 2.3043 | Not Sure |
| C.S18 | 23 | 2.6087 | Yes |
| C.S19 | 23 | 2.3913 | Not Sure |
| C.S20 | 23 | 2.4783 | Not Sure |

In this section, table 15 presents a summary of the assessment of the children regarding the four characteristics of a child friendly church. Based on this general summary, one can say that the four characteristics of a child friendly church by Viva (which are church culture, program, compound and staff) were *all evident* in Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar as assessed by the 23 children of this study.

Table 15: Over-all Averaged Assessment for the Four Characteristics by the Children Respondents

| *Characteristics* | *Average* | *Assessment* |
|---|---|---|
| Church Culture | 2.804 | Yes |
| Church Program | 2.989 | Yes |
| Church Compound | 2.496 | Yes |
| Church Staff | 2.504 | Yes |

All in all, Table 16 answers the sub-problem number four on how the children perceive the patterns of evidence on child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar.

For the treatment of the third null hypothesis, which says "The four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff are "never evident" as perceived by children in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar." T-test was used with a hypothesized average under the scale of *"never evident"*.

Table 16: Summary of All Children's Assessment with the Four Characteristics

| Characteristics of Church | Average | Hypothesized Average | Result | Rejection Error | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Church Culture** | | | | | |
| C1 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Culture" is not *never evident* |
| C2 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C3 | 1.91 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C4 | 2.91 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C5 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C6 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Program** | | | | | |
| C.P7 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Program" is not *never evident* |
| C.P8 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C. P9 | 2.96 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C. P10 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Compound** | | | | | |
| C.C11 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Compound" is not *never evident* |
| C.C12 | 1.61 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C13 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C14 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C15 | 1.87 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Staff** | | | | | |
| C.S16 | 2.74 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Staff" is not *never evident* |
| C.S17 | 2.30 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S18 | 2.61 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S19 | 2.39 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S20 | 2.48 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |

The respondents (children) rated the four characteristics of the church as "not *never evident*." Therefore, we reject the third null hypothesis of this study which says, "The four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff are "*never evident*" as perceived by children in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar."

Perceptions of the Staff Respondents on the Four Characteristics

Firstly, Figure 15 is a picture of how all the staffs assessed church culture as a characteristic of a child friendly church in Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar. It is set in a percentage format. One can see that most of the respondents rated church culture as a yes given the average of the rating with all six statements under church culture. This infers that Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar: (a) Had a special consideration for children, b) pastor and teachers had a plan for the children in their mind, c) gave children a chance to participate in planning, d) helped children connect with God, e) welcomed families, and f) supported parents in how to care for children. In Figure 16, C stands here about church culture and the number highlights the sequence of the element from a child friendly church tool survey data like for example C1 means question one for Church culture from the Part II of the survey questionnaire which deals with the four characteristics of a child friendly church. Then the number 3, 2 and 1 are staff answered based on the following questions.
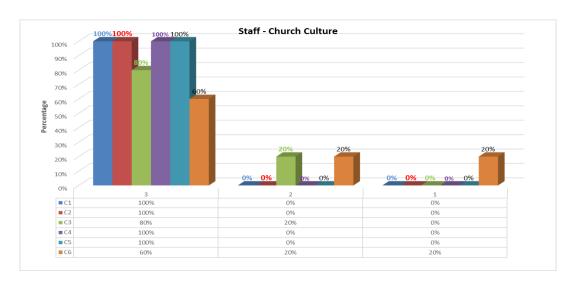


Figure 15: Staff' Perceived Answers in Percentage Form for Church Culture

Table 17 presents the averaged assessment for church culture. The code C1 means statement 1 for church culture; C2 means statement 2; C3 means statement 3, C4 means statement 5 and C6 means statement 6. The averaged perceived assessment for the six assessment items (C1, C2, C3, C4, C5 and C6) for "Church Culture" is shown in this table.

Table 17: Averaged Assessment of Staffs' Responses for Church Culture

| Church Culture | Count | Average | Assessment |
|----------------|-------|---------|------------|
| C1 | 5 | 3.00 | Yes |
| C2 | 5 | 3.00 | Yes |
| C3 | 5 | 2.80 | Yes |
| C4 | 5 | 3.00 | Yes |
| C5 | 5 | 3.00 | Yes |
| C6 | 5 | 2.40 | Not Sure |

The assessments for C1 up to C5 is a "Yes" as the average of the respondents' rate are in that scale and noted that for 2.50-3.00 is a "Yes," while C6 is "Not Sure" as the average of the respondents' rate are that scale and noted that for 1.50-2.49 is "Not Sure."

Secondly is the characteristic of a child friendly church according to Viva which is Church programs. Figure 18 contains the staff' perceived answer in percentage form. Please note that this figure shows the percentage form of the respondents' answers in each of this dimension's questions from C.P7 to C.P10 (meaning statements that refer to church program) using the scale of 3 as yes, 2 as not sure and 1 as no.
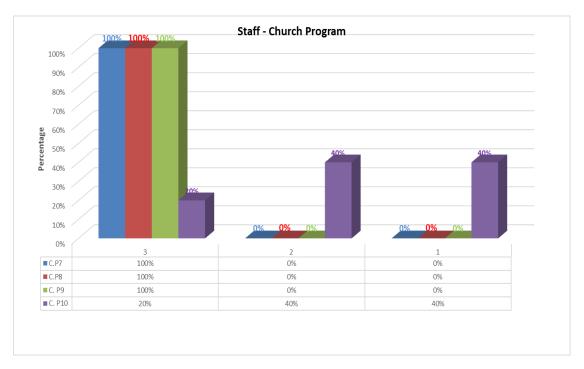
Figure 16: Staff' Perceived Answers in Percentage Form for Church Program

Table 18 shows the summary of the staff' perceived assessment for Church

Program from C.P7, C.P8, C.P9 and C.P10 wherein C.P7, C.P8 and C.P9 got the

highest average per items here in Church Program while C.P10 got the lowest one among

5 respondents.

Table 18: Averaged Assessment of Staffs' Responses for Church Program

| Church Program | Count | Average | Assessment |
|----------------|-------|---------|------------|
| C.P7 | 5 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C.P8 | 5 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C. P9 | 5 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C. P10 | 5 | 1.8000 | Not Sure |

Thirdly is the characteristic of a child friendly church which is church compound.

Figure 17 represents the respondents' perceived answer in percentage form. It offered the

percentage of respondents who answered the scale of 3 as a yes, 2 as not sure and 1 as no.

The bar which has a blue color is for the percentage in C.C11 question, maroon for

C.C12, green for C.C13, velvet for C.C14 and cyan for C.C15 wherein all of these

highlighted the status of the church compound of Reformed Evangelical Church in

Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar according to the adapted Viva tool questionnaire.



| | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|
| C.C11 | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| C.C12 | 0% | 0% | 100% |
| C.C13 | 20% | 0% | 80% |
| C.C14 | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| C.C15 | 0% | 0% | 100% |
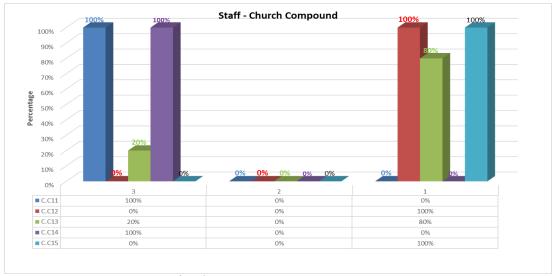
Figure 17: Staff' Perceived Answers in Percentage Form for Church Compound

Table 19 presents the average and the result of the assessment for church culture

in C.C11, C.C12, C.C13, C.C14 and C.C15 in 5 respondents.  The average result is "Yes"

for C.C11 and C.C14, while C.C12, C.C13 and C.C15 are "No" for church compound.

Table 19: Averaged Assessment of Staffs' Responses for Church Compound

| Church Compound | Count | Average | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| C.C11 | 5 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C.C12 | 5 | 1.0000 | No |
| C.C13 | 5 | 1.4000 | No |
| C.C14 | 5 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C.C15 | 5 | 1.0000 | No |

Finally, the characteristic of a child friendly church which is according to Viva is church staff. Figure 18 will show the percentage of respondents answers in each of the questions referring to C.S16, C.S17, C.S18, C.S19 and C.S20 of the Viva toolkit that talks about church staff as the fourth characteristics of this study in the corresponding scale of 3 as yes, 2 as not sure and 1 as no.



Figure 18: Respondents' Perceived Answers in Percentage Form for Church Staff

In table 20, C.S16 up to C.S20 is "Yes", in terms of their averaged assessment scores which all fall within 2.50 to 3.00.

Table 20: Averaged Assessment of Staff Responses for Church Staff

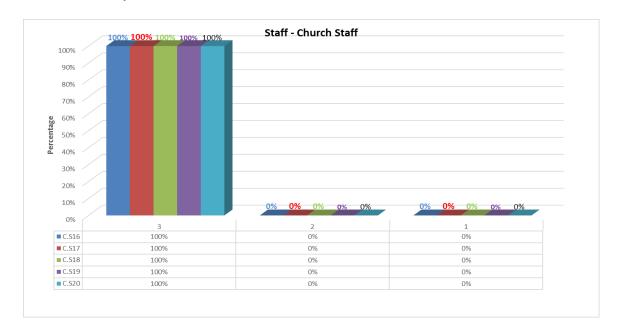| Church Staff | Count | Average | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| C.S16 | 5 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C.S17 | 5 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C.S18 | 5 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C.S19 | 5 | 3.0000 | Yes |
| C.S20 | 5 | 3.0000 | Yes |

In this section, table 21 presents a summary of the assessment of the respondents regarding the four characteristics of a child friendly church. Based on this general summary, one can say that the four characteristics of a child friendly church by Viva (which are church culture, program, compound and staff) were *not all evident* in Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar as assessed by the 5 respondents, which are the staff, of this study.

Table 21: Over-all Averaged Assessment for the Four Characteristics by Staff Respondents

| Characteristics | Average | Assessment |
|---|---|---|
| Church Culture | 2.87 | Yes |
| Church Program | 2.70 | Yes |
| Church Compound | 1.88 | Unsure |
| Church Staff | 3.00 | Yes |

All in all, Table 22 answers the sub-problem number five on how the staffs perceive the patterns of evidence on child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar.

For the treatment of the fourth null hypothesis, which says "The four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff are "never evident" as perceived by staffs in the Reformed

Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar." T-test was used with a hypothesized

average under the scale of *"never evident."* Table 22 shows the answer for fourth null

hypothesis. This shows that all four characteristics are not never evident. Therefore, we

reject the fourth null hypothesis.

Table 22: Summary of All Staffs' Assessment with the Four Characteristics

| Characteristics of Church | Average | Hypothesized Average | Result | Rejection Error | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Church Culture** | | | | | |
| C1 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Culture" is not *never evident* |
| C2 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C3 | 2.80 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C4 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C5 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C6 | 2.40 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Program** | | | | | |
| C.P7 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Program" is not *never evident* |
| C.P8 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C. P9 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C. P10 | 1.80 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Compound** | | | | | |
| C.C11 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Compound" is not *never evident* |
| C.C12 | 1.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C13 | 1.40 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C14 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C15 | 1.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Staff** | | | | | |
| C.S16 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Staff" is not *never evident* |
| C.S17 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S18 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S19 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S20 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |

The respondents (staff) rated the four characteristics of the church as "not *never*

*evident*." Therefore, we reject the fourth null hypothesis of this study which says, "The

four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church programs,

church compound, and church staff are "never evident" as perceived by staff in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar."

Based on the finding of this study, the church culture considered for children and the church knew that children are a reward from God (Psalm. 127:3, NIV) and God wants the church to care very much about the children. The church gave children a chance to participate in planning the programs and the church showed love for children through respect, honour, and acceptance and by welcoming them into its fellowship. When children feel loved and accepted and by the people surrounded by them, it is likely that they will not find it hard to experience the love of God in their personal lives.

The church program has evident in Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar as we see in the findings. The church had worship service programs where everyone can participate and children got a chance to participate in outreach programs. The researcher has mentioned in chapter (2) that the church should have a program for evangelizing not only to the children from the church but also from different areas. In this way, the church can provide a moment for the children to interact with children from other churches, as the Viva toolkit has suggested in the questionnaire.

According to the findings, Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar needs to improve the church compound the most. As Viva toolkit has mentioned the church and its surrounding should be always clean and the church should have more space where children can be safe in order to offer chances for children to engage in outdoor play and information recreation for their holistic growth (Viva 2013, n.p). Moreover, Dan Brewster states that a church should be a place where children feel not only safe but also meets the points of their development with their needs for taking a

step toward with Jesus Christ and for building their right relationship with God. Brewster also has a belief that God will provide the resources if the church is really willing to meet the needs of the children (Brewster 2011, 98-102). In order to be a place where children build their relationship with God, the church itself needs to have a relationship with God.

The church staff members (teachers, workers and pastors) should have a willing heart to help the children in building the foundation of their faith as early as possible. The staff members in Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar really believe in the children and they really invest to the lives of the children. The church sends teachers to attend the training for learning how to teach the children. This kind of training takes at least three months to nine months. When they come back from the training, they get to involve in the church as a full time minister. Barna has stated that the staff members are the ones who have to teach the congregations about the importance of children and motivate parents to take their responsibilities seriously to get involved by working with the kids using their talents and spiritual gifts (Barna 2003, 104-05).

This chapter discussed the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data. The next chapter provides the summary, findings, conclusion, and recommendations of this current study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The final chapter presents the summary, findings, conclusions, and

recommendations for the current study. The summary begins with the problem of the

study and its background, and the four characteristics of a child friendly church. The staff

members in this study refer to the teachers, workers and pastor of Reformed Evangelical

Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar. The questionnaire achieved valuable information

concerning the respondents 'demographic characteristics, and their personal perceptions

of Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar according to the areas which

covered the assessment wherein to the limited four characteristics that Brewster included

in his framework: (a) church culture; (b) church program; (c) church compound; and (d)

church staff. The finding identified important aspects of the research based on the

statistical results of the data gathered. The conclusions included a number of

interpretations based on the findings of the study. Finally, the recommendations

identified a number of suggestions for Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo,

Myanmar, and recommendations for further study.

**Summary**

This current study explored what are the perceptions of the respondents from the

Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar towards child friendliness in

terms of church culture, programs, compound, and staff through knowing the

demographic characteristics of the selected respondents of Reformed Evangelical Church

in Kalaymyo, Myanmar in terms of gender and age. Then followed by how the

respondents assess the characteristics of the church in terms of church culture, program,

compound and staff. Lastly, is to offer recommendations for the characteristic

effectiveness of the church in terms of church culture, program, compound and staff.

Based on assessment of the respondents regarding the four characteristics of a child

friendly church according to Dan Brewster which are church culture, program, compound

and staff were *not* never evident in Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo,

Myanmar as assessed by 28 respondents of this study wherein rejected the null

hypothesis of the study.

This study was limited only to Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan,

Kalaymyo, Myanmar. This study utilized two research-gathering instruments. The first is

drawing interview and the second is the questionnaire. For the interview, the respondents

were the five children who are 8 to 12 years old. In order to concentrate more on the

content of the interview, the data that the assistant researcher gathered from these

interviews was audio recorded with the permission of the respondents and their parents.

The second research-gathering instrument that I used was the questionnaire. I adapted

this from Viva Toolkit (Viva 2013, 1-5). The respondents who answered the

questionnaire were limited to the children and staff who are present during the conduct of

the field research. They were the following: (1) 23 children who are 13 to 18 years old.

The rationale for choosing for this age group is beginning to understand their worlds in a

logical fashion and could be capable of completing the survey; (2) and 5 staff members.

The respondents who participated in the drawing activities were limited to the children who are eight to twelve years-old-age. All the respondents have participated in the church at least one year, so that they have an idea on the current situation of the church especially in relation to the work with children. All in all, there were 33 respondents. I communicated with the pastor and upon his permission, and administered the questionnaire last March 19, 2017. It should be noted that in the statistical treatment of data, there are only 28 respondents since the 5 respondents were younger children and they did not fill out the questionnaire but instead they participated in the drawing activity.

This study employed descriptive research with a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches in data gathering. It used a survey method with questionnaire tabulations which yielded the quantitative aspect of the study and interview methods reflecting the qualitative approach to the research.

## Findings

The following sums up the important findings that were gathered from the study. The first discussion is on the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

a.  Age: 23 respondents are aged 13 to 18 (82%), 4 respondents are aged 19 to 36 (14%) and one respondents is above 36 years old (4%);

b.  Gender: 15 males or 54% of the population, and 13 females or 46% of the population; and

The second part of the discussion is the drawing analysis. Table 2 in chapter IV summarizes the analysis based on the four characteristics of child friendly church. Younger children were asked what comes first in your mind when you hear the word, "church," and the following is a summary of their responses. Four out of five children

said that the church is composed of people (part of church culture, how a church looks and feels like), a place where God is staying, and a place where people come to worship God. Regarding church program, four of five children mentioned playing under the tree that is located near the church, one mentioned about prayer with grandmother as part of the activity in the church, as well as learning new song. Concerning the church compound, four out of five children indicated the tree as a favorite place in the church vicinity. Finally, when asked about how they describe the staff or the teachers in the church, all respondents indicate that they "do not know how to draw church staff." This could be due to the children's inadequacy to draw human figures.

The third part of the discussion on the findings is the answer to the sub-problems and the treatment of null hypotheses one to three. Firstly, Table 6 answered sub-problem two which says, "There are significant differences in children's perceptions on child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar, based on the following demographic characteristics in terms of age and gender."

Since *not* all four characteristics of the church have "no significant dependence" with the demographic characteristics of the respondents, we reject the first null hypothesis of this study. Based on the statistical computation, *there is* significant dependence between the four characteristics of child friendliness and the demographic characteristics

Table 6: Dependence between Demographic Characteristics of Children and the Four
Characteristics

| | Demographics | |
|---|---|---|
| **Characteristics** | **Gender** | **Age** |
| Church Culture | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Program | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Compound | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Staff | Dependent | Not Dependent |

Table 10 has an answer for sub-problem three of this study. Since *all* four

characteristics of the church have "Not Dependent" with the demographic characteristics

of the respondents, we accept the second null hypothesis of this study. Based on the

statistical computation, *there is no* significant dependence between the four

characteristics of child friendliness and the demographic characteristics of staff, which

answers sub-problem 3 of this study.

Table 10: Dependence between Demographic Characteristics of Staff and the Four
Characteristics

| | Demographics | |
|---|---|---|
| **Characteristics** | **Gender** | **Age** |
| Church Culture | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Program | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Compound | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |
| Church Staff | Not Dependent | Not Dependent |

Table 16 answers the sub-problem number four on how the children perceive the

patterns of evidence on child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan,

Kalaymyo, Myanmar. The respondents (children) rated the four characteristics of the

church as "not *never evident*." Therefore, we reject the third null hypothesis of this study

which says, "The four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture,

church programs, church compound, and church staff are "*never evident*" as perceived by children in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar.

Table 16: Summary of All Children's Assessment with the Four Characteristics

| Characteristics of Church | Average | Hypothesized Average | Result | Rejection Error | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Church Culture** | | | | | |
| C1 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Culture" is not *never evident* |
| C2 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C3 | 1.91 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C4 | 2.91 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C5 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C6 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Program** | | | | | |
| C.P7 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Program" is not *never evident* |
| C.P8 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C. P9 | 2.96 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C. P10 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Compound** | | | | | |
| C.C11 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Compound" is not *never evident* |
| C.C12 | 1.61 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C13 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C14 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C15 | 1.87 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Staff** | | | | | |
| C.S16 | 2.74 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Staff" is not *never evident* |
| C.S17 | 2.30 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S18 | 2.61 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S19 | 2.39 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S20 | 2.48 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |

Finally, the fourth part of the discussion on findings is the answers of sub-problems 5 and 6; and the treatment of null hypotheses four and five.

All in all, Table 22 presents the overall assessment of the staff which answers sub-problem five on how the staffs perceive the patterns of evidence on child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar.

For the treatment of the fourth null hypothesis, which says "The four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff are "never evident" as perceived by staffs in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar." The respondents (staff) rated the four characteristics of the church as "not *never evident*." Therefore, we reject the fourth null hypothesis.

Table 22: Summary of All Staffs' Assessment with the Four Characteristics

| Characteristics of Church | Average | Hypothesized Average | Result | Rejection Error | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Church Culture** | | | | | |
| C1 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Culture" is not *never evident* |
| C2 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C3 | 2.80 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C4 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C5 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C6 | 2.40 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Program** | | | | | |
| C.P7 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Program" is not *never evident* |
| C.P8 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C. P9 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C. P10 | 1.80 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Compound** | | | | | |
| C.C11 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Compound" is not *never evident* |
| C.C12 | 1.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C13 | 1.40 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C14 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.C15 | 1.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| **Church Staff** | | | | | |
| C.S16 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | "Church Staff" is not *never evident* |
| C.S17 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S18 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S19 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |
| C.S20 | 3.00 | 1.00, 1.20 | Reject | 0.00% | |

**Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:

First, the respondents represented children and staff of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo. There were 33 respondents which include the younger children who are between eight-to-12 years of age (for the drawing activity); older children aged 13 to 18, and church staff (for the questionnaire). Based on the drawings of the younger children, the following conclusions are made: (1) Regarding church culture, children said that the church is composed of people; (2) on church program, playing under the tree, prayer, learning new songs; (3) on church compound, tree is the favorite place in the church; and (4) children found it hard to draw church staff, probably due to their inability to draw human figures.

Based on the findings, we reject the first null hypothesis of this study. Table 6 in Chapter IV shows the gender of the children has significant dependence of the perception of the children. On the other hand, age does not have significant relationship on the perception of the children on a child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar, in terms of church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff.

The study shows that there is no significant relationship between the age of the staff and their perceptions of a child friendliness. In the same way, the demographic characteristic in terms of gender of the staff does not have significant dependence of their perception on a child friendliness of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar, in terms of church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff. Thus, we accept the second null hypothesis of this study.

The third null hypothesis was rejected based on the statistic computation. Therefore, the four characteristics of child friendliness which are church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff are "not never evident," meaning, it is "evident," as perceived by children in the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar. One can notify that the church has a church culture which welcomes the children; the church has programs where the children can participate and which make them to enjoy attending the Sunday-schools; the church compound is safe for the children to play around and the church staff members are also friendly enough to the children. In the same way, the staff perceived all the four characteristics of a child friendliness which are church culture, church programs, church compound, and church staff are "not never evident," meaning, "evident." Thus, we accept the fourth null hypothesis.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are identified for the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar as well as recommendations for further studies.

Recommendations to Reformed Evangelical Church
in Kalaymyo, Myanmar

Based on the findings of the study, the respondents rated church culture as "Yes," the highest assessment among the four characteristics. This could indicate that Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar could make stronger its church culture. Based on the review of related literature and studies, the drawings of the children, as well as the statistical analysis, the following could be considered by the church to enhance its culture to make it more child friendly:

a. Show a special consideration not only to the children but also to the parents and grandparents since there were children who indicated that family is part of the members of the church;

b. Allow children to participate in church planning on ways that they feel welcomed;

c. Provide more opportunities for the children to connect with God through the Bible and personal experiences;

d. Explore the possibility of working together with the parents in order to care for their children to the church;

e. Plan fellowship program for parents and the teachers in order for them to collaborate how to train the children

f. Cooperate with the family in nurturing the children's spirituality; and

g. Study the children's perception of the church in order to develop the needs of the church.

Based on the study, church program was also rated as "Yes." In this light the following recommendations are identified:

a. Plan a service program for the children as the same time with the adult service; in order to help the parents' busy schedules; instead of sending their children to the church in the morning, parents can bring their children with them;

b. Plan a monthly fellowship with the children and teachers to learn more about each other and for building a relationship;

c. Prepare a sermon for children in the service program; which children can easily understand;

d. Use visual aids and lesson plans which are appropriated for each age group in the Sunday-school;

e. Allow children to join the outreach programs of the church;

f. Nurture the spiritual development of the parents for the sake of the children;

g. Provide children with opportunities to exercise personal choice;

h. Emphasize on the celebration for children (Christmas, Easter, Sunday School graduations, birthdays, children day) where children sing, showcase their talents, and play; and

i. Invite experts to train the staff for nurturing the spiritual development of the children.

Based on the study, church compound was rated as "Not Sure" by the respondents.

In this light, the following are some considerations for the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar regarding church compound:

a. Based on the drawing interview, the children love to play under the tree. The church should acknowledge about it and plan more trees in the compound.

b. Have a sufficient space and more facilities (like new building, classrooms for different age groups, good library, clean comfort rooms, and staff room);

c. Have a space particularly for children to play;

d. Make sure the children are safe in the compound;

e. Provide attractive and colorful facilities to the children;

f. Make the places warm, attractive and welcoming to the children;

g. Put a glass window in the classroom, in order for others to see inside of the Bible classrooms

Finally, staff is the characteristic that was rated "Yes" by the respondents. In this light, the following are recommendations that were identified:

a. Make sure a child protection policy is in place and is being monitored;

b. Make sure the staff express their calling for the children ministry;

c. Train the teachers intentionally on child protection and nurture;

d. Be aware that the teachers know what the doctrine of the church is, so that, they can apply in their teaching; and

e. For the pastor and teachers, visit regularly the house of church members to know the specific needs of children and families.

## Recommendations for Further Studies

As I engaged in this research, I realized that there is still a need for further studies on the following topics:

a. A qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods on the perception of a child friendly church among various local churches in the whole Kalaymyo Area to address the weakness and strength of the local churches;

b. A qualitative study on the impact of the Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar on children's spirituality;

c. An evaluation on the holistic ministries of children in Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar based on its vision, mission, and goals;

d. A project thesis on curriculum dedicated to enhancing a child friendliness to the children;

e.  A longitudinal study on the impact of holistic ministry of the local church to the children with emphasis on the child friendliness in terms of church culture, church program, church compound, and church staff;

f.  Since Myanmar people in general do not want to offend others by sharing some negative comments on researcher's questions, a qualitative research involving methodologies like participant observation and other unobtrusive research-gathering procedures could be conducted on how children, parents, and church staff perceive the holistic ministry of the local church;

g.  An action research with topics that revolve on improving the quality of teaching methodology of church staff on children and young people. This action research could include preliminary data gathering on the present status of the church, then identifying interventions like trainings on child friendly churches, teaching design, and other similar topics, and then implementing these for church improvement;

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS 13 TO 18 YEARS OLD
AND THE CHURCH STAFF

Dear Respondent,
        Thank you for your willingness to answer this questionnaire. This is to identify your perception on the child friendliness of your church. Kindly provide the needed information at the spaces provided according to your perception.

**PART I.  About you:**
   1.  What is your age?
        _____ 13-18 years old        _____ 19 -35 years old        _____ 36 and above
   2.  What is your Gender?        _____ Male                        _____ Female

**PART 2.  About your perception.**
        Please respond to each of the following statements using the scale provided. PUT A CHECK ON YOUR ANSWER.

| Category | Interpretation |
|---|---|
| Yes (3) | You think that this item can be found in your church |
| Not sure (2) | You think this item is not present in your church |
| No (1) | You are not sure whether or not this item is present in your church |

**Church Culture**

| Church culture | Yes (3) | Not Sure (2) | No (1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| My church has a special consideration for children. | | | |
| My pastor and teachers plan with children in their mind | | | |
| My church gives children a chance to participate in planning. | | | |
| My church helps children connect with God. | | | |
| My church welcomes families. | | | |
| My church supports parents in how to care for children. | | | |

**Church Program**

| Church Program | Yes (3) | Not Sure (2) | No (1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| My church has worship service programs where everyone participates in. | | | |
| My church' programs help children come close to God. | | | |
| Children participate in outreach programs. | | | |
| Children in the church learn to interact with children from other churches | | | |

**Church Compound**

| Church Compound | Yes (3) | Not Sure (2) | No (1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| My church and its surroundings are always clean. | | | |
| My church has first aid box. | | | |
| The church has fire extinguisher and other emergency tools in case of fire or other calamities. | | | |
| My church has contact numbers of hospital, fire brigade and police station for quick reporting and response | | | |
| My church has a special place for babies. | | | |

**Church Staff**

| Church Staff | Yes (3) | Not Sure (2) | No (1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| The staff in my church believes that the Bible teaches that children are important. | | | |
| Children's workers are trained how to teach. | | | |
| The staff in my church intentionally cares for children. | | | |
| All staff in my church signed the child protection policy. | | | |
| All staff are trained on how to protect children in all activities. | | | |

Thank you so very much!
This questionnaire is adapted from Viva Network. 2013. "Child Friendly Churches."
Oxford: Viva Network.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS 13 TO 18 YEARS OLD
AND THE CHURCH STAFF
(MIZO VERSION)

Dear _____
A hnuia zawhna te chhang tura I in hmuam avangin I chung ah ka lawm tak zet a ni. He zawhna te hi I kohhran (biakin) in a naupang te tana a hna thawh dan, nangma hmuh dan min hrilh hriatna tur a ni. He zawhna kal tlang hian kan local tin ten naupang tan kan inhawn zia leh kohhran ten an mahni an hmangaih a ni tih naupang ten an hriat zual zel theihna atan a buatsaih a ni. A hnuaia zawhna te hi khawngaihin I hmuh dan te nena in milin min chhan sak dawn a nia.

**PART I. Nangma Chungchang:**

1.  Kum eng zat nge I nih?
    ____ Kum 13-18              ____ Kum 19-35       ____      Kum      36 Chunglam

2.  Mipa nge I nih, Hmeichhia?

    ____ Mipa                    ____ Hmeichhia

**PART 2. I hmuh dan (or) hlir dan**

A hnuaia zawhna te hi I hmuh dan leh hlir dana zira dik I tih tih kha I THAI mai dawn a nia.

| Chhanna | A Sawi Duh Chhan |
|---|---|
| Dik | In biakin ah he zawhnaa a thil sawi hi hmuh tur a awm a ni |
| Ka Chiang lo | In biakin ah he zawhnaa a thil sawi hi hmuh tur a awm lo a ni |
| Dik Lo | In biakin ah he zawhnaa a thil sawi hi a awm leh awm loh I hre chiang lo a ni. |

**Kohhran Kal Phung**

| Kohhran Kal Phung | Dik (3) | Ka Chiang Lo (2) | Dik Lo (1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kohhran hian naupangte hi a ngai pawimawh hle a ni. | | | |
| Kan Pastor leh zirtirtuten naupangte tan an rilru ah ruahmanna an nei a ni. | | | |
| Kohhran thil rua hmanna ah naupangte tel phal a ni. | | | |
| Kohhran hian naupangte Pathian an hnaih theihna atan a tanpui a ni. | | | |
| Kohhran in a mi leh sa te a welcome a ni. | | | |
| Kohhran in nu leh pa te fanau enkawl dan te zirtirin, hma a lak pui a ni. | | | |

**Kohhran Program**

| Kohhran Program | Dik (3) | Ka Chiang Lo (2) | Dik Lo (1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kohhran in mitin te an tel theihna atan inkhawm program a buatsaih a ni. | | | |
| Kohhran program kal tlang hian naupangten Pathian an hnaih phah a ni. | | | |
| Kohhran rawngbawlna ah naupangte an in hmang thei a ni. | | | |
| Kohhrana naupangten kohhran danga naupang te nen in kawmnate an nei a ni. | | | |

**Biakin Hungchhung**

| Biakin Hungchhung | Dik (3) | Ka Chiang Lo (2) | Dik Lo (1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Biakin leh a chheh vel te chu a thianghlim reng a ni. | | | |
| Biakin ah damdawi dah khawmna bur a awm a ni. | | | |
| Biakin ah kangmei thelhna leh rik rum thil thu a hman tur bungrua te neih a ni. | | | |
| Biakin ah rik rum thil a awm huna koh atan damdawiin, mi tat leh police office phawn number te neih vek a ni. | | | |
| Biakin ah nausen te tan hmun a hranpaa buatsaih a ni. | | | |

**Kohhran Thawk Tute**

| Kohhran Thawk Tute | Dik (3) | Ka Chiang Lo (2) | Dik Lo (1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Thawktute hian naupangte an pawimawh zia kan Bible in min zirtir a ni tih kan pawm a ni. | | | |
| Naupang rawngbawlnaa in hmang zawng zawng te chu naupang te engtia zirtir tur nge an ni tih training pek hmasat phawt kan ni. | | | |
| Thawktu zawng zawng te chuan naupangte chu kan ngai pawimawhin, kan ngaihsak tak meuh a ni. | | | |
| Thawktute in naupang enkawlna dan kan hria in, kan zawm ngei ang tih in tiam kamna neih a ni. | | | |
| Thawktu te zawng zawng chu kawng engkima naupang veng him dan zirtir vek kan ni. | | | |

I chungah ka lawm tak zet a ni.
He zawhnaa te hi Viva Network. 2013. "Child Friendly Churches." Oxford: Viva Network ata hman a ni.

APPENDIX B
LETTER TO THE PASTOR OF REFORMED EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN
KALAYMYO AREA, MYANMAR

March 2017

REV. LAL THANGA MAWIA
H.No.10/80, Pa Daung Dyain Street, Kalaymyo, Sagaing Region, Myanmar

Dear Pastor,

My name is Lal Rin Sangi and I am currently a student at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) in the Philippines. As a part of fulfilling the requirements of my Master of Arts in Religious Education with concentration in Holistic Child Development, I would like to conduct a research on the topic, "Perceptions on the Child Friendliness of Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar: Implications for the Holistic Ministry with Children in the Local Church." The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions of the children (eight to 18 years old) and staff of the church on child friendliness so that the church can improve in such a way that the children will experience a positive environment that is needed for holistic growth. I am attaching the questionnaire in Mizo version so you have an idea on the questions therein.

With reference to the statement mentioned above, may I request your kind permission to conduct a research in the church, Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar? May I also ask you to allow my sister to do a pre-test with at least two children and one staff probably on March 26, 2017. If it is fine with you, I will be in Skype while doing this pilot test for my questionnaire.

The process of research would be in the form of data collection through a questionnaire, which will be provided to the children and staff in your church. The criteria for children selection will be based on their age which would be between eight and eighteen years. The norm of staff selection would be based on their tenure of service which would be at least one year of officially serving in the church.

After your approval is granted, I would officially write a letter to the parents for their permission to allow their children to be my respondents and explain the purpose of the study in order for them to understand the benefit of my research. I will also send a letter of permission with an explanation of the purpose of my research to the staff.

Let me also assure you that the data of this study will remain absolutely confidential and will be used for educational purposes only.

I would greatly appreciate your assistance by encouraging the staff and the children to participate in this research.

Thank you very much and I look forward to receiving a positive response.

May God bless you.

Sincerely,

Lal Rin Sangi

(TRANSLATION OF LETTER TO THE PASTOR OF REFORMED EVANGELICAL
CHURCH IN KALAYMYO AREA, MYANMAR)
REFORMED EVANGICAL CHURCH PASTOR HNENA LEHKHA THAWN

March 2017

REV. LAL THANGA MAWIA
H.No.10/80, Pa Daung Dyain Street, Kalaymyo, Sagaing Region, Myanmar

Dear Pastor,

Ka hming chu Lal Rin Sangi a ni a, Philippines rama awm Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) ah Master of Arts in Religious Education zir mek ka ni. Ka major hi Holistic Child Development a ni a, ka zirna ka zawh fel theihna atan Reformed Evangelical Church hian naupang rawngbawlna kawngah engtiang in nge hma a lak tih leh kohhran hian naupang te hi a ngai pawimawh tawk em tih thupui kal tlanga chhuichiangna neih tum a ni. He chhuichiangna kal tlang hian naupangte taksa, rilru leh thlarau lama hmasawnna an neih theih ngeina atan kohhrana in siam that ngaihna te leh mamawh te chu hmuh chhuah ngei beisei a ni a, chutiang thil hmuh chhuah kal tlang te chuan kohhran in naupang rawngbawlna hmalakna tamtak a neih theih zelna atan a ni.

A chunga kan sawi ang khan, Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar ah khawngaihin chhuichiangna program nei turin min phal sak thei a ngem?

He chhuichianna hi zawhna leh chhanna kal tlanga buatsaih a ni a, in kohhrana lawi naupang leh thawktuten an chhang tur a ni. Naupang te chu kum riat atang kum sawm pariat an nih a ngai a, chutiang bawkin thawktute chu a ni lo ber ah kum hnih chhung naupang nena rawngbawlna an nei tur a ni.

Phalna min pe a ni chuan, naupang te nu leh pa te hnen ah an fate ten he zawhna leh chhanna hi chang phal an nih theihna atan phalna dilna lehkha thawn turin ka in buatsaih bawk a ni. Phalna dilna mai nilovin he chhuichianna in a, a thil tum ram te pawh hrilhfiahnate telh a ni bawk ang.

Zawhna leh chhang tute te chuan an hming tih lan a ni dawn lova, thu lak khawm zawng zawngte pawh chu he chhuichianna atan chauha hman tur te an ni. Chuvangin naupang leh thawhktute tan engmah buaina awm thei lo ni a hriat a ni.

Naupang leh thawktute chu he chhuichiannaa zawhna leh chhanna te chu min lo tih sak theih ngeina atan fuihna min lo neih sak theih ngei ka beisei.

I hnen ata chhanna duhawm tak chu ka lo thlir reng e.

Lalpa'n malsawm zel che rawh se. Ka lawm e.

Zah ngaihna nen,

Lal Rin Sangi

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO THE PARENTS OF THE RESPONDENTS
TO ALLOW THEIR CHILD TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONNAIRE

MR. AND MRS. _____

H.No.10/80, Pa Daung Dyain Street, Kalaymyo, Sagaing Region, Myanmar

To the Parent or Guardian,

My name is Lal Rin Sangi and I am currently a student at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) in the Philippines. As a part of fulfilling the requirements of my Master of Arts in Religious Education with concentration in Holistic Child Development, I would like to conduct a research on the topic, "Perceptions on the Child Friendliness of Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar: Implications for the Holistic Ministry with Children in the Local Church." The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions of the children (eight to 18 years old) and staff of the church on child friendliness so that the church can improve in such a way that the children will experience a positive environment that is needed for holistic growth. I am attaching the questionnaire in Mizo version so you have an idea on the questions therein.

In this light, I am requesting your permission to conduct a survey with your children. The name of your child will not be mentioned in order to ensure the confidentiality of his or her responses. All of the collected data will be used for educational purposes only.

I would greatly appreciate your approval to conduct this study. Thank you.

With thanks,


Lal Rin Sangi

_____



Please sign below if you are willing to allow your son/daughter to answer the questionnaire in this study.

Signature: _____
Printed Name: _____
Date: _____

(TRANSLATION OF LETTER TO THE PARENTS OF THE RESPONDENTS
TO ALLOW THEIR CHILD TO ANWER THE QUESTIONNAIRE)
THLAN CHHUAH NAUPANG NU LEH PA TE HNENA LEHKHA THAWN
(PHALNA DILNA)

H.No.10/80, Pa Daung Dyain Street, Kalaymyo, Sagaing Region, Myanmar

Nu leh Pa te,

Ka hming chu Lal Rin Sangi a ni a, Philippines rama awm Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) ah Master of Arts in Religious Education zir mek ka ni. Ka major hi Holistic Child Development a ni a, ka zirna ka zawh fel theihna atan Reformed Evangelical Church hian naupang rawngbawlna kawngah engtiang in nge hma a lak tih leh kohhran hian naupang te hi a ngai pawimawh tawk em tih thupui kal tlanga chhuichiangna neih tum a ni. He chhuichiangna kal tlang hian naupangte taksa, rilru leh thlarau lama hmasawnna an neih theih ngeina atan kohhrana in siam that ngaihna te leh mamawh te chu hmuh chhuah ngei beisei a ni a, chutiang thil hmuh chhuah kal tlang te chuan kohhran in naupang rawngbawlna hmalakna tamtak a neih theih zelna atan a ni.

He chhuichiangna ka neih theihna atan, I fate hi zawhna leh chhanna min neih sak thei turin I phalna ka rawn dil che a ni. I fate hming chu ziah lan a ni dawn lo a, a chhanna zawng zawngte pawh chu he zirna atan chauha hman an ni ang.

Phalna duhawm tak min pek dawn avangin ka lawm e.

Lawm thu tam tak nen,


Lal Rin Sangi


I fate he chhuichiannaa tel rem I tih a ni chuan khawngiah a hnuaiah hian I hming leh signature min ziah sak dawn a ni.

Signature: _____
Hming: _____
Date: _____

APPENDIX D

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION BELOW 18 YEARS

My child is invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Lal Rin Sangi, who is working on Master of Arts in Religious Education, major in Holistic Child Development, at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS), Philippines.

I have read the thesis description of Lal Rin Sangi and had the opportunity to be asked and give answers to the given questions regarding the research.

I am also allowing the researcher to use the data that she may gather from my child in her studies provided that she will promise to keep the data confidentially.


_____
Parent / Legal Guardian Signature


_____
Date

(TRANSLATION OF PARENTAL CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATIONS BELOW 18 YEARS)

KUM 18 AIA NAUPANG TE CHHUICHIANNAA TEL TURA REM TIHNA LEHKHA

Ka fa hi Lal Rin Sangi, Master of Arts in Religious Education (Holistic Child Development) zirlai mekina a buatsaih he chhuichianna ah hian zawhna leh chhannate nei tura sawm a ni tih ka hria a ni.

Lal Rin Sangi'n a buatsaih zawhna leh chhanna te, he chhuichiangna a buatsaih chhan te leh zawhna ka neih zawng zawng te chu hrilh fiah ka ni a, ka hre chiang a ni.

Zawhna leh chhanna te hi he zirna atan chauha hman tur a ni tih pawh ka hre thiam e. Chutiang bawkin, ka fa hi he chhuichiannaa tel turin rem ka tih puiin, phalna ka pe a ni.


_____

Nu leh Pa Signature


_____

Date

APPENDIX E

LETTER TO THE SELECTED STAFF OF REFORMED EVANGELICAL CHURCH

March 2017

Children's Ministry Staff of Reformed Evangelical Church
Address: H.No.10/80, Pa Daung Dyain Street, Kalaymyo, Sagaing Region, Myanmar

Dear Staff,

My name is Lal Rin Sangi and I am currently a student at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) in the Philippines. As a part of fulfilling the requirements of my Master of Arts in Religious Education with concentration in Holistic Child Development, I would like to conduct a research on the topic, "Perceptions on the Child Friendliness of Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar: Implications for the Holistic Ministry with Children in the Local Church." The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions of the children (eight to 18 years old) and staff of the church on child friendliness so that the church can improve in such a way that the children will experience a positive environment that is needed for holistic growth. I am attaching the questionnaire in Mizo version so you have an idea on the questions therein.

With reference to the statement mentioned above, may I request your kind participation as I look forward to conducting this research? Please be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Let me assure you that the data of this study will remain absolutely confidential and will be used for educational purposes only. And the duration of responding to the questionnaire is fairly short.

There will be no reward as such but I would greatly appreciate your honest participation and the efforts that you would put in towards this research.

Thank you so much.


_____                    _____
     Signature Over Printed Name                              Date


In Him,

Lal Rin Sangi

LETTER TO THE SELECTED STAFF OF REFORMED EVANGELICAL CHURCH
(TRANSLATION OF LETTER TO THE SELECTED STAFF OF
REFORMED EVANGELICAL CHURCH)


March 2017

Naupang rawngbawlnaa in hmang mek thawk tute(Reformed Evangelical Church)
Address: H.No.10/80, Pa Daung Dyain Street, Kalaymyo, Sagaing Region, Myanmar

Thawk tu duh tak,

Ka hming chu Lal Rin Sangi a ni a, Philippines rama awm Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) ah Master of Arts in Religious Education zir mek ka ni. Ka major hi Holistic Child Development a ni a, ka zirna ka zawh fel theihna atan Reformed Evangelical Church hian naupang rawngbawlna kawngah engtiang in nge hma a lak tih leh kohhran hian naupang te hi a ngai pawimawh tawk em tih thupui kal tlanga chhuichiangna neih tum a ni. He chhuichiangna kal tlang hian naupangte taksa, rilru leh thlarau lama hmasawnna an neih theih ngeina atan kohhrana in siam that ngaihna te leh mamawh te chu hmuh chhuah ngei beisei a ni a, chutiang thil hmuh chhuah kal tlang te chuan kohhran in naupang rawngbawlna hmalakna tamtak a neih theih zelna atan a ni.
He chhuichhiangna ah hian zawhna leh chhanna te kal tlanga min pui turin Krista hmingin ka sawm duh che a ni. He zawhna leh chhanna hian hun a duh tam hran lo a ni.
Zawhna leh chhanna hian hun a duh tam lutuk hran lova, chuan hmun khata chhan nghal vek theih turin hun bi thiam siam tum a ni bawk. I chhanna zawng zawngte pawh chu he zirna atan chauha hman an ni ang tih ka tiam tlat che a ni.
I mi tanpuina ah ka lawm e.

Christaa I rawngbawl pui,


Lal Rin Sangi

APPENDIX F

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS
18 YEARS OLD AND ABOVE

To whom it may concern,

 With reference to the statement mentioned in the other attachment "Letter to The Selected Staff of Reformed Evangelical Church," may I request your kind participation as I look forward to conducting this research? The following information will guide you through as you decide on whether you are willing to participate. Please be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

 I assure you that your name will not be allied in any way with the research findings. You will not be asked to write your name on the questionnaires and all filled-out questionnaires will be coded. Please feel free to contact me by Email or Messenger if you have any queries concerning this research.

 There will be no reward as such but I would greatly appreciate your participation and the efforts that you would put in towards this research.

**<u>Declaration by the respondent</u>**

 I have read the thesis description of Lal Rin Sangi and had the opportunity to be asked and give answers to the given questions regarding the research. I know that I have my rights to ask any additional questions as a research participant, I may send an email to lilysangi08@gmail.com or message her through Messenger at, Lily Sangi.

 I agree to participate in this study as a research participant. By my signature I affirm that I am at least 18 years old, and that I have received a copy of this Consent and Authorization Form.


_____     _____

 Signature Over Printed Name            Date

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS
18 YEARS OLD AND ABOVE

(TRANSLATION OF INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS
18 YEARS OLD AND ABOVE)

Chibai le!

Lehkha phek pakhat zawka sawi fiahna ang ngei khan chhuichiangna nei tura in buatsaih mek ka ni a. Khawngaihin he chhuichiangah hian min tel sak thei a ngem? A hnuaia lehkha in ziak te hi khawngaihin lo chhiar la, I tel duh nge tel duh lo tih I rilru I siam fel theihna atan a tangkai ngei ka beisei.

Thil pakhat chiang taka ka sawi theih chu I hming ziah lan a ni lova a, chutiang bawkin I chhanna zawng zawng te chu he chhuichiangna atan chauh hian hman a ni dawn a ni tih hi. Zawhna leh thu hriat chiang duh te I nei a nih phawt chuan Email emaw Messenger atang emaw in min rawn zawt dawn a nia.

He chhuichhianna buatsaihna ah hian engmah lawmman leh sum pai in pek a awm dawn lova amaherawh chu I mi tanpuina ah leh I hun hlu tak I senna zawng zawng avang te in I chung ah ka lawm tak meuh meuh a ni.

**Mahni in tiam kamna**

Lal Rin Sangi'n a buatsaih zawhna leh chhanna te, he chhuichiangna a buatsaih chhan te leh zawhna ka neih zawng zawng te chu hrilh fiah ka ni a, ka hre chiang a ni. He chhuichianga tel tur ka nih ang ngeiin, zawhna leh hriat duh ka neih te chu lilysangi08@gmail.com atang emaw Lily Sangi tih Messenger atang emaw zawt thei ka ni tih ka hria e.

He chhuichiangna ah hian tel ve turin ka in peih e. A hnuaia ka hming leh sign hian kum 18 ka thling tawh a ni tih a entir ang bawkin, he rem tihna lehkha hi ka dawn ngei a ni tih a lan tir a ni.

_____          _____

Hming leh Signature                          Date

APPENDIX G

DRAWING PROTOCOL

Give the child a sheet of paper and a box of crayons and tell him or her what you want drawn.

> I'd like to have you draw me a picture of your church and what is special to you at church on the paper.
> You can draw the way you want to.
> **Be sure that the child's name is on the picture and it is labeled—My Church, My Teacher, or Any Title that the child wishes to write.**

After the picture is completed comment:

> That is a very nice picture, or,
> I like your picture.
> Tell me about it.

Let the child talk about it.

If you notice anything you are curious about ask:

> I notice you _____. Can you tell we about that?

You might ask:

> How does it make you feel when you think about the church?

This is adapted from Stonehouse, Catherine. 1998. "Interview Protocol Used in Listening to Children Research." Email attachment (13 March 2017).

Lemziah Endik Dan

Naupang chu lehkha phek, crayon bur te pe la, I duh zawng lem chu ziah tir rawh.

Naupang hnen ah chuan Biakin lem ziak la, chuan nuam I tihna lai hmun ber kha ziak tel rawh.

I duh duh dan in I lem chu I ziak thei.

**Naupang in a lem ziah ah chuan – Ka Biakin (my church), zirtirtu (my teacher) tih leh thil dan a duh zawng te chu a ziak tel ngei ngei tur a ni.**

Lem chu a ziah zawh hnu in:

I lem ziah chu a mawi hle mai (or)

I lem ziah hi ka duh ngawt mai.

Eng nge I ziah tih min hrilh thei a ngem tiin

Naupang chu zawt rawh.

Naupang chu a lem ziah chungchang chu sawi tir rawh.

Thil danglam deuh awma I hria a nih chuan he zawhna te hi zawh rawh:

I lem ziah ah hian _____ ka hmu a. Eng nge a ni tih min hrilh thei a ngem?

Heti pawh hian I zawt thei:

Biakin tih I ngaihtuah hian I rilru ah engtin nge a awm? Eng nge lo lang hmasa ber?


Hei zawhnaa te hi Stonehouse, Catherine. 1998. "Interview Protocol Used in Listening to Children Research atanga lak chhawn a ni e.

APPENDIX H

DRAWING OF THE CHILD IN THE PRE-TEST

APPENDIX I

LETTER TO THE PARENTS OF THE RESPONDENTS
TO ALLOW THEIR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DRAWING ACTIVITY

MR. AND MRS. _____

H.No.10/80, Pa Daung Dyain Street, Kalaymyo, Sagaing Region, Myanmar

To the Parent or Guardian,

My name is Lal Rin Sangi and I am currently a student at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) in the Philippines. As a part of fulfilling the requirements of my Master of Arts in Religious Education with concentration in Holistic Child Development, I would like to conduct a research on the topic, "Perceptions on the Child Friendliness of Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo, Myanmar: Implications for the Holistic Ministry with Children in the Local Church." The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions of the children (eight to 18 years old) and staff of the church on child friendliness so that the church can improve in such a way that the children will experience a positive environment that is needed for holistic growth. I am attaching the questionnaire in Mizo version so you have an idea on the questions therein.

In this light, I am requesting your permission to allow your child to participate in the drawing activity. The name of your child will not be mentioned in order to ensure the confidentiality of his or her responses. All of the collected data will be used for educational purposes only.

I would greatly appreciate your approval to conduct this study. Thank you.

With thanks,


Lal Rin Sangi

_____


Please sign below if you are willing to allow your son/daughter to participate in the drawing activity in this study.

Signature:          _____
Printed Name: _____
Date:                 _____

(TRANSLATION OF LETTER TO THE PARENTS OF THE RESPONDENTS
TO ALLOW THEIR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DRAWING ACTIVITY)
THLAN CHHUAH NAUPANG NU LEH PA TE HNENA LEHKHA THAWN
(PHALNA DILNA)

H.No.10/80, Pa Daung Dyain Street, Kalaymyo, Sagaing Region, Myanmar

Nu leh Pa te,

    Ka hming chu Lal Rin Sangi a ni a, Philippines rama awm Asia-Pacific Nazarene
Theological Seminary (APNTS) ah Master of Arts in Religious Education zir mek ka ni.
Ka major hi Holistic Child Development a ni a, ka zirna ka zawh fel theihna atan
Reformed Evangelical Church hian naupang rawngbawlna kawngah engtiang in nge hma
a lak tih leh kohhran hian naupang te hi a ngai pawimawh tawk em tih thupui kal tlanga
chhuichiangna neih tum a ni. He chhuichiangna kal tlang hian naupangte taksa, rilru leh
thlarau lama hmasawnna an neih theih ngeina atan kohhrana in siam that ngaihna te leh
mamawh te chu hmuh chhuah ngei beisei a ni a, chutiang thil hmuh chhuah kal tlang te
chuan kohhran in naupang rawngbawlna hmalakna tamtak a neih theih zelna atan a ni.
    He chhuichiangna ka neih theihna atan, I fate hi lem ziahna min neih sak thei turin I
phalna ka rawn dil che a ni. I fate hming chu ziah lan a ni  dawn lo a, a chhanna zawng
zawngte pawh chu he zirna atan chauha hman an ni ang.
    Phalna duhawm tak min pek dawn avangin ka lawm e.

Lawm thu tam tak nen,

Lal Rin Sangi

_____

I fate he chhuichiannaa tel rem I tih a ni chuan khawngiah a hnuaiah hian I hming leh
signature min ziah sak dawn a ni.

Signature:        _____
Hming:            _____
Date:             _____

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CURRICULUM VITA

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Civil Status:       Single

**Educational Attainment**

High School:        No. 14, Basic Education Primary School, Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar (1999)

Middle School:      No. 2, Basic Education High School, Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar (2004)

High School:        No. 2, Basic Education High School Tahan, Kalaymyo, Myanmar (2006)

University:         Kalay University, Myanmar (Bachelor of Arts in English) (2013)

Master's Degree:    Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary; Pending upon completion of thesis (2017)

**Work Experience**

Sunday School Teacher:      Reformed Evangelical Church (REC), Kalaymyo (2006-2007)

                            Taytay First Church of the Nazarene (March-November 2016)

Treasurer:                  Children Department (REC), Kalaymyo (2007-2008)

                            Myanmar Centre for Church Planting (Local Bible School) (2009-2011)

                            Philippines Myanmar Christian Fellowship (2015-2016)

Youth Secretary:            Reformed Evangelical Church in Kalaymyo (2007-2008)

                            Reformed Evangelical Church in Yangon (2012-2013)

Secretary:                  Myanmar Community, APNTS (2015-2016)

Chairperson:                Evangelism and Compassionate Ministry, APNTS (2016-present)