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Rethinking about Shifting Denomination of the Believers in Hmawngtlang

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Abstract

The research aims to investigate the cause of the shifting faith and switching denomination. This problem was not only faced by many churches in another part of the world, but it also happened in my hometown within the three denominations which recognized as American Baptist Mission, United Pentecostal Church, and Assembly of God. There were shifting denomination or moving from old to the new faith. It was happening in the place called Hmawngtlang village, Chin State, Myanmar. I as the researcher, the interview is conducted to collect data from the interviewees to answer the research question and sub-questions.

I applied the qualitative research method as my research method. I interviewed four pastors and five shifters. Additionally, the work deals with the churches and find out what and why they were segregated to relate the causes of how they are linked up to my statement of the problem with my research.

Understanding the faith transformation experiences of the shifters in the three denominations show the evidence that when a person has changed his faith, he was still controlled by such old church doctrine, culture, and tradition. Thus, the new converter finds out a new place where he can express and feel his spiritual freedom. Most reasons for the pastors and members those who were left the old denomination are the people who wanted to have freedom.

The switching faith and find out new denomination rooted in the nine personalities that described by Gary Thomas, it said, God created everyone uniquely such as some people wanted to worship God with noise while the other wanted silent. Therefore, people try to find out the new church where they can have a good relationship with God according to their personalities (Thomas, 1996).

Dedication

I dedicate my research to my beloved wife Nilar San.

Abbreviations

AG	Assembly of God
UPC	United Pentecostal Church
ABMC	American Baptist Mission Church
CTR	Chin Traditional Religion

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1 Introduction

The introduction chapter is about how I am going to deal with my research. In this chapter, I will express the topic of the study about those who changed their faiths and changed their denominations in Hmawngtlang Village. The actualization that which the believers in my hometown that faced the changing faith and witching churches will also be stated. Some of the personal interest of the researcher, which issue that draw my attention to the instruction of the thesis will also be talked about. In the next section, the research's literature overview where his motivation for doing the research's information which is the author of the thesis statement will be identified.

Under the analytic unit and research question, the research questions and how the research process will be going will also state. Delimitation is to what extent the thesis will go far and deal. What it will do and what will not be covered. By starting the process of the chapter how it will be dealt, the readers of the argument will have a clear mind that the reader will not raise the question the stated areas and fields, the thesis design and the structure of the thesis are the last part of this chapter that I will end and conclude this chapter.

1.1 Themes

The thesis explores about switching denomination. David A. Gay book called *Effects of Switching on Denominational Subcultures*, point out the reasons that why so many believers are switching their denominations or churches because of changing affiliations such as marriage, residential mobility, and conflict with a previous religious group. He describes the distinction between those who remained in the old church and those who shifted their denomination. The "Stayers" are respondents whose current preference are the same as the denomination in which they were trained. The "Switchers" are those whose current choice is different from the church in which they were raised, and they resemble as true believers.

In switching denomination, there were two reasons. First, spiritual concern, and second, physical concern or social concern. As I am the researcher, my focus is more spiritual means that generated by faith transformation. Because of accepting an essential spiritual understanding, some believers carry out of the former denomination because it has several reasons that are lying upon not knowing own belief so well which so-called doctrine. Not engaging in deep religious faith or a well-defined discernment of his religious belief, and

conflict between the previous and the new culture of the church takes place within a Christian family, not outside the church. In the other hand, the shifting denomination is promoted and produced by crusade and evangelistic meeting from different denominations which is also called and considered as the proselytism.

1.2 Actualization

The first denomination that established in Hmawngtlang was the American Baptist Mission Church. The people of Chin love to drink local beer (zapu), and dancing, which is part of the culture before the missionaries from the United States brought Christianity. Through the work of the missionaries, Chin Traditional Religion was converted into Christianity that the people were not allowed any the practices such as drinking and dancing which considered as evil things. These issues applied in the church in my hometown that raising hands in praising God during the worship, dancing, playing the drum (khuang), clapping, saying Amen, and Halleluiah such things were prohibited. The strictness of the church's doctrine was some believers to leave the old church and get out the new church. After several years, the evangelistic meeting held in Hmawngtlang from which denomination has a different belief system and practices. Some brothers and sisters were changed into new belief and shifted to new denomination a place where they can express more and utilize the freedom of their spiritual life.

On the other hand, for the shifters of faith, the new one is more secure and helpful in nourishing their spiritual life. One of the old men said, his feeling after being switched denomination, the differences between the old and the new denomination was different. He said, he feels like he was in the water that he could not breathe out and dying, but when he was converted into the new church called the United Pentecostal Church, it seems he was out of the water and breathe out and inhale oxygen which I was needed. He also added that the way he praised God in a worship service was like a cow and her baby that put in different places to get the mother's milk, in the morning when the baby was released, she was jumping and running because of the freedom to suck her mother's milk. The same way, he was like the baby of a cow that after his movement away from the previous one, he added, I feel like I am free from such things that control and cast me in tiny spots.

1.3 The personal interest in the research: what, why, and how

While I am studying in MF, Norwegian School of Theology, one of the courses that I took is the church and theology in the south. In the course of study, one of the church theologies that we studied was Nigeria, Africa. Bediako and some other theologians discussed their identity of the church that the indigenous culture is essential because of her identity. They cited the book of Acts that when the Spirit filled the believers, and they began to speak in tongues, the people those who heard them understood in their language.

The theology that the western country brought to us is not our own, and God must reveal and speak to us in our native language and culture. The name of God that we are introduced is and clapping and dancing are which also were given by God as their culture. One of the problems is that they faced was inconvenient of the use of language and culture in communicating with God. The difficulties that Nigeria's churches faced draw me to search the former denomination Hmawngtlang that why some believers move out of the old faith and change it their faith to the new one. This is the assumption of the causes of changing and shifting denomination in the church of Hmawngtlang is the use of the old tradition in worshipping God. All the members of the United Pentecostal Church and Assembly of God members are who moved out from ABM.

The Hmawngtlang has a population around 700. And nearly half of the population is those who moved out into other denominations. In my research interview, I will not interview all of them because some are old enough that their retention is running short that they could not remember their past experience anymore. This is the reason that I am going to inquire the two pastors of the old church, and another one pastor from Assembly of God, and the other one is from the United Pentecostal church because they know how and why their members left the church. Just five of the shifters were interviewed among the many switchers. My interest in the research is not to solve the problem, but to find out the reasons that made the shifters how their faith was transformed and forced them to move out from the old church.

1.4 Literature overview

As I am a master student in Theology, Mission and Society program at MF, when I studied about the mission in the south, especially in Africa, the theology of the church has no connection with the African Tradition Religion way of worshipping God. Therefore, the African theologians argued that the gospel must be communicated with the indigenous culture (Bediako, 1992). The disconnection of the two cultures made them inconvenient and not experience the core gospel. Because of not using their language in term of church theology that they borrowed or developed their theology by the missionaries from other countries.

Since, culture is the bearer of the gospel to every nation in the world, which is found in the book of Acts that when the apostles preach the gospel, those who heard them understood in their language. This is the issue that the African theologians want to develop the God-given culture as African culture. They believe that is having their theology will help them to experience and sense the truth of the gospel meaningfully. On the other hand, in the 21 centuries, since the culture is changing, the worship style or form must also be updated which meet and feed the current believers. By looking also in my hometown that the people of Chin have their way of life, culture, that the missionary from the United States, prohibited some part of their culture made some believers, not fully experience the enjoyment and happiness in the church that leads them to find out the new place to express their spiritual freedom.

Culture is the identity of every tribe and nations in the world; thus, it must keep conscious. Therefore, I am concerned with investigating the causes of shifting and changing denomination among the believers, that these issues and problems are happening in everywhere in the world which also affected to Chin State. Almost all the people are Christian who holds the same faith, but some believers are moving around. This is the reason that I am focusing on the problem of shifting denomination. The central theme of the thesis is the faith transformation that forces people to find out the new denomination.

Throughout the study of missiology, which also deals with the church history, many problems were found out as a result of the different background of missionaries that established their denomination. In the case of the Russian Orthodox Church, (Bourdeaux, 1999) the only church of Russia, many members were stolen by different denominations. The Russia believers treated the missionaries as the destroyer of their spiritual unity that results in of proselytizing, which

has the same connotation as evangelism but has a negative meaning. Why we have so many different churches and denominations today been based and has a connection with what happened in Russia.

The misuse of the location of the mission field that some missionaries preach and evangelize is the already believers instead of nonbelievers or outside the Christian church. By studying church history and mission in the south, the problem that faced by the local believers and which also happened in my hometown has a similar issue. I noticed that in my hometown, first, there was only one denomination which is the American Baptist Mission. Because of the evangelistic meeting and crusade from a different denomination, another two denominations were established and founded. Among the three denominations in Hmawngtlang, there were some brothers and sisters were moving around and changing their denomination within the churches that reminded me and gave me the interest to find out the leading cause of the reason that made them shifted and switched to the new while some others were remaining in the old church.

The people around the world, especially in the United States, many believers changed their faith and searched a different one. Gary Thomas, who is the author of the book called *Sacred Pathways: Discover Your Soul's Path to God*, he depicts how a different individual in the universe has a distinct personality (Thomas, 1996). Everyone in the world has a unique personality, and we use this own personality with God. Some people love to make noise while praising and worshiping God while the rest prefer quietly to worship. For some, still love enthusiasts' worship by dancing, jumping, clapping, and shouting.

The author points out that the existence of the many churches in the world is the product of the unique personality of how God created a person. This is the reason that some believers were raised in their parents care but when they grew old enough then, find a way their spiritual life based on their personality that different from their parents. These several personalities are causing a person to move out from the former denomination to the church doctrine and practice that helps in her spiritual relationship to God. The switching and shifting old faith to the new one is based on the different personalities that a person has possessed.

The previous research on "*Denominational Switching and Membership Growth: In Search of a Relationship*" (C. Kirk Hadaway, 2019) held by (Alston, 1971) and (Hadaway, 1978) have shown the difference between those who switched denomination and remained in the old denomination that the switchers have considered them as the religious people. Those who find out a better church is because of the unsatisfactory on the former church while the stayers are, they remain because the church in which they inherited from their parents. It also mentioned that the switchers are considered as the seekers who have a strong intrinsic commitment to their beliefs. Those who remain in the old church are those who love traditional while the shifters are personal religious favorable. Switching denomination is the second-generation problem that the new generation does not like the conventional church which their parents like. Those who remained in the former church show that the parents as "true believers" (Hoffer, 1951). The switching denomination is caused by the conviction of a person's faith, not convenience as they seek a more satisfying church. The religious beliefs, experiences, and practices are used to survey the religion switching among the United States believers by (Glock and Stark, 1965).

1.5 Analytical unit and the research question

1.5.1 The analytical unit

In order to find out the reasons and problems that not keep some converts in the old church bringing about how one believer change his or her faith, so-called experiences of transformation, the research will be applied qualitative research methodology. This switching denomination has happened in several places in Chin State, Myanmar, but I have chosen for a specific area called the Hmawngtlang as a research field and case studies. Then will have interviews with the selected group of people to collect the research data. Group one consisted of two shifters and the second group consisted of four pastors from the three denominations that what they think the reasons. I believe that through the interview of the two groups will help me to get out the fact that gives new spiritual experience and the transformation of the shifter's faith.

In rethinking about shifting denomination in Hmawngtlang village, Chin state, Myanmar, the model of faith transformation that cause faith shift is "to find out something to experience which

is bigger and truer faith as authentic, grounded, open, true-to-experience, healing, and freedom" (Escobar, 2014:7). Most of the time people think faith shift as only in negatively, but this faith shift model helps us to understand that it is not like faith or an end, but positively, it is a deeper faith to enjoy by losing old beliefs without losing God.

1.5.2 The research question and sub-questions

To realize the reasons for shifting denomination, the causes of the believers to have new experiences and transformation of the switchers, this thesis will be dealt with and investigated through the research questions. To research the origin of the problem of shifting denomination among the believers in Hmawngtlang, the researcher will study what has occurred within the last several years in the church. The background of the shifters which cause and keep them not to remain in the old denomination also will be dealt with. The researcher of the thesis intends to find out several causes that pushed them to depart the old denomination. Throughout the subject field, the answer will be discovered by answering the questions listed below. According to the literature review, several reasons allowed people to leave out of the church. The thesis will deal with the main root of the problem that leaving aside from the perspective of the mission. According to the assumption, the actual reasons will be found after interviewing of the shifters and the four pastors of the local churches. The main question and the sub-questions are related to finding out the truth about the causes of leaving the church. In the field, the researcher will interview the pastors from each denominational church how they felt when some members leave the church and what they think the possible reasons. Through the research question, the interview will go further to those who shifted the former church that is what reason they left and will ask them the differences between the new denomination and the old church. The research question is:

How is the shift of the shifters 'faith that leads to switching denomination is understood and valued by the pastors, and how the shifters understood and gone through their beliefs changed in their past? What are the causes of their faith change?

Sub-questions:

1. What is the main reason that makes some believers shift their denomination?
2. What is the different experience of the shifters between the old and new denomination?
3. How do the pastors understand when some members leave the church?
5. How is the feeling of a person that moves out from the old denomination?
6. What are the differences between the old denomination and the new denomination?

1.6 Delimitation

The scope of writing the thesis is one year; therefore, the argument will not go beyond the place that chosen for a case study which is known as Hmawngtlang, Chin State, Myanmar. Since the researcher is the student of MF. Norwegian School of Theology, I will go to Myanmar to interview with the shifters and pastors from the three denominations. Even though the research problem has happened in some other places in Chin State and another part of the world, it will not be dealt with them except the chosen location. In other words, the research would not deal too with what keeps those who do not shift and remain in the old church.

In some case, the thesis will not deal with other places around the world except Nigeria in Africa, which book I used as my literature review that called: *Theology, and Identity: The Impact of Culture upon Christian Thought in the Second Century and Modern Africa*, published in 1992. The author is Kwame Bediako.

In dealing with the book, I am going to use is as independent variables to support my thesis main reason that causes shifting the old denomination. The researcher interviewed four pastors and five of the shifters to gain information about moving into the new denomination. The notice from the insiders, the interviewees, are those whom the researcher wants to get the data for the research.

In addition, to support thesis's main reason to dig up, sometimes I will go to Scripture which is found in John chapter one about the incarnation and what the apostle Paul said that to win Jew, I became like one of them and to the Gentiles, became like one of them. And further, I will also deal with how our culture related to our spiritual life that helps us in expressing our feelings when we are experiencing the Holy Spirit or encounter with God in life.

1.7 Research design

The subject of my thesis is about rethinking about shifting denomination in Hmawngtlang that how some believers went through and transformed their faith that forces them to leave the old denomination in Myanmar. The qualitative research strategy is applied in my thesis to find out the reasons and problem by using interviews as a research method to collect according to the research questions. The sub-questions will be used as the interview guide. In this research, this main question will be answered which is stated below the research question. The research methodology discussed detail in chapter four.

1.8 Structure and organization of the thesis

The thesis structure and organization, the introduction of the research will be described in the very first part that how the researcher drew my attention and interest in the case study which is in Hmawngtlang at my hometown. Because of what the researcher had seen how some brothers and sisters were shifting their denominations was which I want to do research that caused the switching and changing the church.

Second, the background of the research will be discussed in this chapter, which will deal with Hmawngtlang as the field and case study that takes place for data collection. Since this village is in Chin State, one of the seventh state in Myanmar. Moreover, a little background of chin state and Myanmar as the country will be discussed.

Third, theory, in this chapter, how the researcher is going to use the approach to work the thesis process step by step and make conclusions. To deal with the shifters, the theory will deal with what and how the switchers change or transform their faith that leads them to another place.

Fourth, methodology, in the fourth chapter, how the research will be conducted and method for collecting data will be described, such as the interview is the primary method for the research gathering, how the thesis process was dealt with in order to get in touch with the target group of people through the pastor's consent. The pastor was used as the gatekeeper and a pilot whose drive the plane and all members in the church.

Fifth, presentation, all the information collected through interviewing the interviewees will be presented in this chapter.

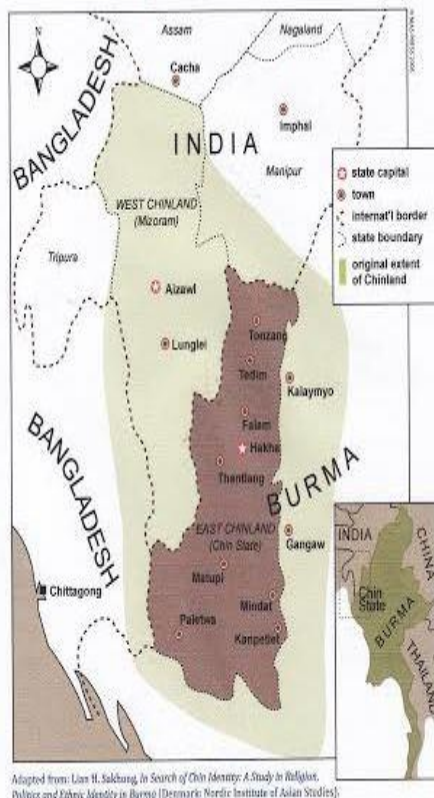
Then, discussion, in this chapter, the researcher will discuss the causes of the shifting denomination in Hmawngtlang which are known as spiritual matters and physical matters. Then further, the finding from the literature review that how the origins of the segregation of the church into several denominations based on the church history will connect to the research. On the other hand, the researcher will show the relation of the causes of the switching denomination and the causes of the church's division based on historical movement.

Finally, in the concluding chapter, I will present the main research question and sub-questions. I incorporate the contribution of the research and end with suggestions for potential further research on the topic of the force of leaving the church when someone experienced and transformed his or her faith.

2 Background

In this chapter, I will introduce a little background of Chin State as my thesis is about shifting and switching denomination where it takes place within among the three churches in Hmawngtlang, Chin State, Myanmar. The research's field is founded by the devoted believer name called, Pu Za Khar from Phai Pha village, Senthang, Hakha township. The founder founded this village in the name of the God, who created heaven and Earth which is found and believe in the Scripture.

Map of Chin States



The country Myanmar is formerly known as Burma, which country is one of the South East Asia countries. Chin state is one of the seven states in Myanmar which shared a boundary with India in the west. This state is considered a Christian state. Hakha is the capital city of Chin.

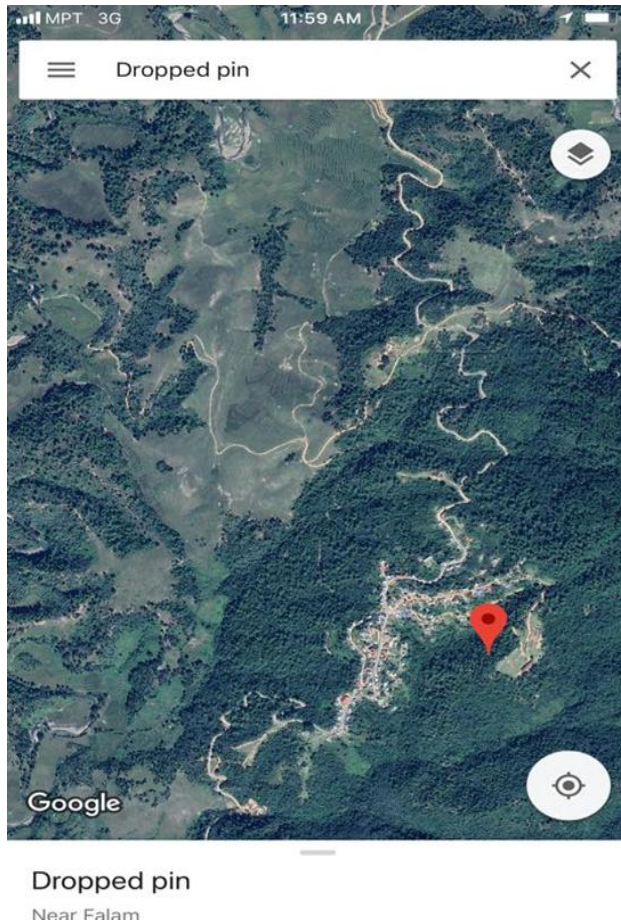
Based on the thesis of *John Tha Cung*, master thesis title: “*Naming God in the Chin Language Towards a Contextual Approach*,” he said about the population of the Chin state that has 478,801 based on the 2014 census record. It lies between latitude 24 in the north and 21.45 in the south and between longitude 94.5 in the east and 93.20 in the west. The border countries of Chin State are the Indian state of Manipur in the north and the Indian state of Mizoram in the west, Sagaing and Magwe divisions of Myanmar in the east, the Rakhine State of Myanmar in the south and Bangladesh in the south-west. The length of the east to west is 100-150 miles and north to south

is 250-300 miles. It has a land area of 13,902 square miles (Cung, 2018: 28).

According to Thawng Hlei Thang, master's thesis "*Reasons Of Church Split Among Chin Migrant Churches In Stavanger*" the background of chin religious before the missionaries came to the Chin Hill was explored in his thesis regarding, he said, the religious condition in Chin State, traditionally, the Chins people are who worship evil spirits. They have trust in that demons are present everywhere and they acknowledge them. They were not worshipping these spirits, but rather they exorcized them or appeased them in order that they might not induce them all kinds of bother, also so that they might suffer health, durability, and prosperity. The Chin believes in the existence of a controller of all things, a Supreme Being (Thang, 2015: 27-29).

2.1 Hmawngtlang

2.2 Map of Hmawngtlang



This village is set up in 1942 by Pu Za Khar and his allies. This village has 700 population, according to the census of 2018. In this place, there were different churches that are called American Baptist Mission Church, United Pentecostal Church, and Assembly of God. There are approximately 120 houses held in the small town. The small town is situated in a Zophei area in Thantlang Township. It is far from Thantlang about 24 miles. The village has a general hospital and police station, immigration office and Basic Education High School. In this small town, the people are mixed that some are from Zophei, Senthang and Lautu. Zophei, Senthang and Lautu.

2.3 Rethinking about shifting denomination of the believers in Hmawngtlang

Sang Hlei recorded in his book called *Hmawngtlang Krifabu Sui Jubilee 1942-1999* how the village was founded. In 1941, the village called Hmawngtlang was founded by the leading of Za Khar from Phaipha village which located in Senthang, Hakha township (Hlei, 1999). Za Khar had been already a Christian that he brought with him a denomination called Baptist Church, but the church is called until now American Baptist Mission (ABM). Lian Hmung Sakhong states in his book called *In Search of Chin Identity: A Study in Religion, Politics, and Ethnic Identity in Burma* the whole land of Chin, the Christianity is brought by couple missionaries Arthur Carson and Laura Carson from Columbus City, Iowa whose were sent by the American Baptist Mission Society in 1899 (Sakhong, 2003:106,122).

Through the work of the first missionaries, the whole land was converted into Christianity almost a hundred percent. Since Hmawntlang village was founded in 1942, the only church was a Baptist church until 1983. In 1983, because of proselytism, some brethren left the Baptist church and built the new denomination called the United Pentecostal Church (UPC). For which reason, a new church was founded because of the new system of believing God that some practice speaking in tongues which were not allowed in the old church, such as clapping, and dancing. On the other hand, the split of the church was based on doctrinal issues.

Ron Rhodes illustrates one reason why several denominations exist was a woman's name Agnes Ozaman and Evangelist Charles Fox Parham spoke in tongues in Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas in 1901, after they studied Paul's writing about speaking in the other tongue that non-Pentecostal churches were no longer welcome them (Rhodes, 2015:334,335). This is one of the reasons that allowed or caused the new denomination called the United Pentecostal Church emerged in Hmawngtlang village. After several years, there was also other denomination, such as the Roman Catholic Church, Assembly of God, and Seven-day Adventist.

According to the latest population data collection, 663 was inhabited in Hmawngtlang village. Now the Baptist Church has 352 members. The approximately, 211 belong to United Pentecostal Church and Assembly of God. It is evident that by tracing the history of the village, some of the believers love to dance, and playing drum which was part of their old culture that practiced before Christianity was introduced. When the missionaries eliminated, such customs and not allow in the church, when some other group of denomination brought, some accepted because of more convenience in worshipping God through using their own culture. This is the reason that some believers were left the old church and find the other one. In the other hands, those who were shifted and switched their old denomination to new are the product or the effect of not having their own culture concerning their spiritual life according to contextual theological perspective.

Lian Hmung Sakhong book entitled as *"In Search of Chin Identity": A Study in Religion, Politics, and Ethnic Identity in Burma "* it is stated that the first missionary couple did not use chin language in teaching the chin people, they used Burmese because they thought that chin

language is inadequate and unnecessary to translate the Bible into their dialect. He said that "imposing the foreign language was not always successful; instead it caused several problems and cultural confrontations" (Sakhong, 2003: 139).

There were many members of Baptist Church were moving out to the AG, and UPC, between 1983 up to 2000 years. But the researcher interest and thesis will not beyond 2000 years, but the focus year is between 2000 to 2018. In the other hand, the investigator will only deal with a few people that were shifted and changed their denomination within 18 years. Carrying on this project and investigating the matter is relevant because the same research topic was founded in among the Christian community listed in the literature review.

2.4 Overview of the research

We, Christian, believe God as the same yesterday, today and forever based on (Hebrew 13:8) and I the Lord do not change (Malachi 3:6). However, we the believers as in the changing world, we are experiencing a changing faith in our daily lives. It is an undeniable thing that's happening among Christians that our belief growing and expanding we walk alongside one another from somewhere to somewhere else and explore our beliefs in our unchanging God in the midst of our changing world, that everything changes including us the way we live, communicate, thin, and even the way we believe (Hidalgo, 2015: 12). It is a fantastic thing that is happening where we live in the world is change. We Christians, the God that we are worshiping, is unchanged God. Jesus the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. The God that we believe is unchanged, but we the believers have changed faith. Even in the scripture, it said that is believed that God never changes, since my thesis is a case study, in dealing with this thesis project, I am getting into the field through the help of the three pastors from each denomination.

3 Theory

3.1 Introduction to the sources of the theory

In this chapter, I will discuss the approach that how I am proceeding to serve the inquiry question that what is the main reason that force some of the believers in Hmawngtlang to leave the old denomination and get out the new one that transformed their faith and how they have experienced. I will examine the data shown in the findings chapter and link my finding to relevant theories about shifting denomination. The research is dealing with the problems of the thesis, general issues that latter on drawing some facts that gained to link with the data from the interview to analyze the causes of switching denomination in the village. The deductive method of social research is selected for the thesis's theory. This is how the literature of review mostly tries to see the problem of the argument is that it will deal with more on church history that why and how the church was split into various denominations.

It is clear that church history was the product of the high commission or the mission. Therefore, I am going to deal with church history and missionaries' activity that's why today we have a lot of denominations, and some believers were changing and switching churches to be fed and nurture their spiritual. For the sources of the thesis, the three books will be used as primary. The first book is called: *Sacred Pathways: Discover your Soul's Path to God*. The second book is entitled: *Proselytism and Orthodoxy in Russia: The New War for Souls*. The third book is *The Complete Guide to Christian Churches: Understanding the History, Beliefs, and Differences*.

The three books will be used for the theoretical framework of the thesis. Then, additionally, the book called "*Faith Shift: Finding Your Way Forward When Everything You Believe is Coming Apart*." I am going to apply the phrase which is found in the book of Escobar. It is states as "so many faiths, so many shifters" (Escobar, 2014: 20) that there are so many believers seeking spiritual refugee. Those who shifted their faith and seek the freedom of their spiritual. The freedom seekers are the people who found the new system of belief that conflict with the former church's belief system. Therefore, since they had stuck and caged by the system they have lived in, they move out from the church and find out another church where they can live freely

without any hindrances for their spiritual lives. The conflict of the new faith and the old faith is which cause many people to leave their church and establish and build for their own sake. The existence of the so many churches in the world is mainly rooted in this faith conflicts.

The Sacred Pathways: Discover Your Soul's Path to God, the book is used for one of the four books to theorizing my thesis. The book has part 3 and has 12 chapters. The author talks about the nine ways of relating with God which he called as naturalists, sensates, traditionalists, ascetics, activists, caregivers, enthusiastic, contemplatives, and intellectuals. These are nine personalities that each person possesses differently. He states that there is only one God, but there also many relationships.

In contrast, the Medical Doctor who prescribed for all patients to take medicine called penicillin is not applicable in this generation. There is medicine for the specific disease, the same way each person has the unique form of worshiping God (Thomas, 1996). Gary Thomas illustrates, for instance, in the Scripture,

Abraham built altars everywhere he was while Moses and Elijah revealed an activist streak in their many confrontations with forces of evil and their conversation with God. David again who wants to celebrate God with an enthusiastic style of worship while his son Solomon expressed his love for God by offering generous sacrifices. Ezekiel and John describe Loud and colorful images of God, stunning in sensuous brilliance. Mordecai demonstrated his love of God by caring for others, and Mary of Bethany is the classic contemplative sitting at Jesus's feet (Thomas, 1996:18-19).

The theory of the book is to go throughout the historical movement within the church. The primary cause the segregation of the church and denominations were based on the different personalize of each theologian that he mentioned some of them as Roman Catholic Church's practices, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Anabaptist, orthodox church, John Wesley and Pentecostalism church, John Wesley and Pentecostalism which the author called sacred pathways that are listed above. His intention of writing the book is not to find out the reason of the shifters switched their old denomination, but it is related to my research because the nine paths were which each shifter possesses that leads men and women to which denomination is compatible for their spirits when they experience the change of their faiths.

In this book, the author lists them all nine sacred pathways and makes an explanation for each. I only choose chapter one in part one that he called the journey of the soul: Loving God. What happened the last five hundred years in the church history that split into so many churches and denominations were caused by the possessing of a unique personality, how a man sees God and worships him.

The reasons for the only church called ABM was split into several denominations, and some of the brothers and sisters moving within the three churches were affected by the primary cause of the split of the church.

The Complete Guide to Christian Denominations: Understanding the History, Beliefs, and Differences, Rhodes states that how the church emerged and split into several denominations. Rhodes used the theory as church history that traced it back to the birth of the church, then go further throughout the church history how they separated and how each denomination emerged. He outlines how the church began, and it's split into several denominations. He distinct each denomination by who is the founder, the belief such as the Bible, God, Jesus, Christ, Holy Spirit, sin, the church, sacrament and end time. The author Ron Rhodes began with the birth of the church which is found in the book of Acts then go throughout the century until sixteen centuries (Rhodes, 2005).

According to the book, there were 300 denominations in the United States at that time. Through study this book, several reasons were found out why the church was divided into different denominations. The theory of this book is not related to my thesis, however, by finding out the problems and the roots of the separation of the church had the connection. Because of the existence of many denominations in my hometown, some brothers and sisters shifted and switched their denomination which is the product of the different theological understanding of the Bible. The reason for the first church splits into three denominations had the same problems as the early church history had. Therefore, to identify out the origins of the causes of the emergence of different churches are the theory that I could apply not to precisely the same as the author of this book, but in my case, this theory will help me find out the movements of the shifter' faith transformation and experiences.

The Proselytism and the Orthodoxy in Russia: The New War for Souls, it dealt with the split of the Orthodox Churches into several denominations because of the missionaries from the different countries and different denominations. This book is written in perspective from religion and human right. The foreign countries brought the origins of the split of the state church. Therefore, the Russian Orthodox Church considered the protestant churches are the destroyers of spiritual unity, and they are which caused the division of the main church.

The author used the theory in his study how the new war souls begin in Russia that after the human right that propose the religious freedom of conscience signed then the Greek and Catholic are welcomed. The word proselytism which is the synonym of evangelism as the mission task to proclaim the good news was practiced where the gospel is already preached and received which is known as the Russian Orthodox Church. The problem of the split of the church was brought by the foreign missionaries which have a theological war which based on a different belief system. Several authors contribute this book regarding the same topic, but mostly I will focus on the introduction part which is written by John White Jr. Since this book is called New War for Souls which problem was caused by the proselytism (Bourdeaux, 1999).

Furthermore, I will consult some other books which relate to my thesis. The research theory, such as biblical church growth, finding my way home: pathways to life and the spirit, master plan for the church, why church matters, Firestone: preventing and overcoming church conflicts, sacred pathways: discover your soul' path to God, and finding church: stories of leaving, switching, and reforming and contextual theology.

3.2 Theoretical perspectives from those sources of theory

In this part, I will discuss the related approach on how the early Christian historical movement of the church was segregation into many denominations. The research problems must deal with from different angles of Christian theological views:

3.2.1 Historical

The historical account of the schism of the Christian churches or denominations leads me to how and what caused. Before I run through the church history, I want to put in the book called: Faith Shift: Finding Your Way Forward When Everything You Believe is Coming Apart, authored by Kathy Escobar. The intent of the writer is when someone changes his or her

religious belief, people frequently view negatively but, there also a direction to think positively that shifting faith is to receive a spiritual blessing. The people who did not experience by themselves about faith transformation may not know more than those who experience changing faith by themselves. Those who experienced are saying that changing faith and changing denomination does not mean that they lost God but change it the belief and denomination. The author also expresses that the reason for some people left the old faith or denomination was because of so many religious beliefs. Here I want to quote the word "so much faith, so many shifters" (Escobar, 2014, p. 20). The division of the church history, four books will be reviewed to catch up the origin or church and how it's divided.

The first book is of Kenneth E. Bailey who authored a book entitled: *Paul through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural studies in 1 Corinthians*. The review of the division of the churches, the church or denomination was not by the leader. For instance, the Jesus and his disciples, after the master left them, they were not called themselves as Christian but outside the community called them the disciples of Jesus as Christian at Antioch (Acts 11: 26). In Apostle Paul missionary in 1 Corinthians 1:10-16, there was a problem among the believers. Some of the followers called themselves that they belong to Paul, some to Peter, and some to Apollos. The intention of Paul is clear that they all are one that belongs to Jesus Christ. This book was written in the perspective of culture which has no connection the division of the church, but this is one of the reasons and the attitude of the people that we have many denominations in nowadays. Going through such person Martin Luther, John Wesley, and John Calvin, they themselves have not intended to recover a new church, merely those who respect his teaching themselves as Lutheran, Wesleyan or Methodist and Calvinist (Bailey, 2011: 67-71).

The second book is called: *The Complete Guide to Christian Denominations: Understanding the History, Beliefs, and Differences*. The writer, Ron Rhodes, describes how the universal church was split into so many denominations by showing and explaining the different fundamental belief and practices of each. The theory of the book, the author's purpose is not related to the thesis's argument, but the sources of the separation of the church are which the researcher wanted to draw it to his thesis and link it together. My focus is the first chapter of

the book which is called *"Beginnings: The Emergence of Christianity and Denominations"* stated that the birth of the church and the spread of Christianity.

Then I will go further and defines the denomination. And lastly, showing the reform of the church that called the reformers are as protestants. The author distinctive underlying belief and practice of each of the churches that listed. These are the churches differentiated Adventist churches, Baptist churches, Brethren Churches, Catholic Churches, Christian Churches, Congregational Churches, Episcopal and Anglican Churches, Friends (Quaker) Churches, Fundamentalist and Bible Churches, Holiness Churches, Lutheran Churches, Mennonite Churches, Methodist Churches, Orthodox Churches, Pentecostal Churches, and Presbyterian Churches (Rhodes, 2005).

In A.D. 42, In the book of Acts, the disciples of Jesus had called them Christian in Antioch. Before that, they were called themselves the term "Brothers" (Acts 15:1,23), "Saints" (Roman 8:27), "Believers" (Acts 5:12), Disciples (Acts 9:26). One of the reasons that why they were called a Christian was there were parties that some belonged to Herod (Herodian) and another party belonged to Caesarians those who followed Cesar (Mark 3:6; 12:13). Therefore, the Christian was a separate group which distinct from Judaism and also from the other ancient religion's world. The city of Antioch was a mixture of Jews and Gentiles, a place where different kinds of people live. On the other hand, even though this place was where there were races, cultures, and languages but their unity is in Christ. Christian was never referred to collective movement, but when it came in A.D. 354/430) Christianity as a movement.

The birth of the church, the scripture refers to both the universal and the local churches because these churches are a company of people who have one Lord and share one gift of salvation in the Lord Jesus (Titus 1:4). This church was born on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. The universal church is represented by many local churches spread throughout the world. The spread of the church is found in the book of Acts that a strategy of the gospel spreading out to other areas is through one local church after another. In the twenty centuries in the United States alone, there were 300 denominations. Denomination means to name which come from the Latin word "denominare." In 1809/1817, the fourth president of the United States, James Madison said that "many people immigrated to the United States because the British colony that they brought their own denominations and churches" (Bourdeaux, 1999, p. 13). Throughout the time,

the new denominations continued to emerge on the American soul as a result of splits and mergers. On the other hand, the influential leaders gave rise to new denominations based on what they have been practices, according to their understanding of the Scripture.

In the third, the thesis of Thawng Hlei Thang, which is about why and how was split the churches in the Chin migrated in Norway was one of the sources of my research theory that I want to base. The thesis entitled as "Reasons of Church Split Among Chin Migrant Churches in Stavanger" (Thang, 2015). The researcher intends to recover out the reasons for the partition of the churches which is not the case pertained to my research and not applicable his theory. Anyhow, the information that came from the interviewees of my research, there is a connection with doctrinal issues and socio-cultural issues that made them not to remain in the old denomination.

In the thesis, the reasons why and how the churches in Stavanger split into so many churches were rooted in doctrinal issues, denominational, and social-cultural. One of the reasons that some believers shifted the old denomination was the chin people of the socio-culture that cultural traits evident in their Christianity, especially when they intend to change to another church and denomination, they invited or persuaded their relatives and kinspersons to support and join them personally. Approximately in 1936, other missionaries from different denominations arrived in Chinn State and established churches. Such as Roman Catholic Church, Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church, Assembly of God, Church of Jesus Christ, United Pentecostal Church, Full Gospel Church and Church of the Rock.

I want to concentrate more on Hlimesang Movement. Thawng Hlei Thang states in his thesis because of this movement, and United Pentecostal was founded in Hmawngtlang. This movement came over the border into Myanmar to the Hualngo people of Falam subdivision during the second world war. Hualngos are most like the Luseis. Since they practiced dancing, crying, heavy breathing, bowing up toward heaven, they were broken up from Baptist and remained as an independent. This movement spread into the Hakha area, affecting first border villages of Dawn, Ralpel, Bungtlang, Lungler, and Ruabuk, etc. Then it continued south along with the border town to Ngalang, and another town among Mara, and Zophei and Thanthlang (Thawng Heli Thang 2015:34).

3.2.2 Theological

In my thesis, the reason of some believers in the three churches in Hmawngtlang was shifting their denomination in some manner, and it was affected by cultural issues which the leaders in the church lacked to update or adapting the contemporary civilization. In the other hand, the church must acknowledge the culture changed in our community and society that new generation especially, the youth is not adapted way of their parent's worship style. P. O'Callaghan talks about how faith and culture are related, it said, Faith and culture are not separated when talking about a mission "that Faith which arises from divine revelation, and culture which springs from the human spirit, invariably interact with one another" (O'Callaghan, 2017).

In doing contextual theology, Bevans Pears, discuss in his book called "*Contextual Methods in Theology: an essay in contextual theology*" that the culture of the gospel must be wisely applied in mission fields and within the church as well. Bevans is the most influential proponent of this model himself argued that the gospel could not merely be taken into context, but it has to be genuinely heard and revived within that context (S.B.Bevans, 2018: 31). For Bergmann, contextual theology is which open God's revelation presence in the very places that people find themselves. He also quoted which Bergmann explains that theology today ought to be contextual theology (Bergmann,3003:1,43).

He defines the word context at which can be transferred to other fields and its related also to the particular social, cultural and ecological situation within which a course of events takes place. In Relating to my research, the author's purpose has no relation to my thesis but which the author wanted to explain is that God revealed to the chosen people who had a particular culture, but God also speaks other countries through their customs. In my research case, this is how I want to apply the contextual theology is God spoke our parents or older people through the old culture, but in this new generation, since culture is changing, we must allow God to speak the new generation people through the culture of the new generation. On the other hand, the contemporary theologian which I called them as pastors must contextualize form and style of worship God by not only the old way but also should be in a quick manner.

Here I want to give first the definition of culture not in a broad way, but which means that I will apply to my research. Thlaawr Bawthrin defines culture as the word culture comes from the

Latin word "culture" which means cultivation (Bawthrin, 2002: 59). P.O'Callaghan quoted in his journal article of (Guardini, 1940:1-9) that there are three magnitudes which are nature, subject and culture. Nature, what we encounter or what is given to us, is transformed by the human subject, and this is what produces culture. I want to emphasize the word "cultivation" more because the culture is a group of people that cultivate from their activities (O'Callaghan, 2017).

According to David Kinnaman, there was a disconnection between the old generation and the new generation. The modern-day exile, which the author meant is the young people are exiled from the church because of the culture. It said, "every generation faced the changing culture, different social problem, and challenge, new pattern of work,....." its culture was burned which connect as bridges the young people to their spiritual heritage (Kinnaman, 2011: 76,77).

The author points of some reasons that caused the exile from the church are like the strictness and overprotective in the old culture as an old traditional way of worshiping God. The church is not adequately preparing the next generation to follow Christ faithfully in a quickly shifting civilization. Therefore, the idea that the new generation is looking for, "I want to find a way to follow Jesus that connects with the world I live in." They enjoyed their spiritual lives to be connected, to be whole, and to make sense. For instance, in Hmawngtlang's United Pentecostal Church, I myself do not want to use and play drum which older people really wanted which they possess from their old culture, for me that drum was out of date and for younger people, such music was not helpful in singing and praising God during the worship service. Such things needed to contextualize in the church's culture which is part of the form or style of worship in the new generation.

In the case of Hmawngtlang' believers in the old form of worshiping God, dancing and clapping, saying amen, and halleluiah was strictly prohibited that such things are which related to their old culture, some move-out and find out a new church for simple reasons. Dancing and clapping were forbidden. Bawi Hrin Thlaawr said, "however, the missionaries encouraged the Chins to abandon their ways of life and adhere to the Christian way, namely, the missionaries, Rev. Cope and Rev. Strait, aggressively forbade all Chin culture and tried to eliminate the existing social structure of Chin life (Bawthrin, 2002:138).

This is the reason in Hmawngtlang, dancing, playing drums, and clapping was strictly abandoned in the former church. These kinds of practices are part of the Chin peoples' culture. It is believed that the reason why Rev. Cope and Rev. Strait abandoned is it could lead the people to great sin because it has to do with drinking alcohol that takes place during the celebration of the feast. According to Lian Hmung Sakhong and Bawi Hrin Thlaawr, they extremely criticized the task of the missionaries is to maintain the culture and custom of the place where they are employed. In reflecting on the missionaries' work, "it must be written from a local perspective, with the focus on the indigenous factor rather than purely foreign missionary factor" (Sakhong, 2003:106) and (Bawihrin, 2002:160).

The reasons why so many young people today leave the church is the old way of worship, and culture and tradition of their parents had not connected with the culture in the new generation of the young people today. The church must update or change such form of worship style and adapt to a changing situation that which the young people live in. Therefore, John Mbiti said, it is needed to develop the Nigerian Church, which theology is all a western way. The case was not related to my case, but what I want to apply what he said in my situation is that since the African people not a convenient way of the western culture in the church, they must adopt the lifestyle of local people which will help them in their relationship with God because the culture is which through God speaks the people. He states that "the church will become for them a community in which their corporate aspirations are not destroyed but fulfilled and intensified, in which tribal foundations are not simply shaken and replaced with a vacuum but are made more secure in Christ" (Bediako, 992: 310).

The generation of old men and women to remain in the churches, which the missionaries were from a way of worship style based on the people on that day must be considered for the younger generation. In order to the young men and women to keep in the church, if the church is not severe in adapting the changing situation, the church will not win the people. McIntosh said that the "church could not continue to use seventeen-century language, eighteen-century architecture, twentieth-century methods if they are going to win the twenty-first-century world to Christ" (McIntosh, 2003:148-9). The point here is since the missionaries need to observe the strategy and method to reach this generation, they must apply the updated culture of the people. The same way, to approach the young people and believers today, it is needed to reform

accordance with the young culture because the old way has not connected them with Christ and not helpful for them in their spiritual life.

The important to consider for the young generation culture, David Kinnaman talks in his book *You Lost Me: Why Young Christian is Leaving the Church... and Rethinking Faith* about how the church must adopt the contemporary lifestyle the young people in this generation which keep the young people not to leave the old church. "For many young Christians, there is a realization that they want to follow Christ in a way that does not separate them from the culture. They want to be culture makers, not culture avoiders" (Kinnaman, 2011: 21,77).

The simple reason that caused to segregate the only church in Hmawngtlang into several denominations could be considered as Thlaawr Bawthrin has said, "the native Chin ministers were influenced and affected by the misconception of the missionaries regarding Chin culture" (Bawthrin, 2002: 160). The point is the culture of the new generation is highly needed to be considered. Not only that reason, but the old way of worship (culture) must also be contextualized according to the new generation culture because the environment is which transformed us differently from the old culture. Aside from the Christian perspective of culture, how its origin, churches that isolate themselves from the culture do not fish All culture is originated in God's will, but God does not design all cultures because of sin, some culture was developed evilly (McIntosh, 2003, pp. 123-124).

In the journal topic, *denominational switching and membership growth in search of a relationship*, switching denomination is seen as a signal of church growth because the church offers the believers another denomination as the better one (Hadaway 2007). The attractiveness of the church is called the growth of spirituality. In this research, it is plainly described that the church that holds an old traditional or old cultural way of worship is declining while theologically conservative or the church that is adopting a change situation which the new generation way of worship is increasing.

Regarding the missionary's work, R. Smith, the missionary commented that missionaries usurped the prerogatives of the indigenous chiefs. As the missionaries were able to extend the limits of their sufficient power, so they destroyed the tribal authority and, even before there was

any effective administration by the British South Africa Company, they had persuaded (Smith, 1999).

Africans to respect the power they wielded and to regard white men in general as superior. Open disputes and competition between mission groups also undermined the authority of Christian claims and institutions but, more importantly, the lack of doctrinal clarity blunted their ability to cut away at traditional African cosmologies and practices and to provide an effective alternative, particularly in explaining their social misfortunes.

3.2.3 Missional

In studying missiology, the instruction that the disciples were given by Jesus. First to evangelize the people, the geographical location, such as Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the world. In this section, mainly I want to focus more on evangelism and the place where the gospel must be preached. I will look further at the word evangelism and proselytism then differentiate.

3.2.3.1 Proselytism

In the book of John White Jr. and Richard C. Martin that edited by Martin E. Marty, "*Sharing the Book: Religious Perspectives on the Rights and Wrongs of Proselytism*" the word Proselytism is discussed in the human rights perspective that had a negative connotation. The word proselytism comes from the Greek word "Proseelutos" which means one who has come to a place (Marty, 1999: 1). The word of proselytism relating to my research, there is a similar word that used in my hometown which is called as the word "crusade". This crusade is used for the program to evangelize unbelievers and the believers. In the case of the unbelievers, it is helpful for the church to bring the unsaved people to God's family. But when it comes to using within the believers, this program is resulting in the war for souls because the intention of the crusader is not to revive the souls, but it is to steal other church members to his or her church. when some people are converted into the crusader's belief, the crusader builds and establish his own church in that place. This program is which caused the church to split into many denominations in my hometown. It is treating as the program that destroyed the unity of the spirit of the church. the misuse of the place, it becomes the program of stealing other church 's members.

Was Looking at the original meaning that has synonym as a stranger. David A. Kerr expounds the word Proselytism in biblical perspective, and it is the synonym of evangelism (Kerr, 1999). The Hebrew word for proselyte is "ger" which means stranger. During the Old Testament, the Deuteronomist taught that the proselytes-stranger was to be honored among the Jews who had themselves been a stranger in Egypt (Deut.10:19). Jesus' s name is which caused the controversy among the Jews that it must be incorporated with Pharisaic. New Testament references to Jewish proselytes among the first Christians indicate that they were welcome members of the early church (Acts2,6,13).

When it came in the eighteenth century, the term came to have the negative connotations in the missionary movement in the colonial era. Martin E. Marty, who wrote the book called *Sharing the Book: Religious Perspectives on the Rights and Wrongs of Proselytism in human right perspective* that even though some other writers accept the word proselytism as evangelism in the legal term. But for him, he states the proselytizer violates boundaries and disrupts traditions that he more concerned with enlarging his community than caring for the integrity of others. He also considered him as a competitor with other churches or denominations (Marty, 1999: 2).

According to Johnson, he defines and illustrates the meaning of the proselytism, and it is totally in error because "coercing another to join one's religious group will be a violation of the others fundamental right to follow his or her religious tradition (Marty, 1999: 337).

For Fr. Leo Walsh, he lists them of problems of proselytism:

He describes the issues of the proselytism as making unjust or uncharitable references to other churches' believes and practices and even ridiculing them, comparing two Christians communities by emphasizing the achievements and ideals of one, and the weaknesses and practical problems of the other, employing any kind of physical violence moral compulsion and psychological pressure, using political , social and economic power as a means of winning new members for one's own church, extending explicit or implicit offers of education, health care or material inducements or using financial resources with the intent of making converts, manipulative attitudes and practices that exploit people's needs, weaknesses or lack of education especially in situations of distress, and fail to respect their freedom and human dignity. The problem with proselytism as it is understood in the twenty-first century is that, by doing the wrong thing for the right reason, the result is not increasing the unity but increasing the division in the Body of Christ. One can be very sincere, but very very wrong (Fr. Leo Walsh, 2002, p. 3).

The primary task of Evangelism and Proselytism in doing the mission is to work toward the conversion of heathens or outside the church. As the location of how the disciplines of Jesus would be preaching the good news was given first to unbelievers in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the world (Acts 1:8). The two words, if it is using the purpose of faith "transformation", then it is illegal (Marty, 1999: 348) but when it comes to using in the purpose of church growth in membership, then is treated it as "misleading" (Marty, 1999.344).

Thus, the reason that the misused of the wrong location that many Protestants do not even consider the Orthodox Church to be a proper church that missionaries from western countries and Asia brought their denominations to where the Orthodox Church already existed. The reason that the two words that used in legally in the early church were not accepted positively and treated as negatively (Bourdeaux, 1999: 8). The perspective from human rights, it is hard to say that proselytism is right and wrong. Silvio Ferrari also states that "one group evangelization is another group's proselytism" (Alexander, 2010: 254). When the proselytizer proselytizes, he violates the proselytizer right. According to this author, proselytism has a negative meaning that roots are to be found in the notion of religious membership" which purpose is opposite with evangelism.

In Hmawngtlang village, during 1942, there was only one denomination called ABM but the improper field of evangelism which is the task of mission, the proselytizer introduced the new denomination called UPC by conducting crusades which also can be considered as a program that to convert the members of their denomination. If the word "revival" is used in such program for awakening or reviving all souls in the purpose of its church or denomination, that will be more appropriate. The intention or original meaning of the evangelize or proselytizer which word that considered as the synonym, when someone applied, it must be accorded with its original purpose.

Lack of not knowing the original meaning that it led and caused the church to segregate into two denominations or give birth a new denomination which against the teaching of the Scripture. Because of the proselytism, there were shifting and switching denomination. "It is evident that these different conceptions of entering and leaving the church are reflected from the proselytism (Alexander, 2010: 256). In the case of the Russian Orthodox Church, the missionaries from different denominations considered some members as Christian even though

they have already the baptism. The reason of why they treated them as the believers because they did not live in a manner which is not consistent with his religious, " the Pentecostal groups convinced that religious membership depends on a conscious personal choice but no longer practices his faith."

Evangelism, from the Greek, the combination word, "Eu (good) and Aggelion (message) eeuaggelion" basically the meaning is preaching or announcing the good news as "the act of preaching or proclaiming the good news of Jesus the Christ" (Marty, 1999: 336). Church planting is essential to expand the kingdom of God, and it is the purpose of reaching the people. Ed Stetzer said church planting is considered as the program for stealing members from other churches nearby (Stetzer, 2006: 5) it is true that for the case of my hometown after planted a new church, the members from the old church shifted their denominations to the new one.

The intention of the church planter is essential that if he planted his church among the unbelievers, that would be considered as biblical church planning like the apostle Paul in Gentile countries. The mission is the heart of the Bible in the perspective of missiology; therefore, many Christians spread the good news to the whole world according to each belief system of the denomination. The word Revival and Crusade, which apply within the church that make problem in some sense that it causes stealing members from other churches. Therefore, evangelism is the task of the missionaries that are applying to spread the gospel. Because of doing a revival and crusade place to place within the already Christian community, some believers were converted to another denomination; therefore, the term proselytism is which came from evangelism. In contrast, revivalism is (Peterson,1993: 292) a kind of method that used to each the unconverted in the church and the lost outside the church. Methodist and Baptist applied this kind of evangelism in 17 centuries in the United States.

In the perspective of the mission, God revealed to every tribe and the whole world in own language which he based on Acts, in Pentecost day all people understood when the believers began to speak in other tongues. Therefore, Mbiti said, "the church will become for them a community in which their corporate aspirations are not destroyed but fulfilled and intensified, in which tribal foundations are not simply shaken and replaced with a vacuum but are made more secure in Christ" (Mbiti 1992.310).

Finally, throughout data collecting and literature review, the finding could be divided into two kinds which at first, the cause of the switching church is because of the shifters spiritual concern and the second one is the opposite of the first one that it is based on the physical matter (personal issue) between members and leaders. Therefore, the thesis will more focus on the spiritual problem that the identity of a person as culture relates to his spiritual relation to God.

3.3 Summary

To sum up, this is the thesis, theory chapter that discusses how the researcher is going to formulate the hypothesis based on the existing theory of the preview review relating to the same issues that caused the shifting and switching churches or denomination because several reasons that were happening among the believers. Mainly, the theory of research is based on the three books called "Discover your Soul' path to God," that God created each man is unique and with different personalities to have a relationship with the creator. Through that personality, men and women find and have a relationship with God that the author described as many relationships to the only one God, which he meant all churches and denominations as a group of people that belong to the same personalities.

The Complete Guide to Christian Denominations: Understanding the History, Beliefs, and Differences, the author, Ron Rhodes describes how and why the church that called the universal church come to exist and split into several denominations that we have so many churches today. Especially, the writer based on the historical movement in the United States, and the second book is also called "*Proselytism and Orthodoxy in Russia: The New War for Souls*" edited by John Witte Jr. and Michael Bourdeaux. The second author writes the book in human right perspective that the missionaries from a different place such as from Western countries and Asian countries who brought their denominations the place where there was only the church called the Russian Orthodox Church that split into several churches. This book is about the war for souls as entitled the book.

The theoretical perspective from the sources that the researcher wants to gain the information to support the research problem that why and what caused the believers were segregated as a church and switched from the old denomination to the new one. Firstly, the research has dealt with the church history that who and why separated and divided among the believers. Discovery out the reasons that cause the problem of the split is what a person experiences, new faith and

try to build the new one for his own. The case also shows that the reason that some brothers and sisters switched and shifted their denomination is simply because of the so many existing churches allowed them to their own choice. Secondly, theological issues that cause the believers to find the new place especially the young people. Since there are so many cultures in the world, based on that culture God communicate the people according to local culture.

Therefore, contextual theology is discussed because in this twenty-first century or we should say the younger generation, there were so many young believers left churches and denominations. Their problems were their parent's way of worshipping God is not helpful for them to draw near to God. On the other hand, between the old form of worship style and the contemporary style that the young people have not connected with the church. Gary L. McIntosh said in his book called Biblical Church growth that we want to win the new generation, and we should not forget the sixteen-century culture. His point is the church must adopt a changing situation so that all the people will remain in the church without finding a new church. Thirdly, emotional issues are discussed, especially proselytism and evangelism.

According to the Scripture, initially, these two words have the same meaning, and it was a legal term for the early believers, but when it passes it to the sixteen and twenty-one century, the word proselytism was treated as a violation of the other rights. This was mostly used the already believers, not the unchurched; therefore, it is considered as the activity that used for stealing the church members from other nearby churches.

4 Methodological Approach

In this chapter, I am going to present and discuss the research methodology. And I will describe the method of collecting data and how I am going to analyze the research material and justify my choices.

4.1 Research method

Alan Bryman illustrates several research methods in his book called *Social Research Method*. The qualitative research method is relevant to my thesis since the research has a specific field and a group of people to interview them. Therefore, in my research, the qualitative research method is applied because the investigation is about the faith transformation and experiences that deals with "not a number," but "words" "ideal and people" (Vyhmeister, 2008, p. 162) and (Bryman, 2012, p. 380). The qualitative research is most applicable because the study has a specific group of people to deal with how their faiths were transformed and experienced which allowed and forced them to leave the old denomination and find the new one. The purpose of choosing a qualitative research method to investigate the transformation of the beliefs of the shifters and switchers of the denomination is to answer the central question of the thesis. The qualitative research method is the only way that I could attain the experiences of the leaver of the old church by conducting the interview why and how many beliefs have changed.

Since the researcher is a student at MF. Norwegian School of Theology, Religion, and Society. To collect data, books that support the thesis such as book, magazine, journal and online material, the MF library is the central place that used for thesis materials gathering. Then, the interview is the primary method used for data collecting in the research field, which is called Hmawngtlang, Thangtlang township, Chin State, Myanmar.

4.2 Research design

The case study is applied in the research as a framework for gathering and examining the data. It drives to observe the causes in detail and care. It concentrates on explaining the unique features of the case (Bryman, 2012: 71). A little town called Hmawngtlang is selected as a case study for the research. The interview is the primary research method used for data collection. The sub-questions are used for the interview guide, and by answering them by the interviewees, the central question of the thesis will be solved as well. As I have chosen a small group of people, purposive sampling is applied.

4.3 Interview

The interview is used for primary research methodology, and it helps me to get the information from the interviewees who are "relevant and important" (Bryman, 2012, p. 470) in the transformation and experiences of their faith that forced them to shift the old denomination and find out the new church. There are nine interviewees. Four of the interviewees are pastors from each denomination which are American Baptist Mission Church, United Pentecostal Church, and Assembly of God. The choosing to interview the pastors because they know their members each very well that the reason for some who left the old denomination do not know how to explain because of losing their memory since they are old enough. Consequently, their ministers could give the appropriate information about the faith transformation and experiences of the shifters. The five interviewees are those who shifted church or denomination because of their personal experience and change of their belief that lead and force them to leave out the church.

Since the research was about those, who switch off the denomination in the past that bear to recall life history, therefore I pick up the qualitative research interview that has " rich and detailed answers" (Bryman, 2012: 470). And then, the sub-questions are utilized as the interview guide" (Bryman, 2012, p. 213). The unstructured interview and oral history interview are used because it is "in which the respondent is required to remember results from his or her past and to meditate on them" (Bryman, 2012, p. 213). The "rich and detailed answers" and the "important and relevant" come up from the interviewees how they have understood their past experiences and transformation of their faith by interviewing them. The interview is the primary research method applied in this thesis to collect and gather the data from the field that chosen for the case study.

All information that I got from the interviewees from four pastors and five shifters were a transcript in my field note. The research field is the place where I belong and grew up in, in the interview, I used the dialect of Hmawngtlang that I could easily communicate with the people and it helps me to get a definite meaning, and it also offers me a better comfort. After I have done interviews, I have translated into English that it takes time to edit and check several times.

4.4 Selection of informants and formulate the interview guide

Many believers shifted their denominations in Chin State, Myanmar that I have chosen to focus on the three denominations in Hmawngtlang which have around seven hundred populations. Since the thesis is the sort of qualitative research that had selected nine individuals to interview, Bryman states a specific group of people has been chosen for the goal of the research question, sample random has not called for (Bryman, 2012:408). On the other hand, it is said that snowball sampling defines the technique of the research. The small group of people is relevant to the research questions. The sampled participants propose other participants who have had the experience or characteristic corresponding to the research (Bryman, 2012:424).

The interviewees are nine in total that four of them are pastors. In choosing participants, I have applied purposive and criterion sampling because these pastors knew their members how their spiritual life is and why some of their members left the church. Aside from the leavers of the church, I have chosen five persons to pull forward and serve the research questions which will be the case of the shifting denomination in my hometown. The standard sampling and purposive is applied for selecting participants for the interview. Since the research has a particular group of people that used purposive sampling (Silverman, 2005:129) as the theoretical framework is which allows me to choose a case that illustrates some feature or process in which the researcher interested.

4.5 Method for analyzing the material

To obtain the information, I have applied the research method as qualitative. It is believed that the information which will be collected and received through the interview are essential materials for the research. All the information was noted in my notebook while I was interviewing the interviewee. After getting in touch with the interviewee, I plan and schedule for the meeting. And then, I go forward to interview all the selected informants at a different time. The primary topics that mentioned in the interviews with the informants are about crusade

or evangelist meeting, became dedicated to God, doctrinal issues, denominational issues, spiritual freedom, spiritual nurturement, a form of worship, more fed spiritual food, and more enthusiasm or became a godly man. The data which is collected and saved in my notebook are which will answer the primary question of the thesis that stated in the introduction chapter. Again, the interview is chosen for primary research method because as the inquiry is concerned with personal experience and the transformation of the belief that what and how a person has been changed in his or her trust in the past.

The causes that are obtained from the interview are the product of the culture that not utilized by the people of the Chin because it is a God-given culture which is based on John 1 incarnation. As we see the nature of God, the Father, through the lifestyle of Jesus, which is found in the discussion of Philip and Jesus that Philip asked Jesus to show him his father. Jesus said, if you see me then you will see my father because I in him and he is in me (John 14:9). The point is through the culture of Jesus, and people can also recognize God's nature. On the other hand, culture is which form a person being, and it is the way of his life to express and make value him. Therefore, since God revealed and spoke the people through their culture like in Acts, John, the missionary that prohibited some parts of the culture of the chin people cause not incompatible and inconvenience in a worship service in the church.

4.6 Research ethics

In ethical matters of research in which the researcher deals with the whole process of the thesis. The ethical issues in the argument are about "how should we treat the people with whom we conduct research?" (Bryman, 2012:130). To prevent the negative consequences from the informants, the ethical issues must be considered. In the process of the thesis, the first step that the researcher must do is to contact each pastor and present them my intention of doing interviews with some of the church members. To have the consent of the minister of the church is essential. After the permission was given, I was dealing with the persons that I have chosen to interview with them. Each pastor of the three churches had used them as a pilot who drives all passengers in the airplane and as a door guard in the security guard house to access the inside of the building to get in touch with my selected sources. I considered the pastors also like the window that leads me to discover the outside perspective. It means that pastors are helpful to me in acting and conducting interviews for data aggregation in the three churches.

Since some of them were not willing to put their actual name in the thesis to prevent the potential of negative consequences forms in the interviewees. The reason I must keep the ethical principle is not "to harm the participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy, and deception" (Bryman, 2012:135).

4.7 Question about the quality of the research

4.7.1 Reliability and validity

According to David Silverman, qualitative research leads to an absolute preciousness about the validity and reliability of the researcher's interpretation of interview respondents (Silverman, 2005: 211). In qualitative research, reliability and validity are essential two essential principles to show the quality of the study. The author states that to convince the audience that the finding of the researcher is genuinely based on the critical investigation of all the data is not enough to make the research validity; therefore, it should also depend on some other example. The external reliability considered that it "refers to the degree to which findings can be generalized across social setting" and the degree to which the study can be replicated (Bryman, 2012, p. 390).

Bryman illustrates the external reliability that a qualitative researcher replicating ethnographic research needs to adopt a similar social role to that adopted by the original researcher. On the case of the study, the reliability and validity also are based on this and applied that the selected group of people to interview in order to get the information that what and how some believers left the old denomination, the causes and issues are compared to how the history has the story of the split into several denominations and church from the early church which is founded in the book of Acts. In comparing the causes to the case study and the case of the church history tracing back throughout the centuries, there were similarity causes and issues. These have shown that the validity and reliability of the research makes and values the data in high quality. It is believed that the experience and transformation of faith that lead to shifting denomination, the fact that finding out through the interview from the selected informants will be agreed by the other researcher as well.

David Silverman states the word "validity is another word for truth" that evaluate the qualitative research "trustworthiness and authenticity" (Silverman, 2005, p. 210) and (Bryman, 2012, p.

390). The trustworthiness and authenticity of the quantitative and qualitative research parallel as credibility and internal validity, transferability and external validity, dependability and reliability, and confirmability and objectivity are the four criteria of the trustworthiness of the qualitative social research. The social reality of the fact that happened to Hmawngtlang believers of some switching their denomination is especially evident of the trustworthiness criterion of credibility.

In regards transferability of the finding to another context shows the truth about the external validity of the qualitative research (Bryman, 2012, p. 392) in contrast, the fact that "hold in some other context" is the transferability.

Dependability as reliability (Bryman, 2012:392) the whole the process of the thesis, I as the researcher is the one who interviews in person the interviewees and collects the data, take notes in the field, interview transcript, and make data analysis. On the other hand, the research question and sub-questions are formulated and drawing to the conclusion.

Confirmability is the fourth criterion that evaluates the research`s objective of the study. The interview as a research method to collect data give "rich answer and details" and the literature review of the related finding will be the source of the research theory that gains credibility and authenticity.

5 Presentation of the findings divulged

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the purpose of the results of both groups interviewed. Four pastors as interviewees belong to the first, and five faith switchers formed the second group. Primarily, the finding relies on the responses from pastors, shifters, and coming up from the literature review. The main research question is "Why do some believers in the Hmawngtlang shift from their faith and denomination to another?" Consequently, the faith switchers stated determinants relevant to the thesis problem. The four ministers gave familiar and may be unreliable responses.

This researcher consulted with literature review and preview on paper of a similar problem happening elsewhere in the world. Discoveries from the literature review supplement the reliability and validity of the thesis problem.

5.2 Research Sub-questions

These sub-questions served as an interview guide as stated in the methodology chapter. Also, each of the two groups has different questions. Furthermore, to protect their right to privacy, disclosure to their identity will be during the interview findings.

5.2.1 Interview question with the Pastors

1. Name of pastors
2. Ministry experiences
3. Is there shifting faith and switching denomination when are serving the church?
4. What are the causes of the shifters to move out of the church?
5. How can the church prevent leaving the church?
6. Do you consider the case of shifting faith has positive and minus?

5.2.2 The interview question with Shifters

1. Name of shifters
2. Former denomination name
3. Year of shifting faith and switching over the church
4. What is the case of his or her faith transformation?
5. Are there any differences between the doctrine the old and the new church?
6. What is the benefit of having and belonging the new denomination?

5.3 *Finding from an interview with pastors*

In this section, the four selected pastors responded to how and what they understood and observed when some members moved out of their church into another preferred denomination. As stated, the issue of this research is: What caused the transformation in the shifters and compel them to leave the church and find a new denomination? Thus, the interview with the pastors deals with issues which caused members to leave the church. Moreover, this researcher solicited the causes and perspectives on the motives for leaving the church? Also, if someone moved into his church what possible reasons did, he has in mind? The actual names of the interviewees are not revealed to protect and prevent violation of their rights. Instead, they would be referred to as pastor # 1, 2, 3, and 4 and same for the shifters.

5.3.1 Interview with Pastors

5.3.1.1 Interview One

Pastor 1 belongs to the American Baptist Mission Church. He ministered to the church as the Senior Pastor for 14 years since the year 2004 to 2018. The interview was on November 20, 2018. Accordingly, some members left the church during his term of office. He listed some reasons as: first and vital is how well the members understand the beliefs and practices of former as opposed to the new faith. He observed the shifters assumed the new system of beliefs and practices true based on their understanding. To check such shifting, Pastor 1 recommended training programs on the doctrine of the church to strengthen and solidify their faith. He stated Crusades and revival meetings are some avenues of awakening their spiritual life.

Secondly, conflicts within the church compel members to leave. Understandably, people with diverse personalities compose the church; thus, disagreement is inevitable. Although this source is not spiritual, it significantly affects the membership. Moreover, he stated conflict within the

church arose from the dispute in meetings, personal opposition to others, and the lack of home visitation. For illustration, a pastor failed to call on his member confined in a hospital, but a minister from another denomination visited; thus, the patient's family feel loved by the other pastor. Conversely, the ways and leadership styles of ministers may hurt and cause some members to leave the church.

Lastly, Pastor 1 claimed some members loved freedom in both spiritual and physical matters. He pointed out some members engaged in the word of God want more involvement not only in the ministry but also in the decision-making in the church affairs. This created animosity when the deciding body rules out their propositions during the meetings. Furthermore, these people condemn their leader. Therefore, they find places they can express their spiritual and physical freedom. Conversely, different denominations with varying doctrines and belief systems engage crusades, religious campaigns and revival meetings to gather people. Thus, searching people are easily influenced by the system of beliefs, and they want to practice but prohibited by their former church.

5.3.1.2 Interview Two

Pastor 2 belongs to the same denomination as Pastor 1. He served the church from 2014 to 2018 as an assistant pastor. Pastor 2 identified discrimination as one reason members leave the church. The dissatisfaction of members arose from pastors who practiced favoritism and triggered them to find a welcoming and loving church. Additionally, poverty motivated some members to leave the church. The church could not meet their physical needs; thus, members transfer to a church that can provide their physical needs.

As with interviewee 1, pastor two stated members followed the minister who visited and prayed when they were in a difficult situation. He further noted that such members wanted spiritual freedom to exercise their faith but were abated by the elders of the church. Allegedly, the stern and legalistic practices of the church compel some believers to leave their denomination. Noticeably, after a crusade three or four members were converted and accepted the new doctrine. Interviewee 2 asserts disagreement in the agenda of a meeting, conflict in the church and neglect of the pastor to visit as inconsequential. He stated such new converts must learn from the Samaritan woman at the well who, after knowing the truth about the Messiah invited others as she had experienced.

5.3.1.3 Interview Three

The third pastor belonged to a different denomination called United Pentecostal. He served as assistant pastor from the year 2012 to 2018. According to this pastor, confusion on the major church doctrines such as Trinity, Oneness, and Pneumatology triggered the switch in faith. Whereby, rejection of the works of the Holy Spirit existed in the former denomination. Accordingly, insincere devotion to the word of God resulted in a shallow faith. Thus, without firm stand shifters quickly abandon their doctrine.

Moreover, families with different denomination believed they stay and worship together under one hence persuaded relatively to join them. Finally, he pointed out the weak leadership resulting in uncaring and neglect compelled believers to switch. The pastor's sincere love for his members thwarted shifting of faith.

5.3.1.4 Interview Four

The fourth pastor is serving the church of Assembly of God. He entered the ministry in the year 2016 to 2018. He points out some problems that cause the shifting faith and switching denomination. Foremost, the church that does not allow revival song or contemporary songs which songs are mostly young people who love to sing. However, the church does not like much that some believers did not touch their hearts by the old hymnal which the old men and women loved. The switching denomination and changing faith are the results of the church that do not want to change the old way to the new approach. On the other hands, the church is more favorable and prefer to keep the old tradition and the old form of worship.

Secondly, he gives the reason why a member leaves the old church is depending on a person not much engaging his or her time in spending in the spiritual things such as reading the scripture, studying the Bible, not having a prayer life. If a person is not having spiritual, because of not knowing his or her faith is the root that when he heard the teaching of the Bible that he changed his faith and denomination quickly. He added weak faith as the root of the problem of leaving the old church. Being not knowing own faith clearly and not having a strong faith, and not having a holy life living which is the product of lack of having a relationship with God. Fasting, reading, and studying the scripture are which the pastor is referring to the spiritual life that the shifters and switchers being neglected in his or her Christian life. According to this pastor, leaving the old faith and church, he thinks only negatively.

From the interview with the four pastors, most of the reasons that they point out, there is the relationship with each other which also have a favorable view that shifting is more on spiritual concerns and a negative aspect is that the leaver's reasons are related with the physical or social concerns. Mostly, most of the pastors view the shifter why his or her faith has changed and changed their denomination negatively. The reasons that they point out have similar thoughts and understanding upon the problem or the cause of a personal faith transformation that leads to finding out the new church where he feels more secure and suitable for his or her souls.

5.4 Finding from an interview with shifters

5.4.1 Interview with Shifters

5.4.1.1 Interview One

In 2013, shifter one moved from the American Baptist Church to the Assembly of God. Interestingly, the evangelistic preaching from the Assembly of God in righteous living convicted her. Living a holy life stemmed from the belief the body is the temple of God hence a need for holiness. Furthermore, she stated the absence of a call to the altar and the form of worship compelled her to switch the denomination. Conversely, she expressed the Assembly of God more spiritual.

Even though both denominations are Trinitarian, while ABMC is not practicing which the Assembly of God Church practice speaking in tongue, dancing, clapping of hands, and shouting Amen or Hallelujah, the former church is very strict in such practices that prohibited in the church. Also, she claimed the new denomination was more helpful and purposeful to her spiritual life, offering a better and meaningful relationship with God.

5.4.1.2 Interview Two

Shifter 2 was born and raised in the American Baptist Mission Church. Indeed, he served as a deacon for two years. Also, according to him, in his former denomination, he felt a call from God to pray in the church. Thus, prayed for three whole years. Afterward, however, he prayed in the nearby forest; specifically, in Pha tlang. Subsequently, he acquired property and farmed for the entire year. During his leisure time, he faithfully read the Bible. Upon studying the Bible, he discovered baptism is imperative to salvation. For instance, he read in the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 28, Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize in the name of the Father, the

Son, and the Holy Spirit. However, in the book of Acts, believers were baptized only in the name of Jesus. Therefore, he desired baptism in the name of Jesus.

Consequently, after delving into the Scriptures, he concluded that only Jesus is the true God worthy of worship. These realizations constrained shifter 2 to seek a church that practiced his discoveries. He affirmed the United Pentecostal Church. However, despite the sincere desire to change his denomination, his decision was vetoed by the separation of church affiliation from his wife. He also needed to finish his term of service as a deacon.

Finally, he cited the third reason for remaining in the former church was to avoid a conflict with his wife. Thus, he waited for the perfect time to inform his family. Also, this interviewee believed God would make way for him to switch. Indeed, after several years the United Pentecostal Church held a Bible Conference in a small village called Zabung. Accordingly, his wife expressed a desire to attend the occasion. Undoubtedly, she prayed and fasted during the conference. After returning home, she recounted her experience which was the same as his. At that moment, he shared his secret he kept for years. Subsequently, his entire family was converted to the United Pentecostal Church.

In contrast, the former church and the current denomination have a different understanding of the doctrine of God.

5.4.1.3 Interview Three

The third shifter moved out from the American Baptist Mission Church to the Assembly of God in January 2013. Accordingly, a crusade by the Assembly of God facilitated their change of denomination; whereas the Assembly of God practices speaking in tongues, but the American Baptist Church does not. Also, shifter 3 affirmed the Assembly of God more helpful to their spiritual life. He also claimed, practicing such spiritual discipline brought them into a closer relationship with God. Finally, he stated after moving into the new denomination, and his family became devoted and sincere Christians.

5.4.1.4 Interview Four

The fourth shifter currently attends services at the United Pentecostal Church. He and his family moved out of the American Baptist Mission Church on January 8, 2008. Conversely, a new

understanding of the doctrine of Trinity convicted his heart: whereas, the American Baptist Church puts their faith in the Trinity, namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as one God while the United Pentecostal Church trust in Jesus Christ alone as the true God who wrought salvation. Undoubtedly, a conviction that Jesus alone is the true God was the primary reason he moved to the new denomination. Hence, after the acquiescent acceptance of the doctrine of Oneness, he sought the baptism in the name of Jesus alone.

5.4.1.5 Interview Five

The first converted member of the Assembly of God from ABMC is shifter five. As a result of a crusade held at her house, this denomination was established in January 1996. This interviewee is one of the leaders among the 45 members of the church. Indeed, she claimed the crusade abetted her to grasp and know the true doctrine of the Bible.

In contrast to the doctrine of her former church, she supposed some practices such as speaking in tongue, dancing, shouting during the service being endorsed. In fact, she claimed the practice of such conveyed spiritual freedom whereby she could communicate and have a relationship with God freely. Hence, she believed she became more religious and devoted to every aspect of her Christian faith.

5.5 *Summary of findings with the interview*

The above correspondences reveal that the general motivation for the shifting of faith was initiated by the crusades of the diverse denominations with divergent doctrines. Significantly, all the respondents expressed a high concern for spiritual things that may affect their spiritual life. Thus, they have indeed sought congregations where they could exercise their beliefs.

6 Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presents the data collected from the interviews. Following are some reasons cited for switching denomination. First, though the objective was not to persuade members of other faiths, a significant number of the brothers and sisters changed after attending the said crusades.

The second reason was attributed to their spiritual and social concern. Chiefly, the respondents claimed that the leaders of the church neglected members experiencing a stressful situation such as illness, family problems, personal issues, and poverty. And in order to alleviate difficulties, switchers sought membership in another denomination that can satisfy their needs.

Lastly, reasons solicited from the pastors were socio-cultural issues, conflict with leaders and fellow members, and spiritual freedom introduced by the evangelists from a different belief system.

6.2 Scope and Construction

This discussion chapter is coordinated to correspond to the Sub-questions that hit up my research targets. I discuss out this sub-topic by combing relevant theory with analysis of the findings attained through my consultations with the pastors, and shifters and switchers of faiths and denominations. The role of discussion chapter is to build up useful insights to answer my research question and Sub-questions in the closing section. So, a summary of each subtopic will be given to guide out its essential insights. Moreover, the data from the pastor's perspectives and the findings from the literature review will be used to examine the information collected from the shifters whose experienced personally shifting faith and changing the churches.

6.3 Findings of the Causes of Shifting and Switching

Reflecting on the theory chapter, the underlying theory that applied in order to analyze the conclusions that cause shifting faith and switching denomination is based on which Kathy Escobar used the approach of "so many faiths, so many shifters" in her research about why young people in Canada left the church recently (Escobar, 2014, p. 20). The reasons that some brothers and sisters leave the former faith and church because everyone has a different personality. God created everyone person uniquely.

In looking into the history of the split of the churches, the causes of the separation and the reasons were related and had a connection with which Gary Thomas describes the sacred pathways that have nine personalities which each one uses in relationship and communication with God by worshiping (Thomas, 1996). These personalities are which caused the universal church into many denominations today because of each theologian, or believers view the truth about God according to the Bible.

In dealing with the cases of shifting faith and switching denomination in Hmawngtlang, it is needed to consult with the church history, which I based on the book called (Rhodes, 2005) why and how it was segregated. When we talk about freedom, in reality, this freedom relies on the personality that a person possessed, therefore, in a relationship with God, personality is which every person uses in his or her daily relationship with God.

The result of the interview, it is the way that God called the shifters and switchers according to how God created them with a unique personality. This is how the preview research on this topic commented about changing faith that C. Kirk Hadaway, 2019 held by Alston 1971 and Hadaway 1978 observed according to their research outcome, those who remain in the former faith and the church, and those who shifted their convictions and switched their denominations.

Those who shifted faith and switched their churches have considered them as the sincere believers because after being encountered with God and experienced the truth about God, they move out from the old doctrine and church because the former one is helping them with their growth in spiritually. Then, those who remained in the old faith have considered them also as

who satisfied the old traditional way of worshipping God and not much interest in the personal experience instead of enjoying within the heritage one of their parents.

It is true that those who shifted faith and switched their denomination in Hmawngtlang, they are an enthusiast and religious people compare to their past beliefs according to them. s, there was significant being converted their faith and transferred to the new church looking back to their lives before and after. On the other hands, when someone experienced God and encountered with God, then changed his or her way which is different from the old way; therefore, they find out the atmosphere where they can freely exercise and express. Since the former church doctrine did not allow and prohibited some brothers and sisters in Hmawngtlang when they have the new spiritual blessing that they have the experience, but still the church still controlled them not to practice what they have a new one that allows them to find out a new place.

The reasons why someone left the old church is because there is no connection between the old doctrine and the new doctrine. Kathy Escobar (Escobar, 2014) concludes as the faith shifters did not mind leaving the old church because they are convinced that shifting faith and switching church is not losing God but to have a better relationship with God instead. Changing and shifting belief it not what thee shifters have in their minds according to the interviews; their faith should not hold by the old church teaching. For them, this is how they feel that it is better to live accordingly with the will of God instead of obeying human.

Proceeding to the theological issues that have a connection with the research problem is called contextual theology that less considered in the church rooted the problems of believers not experience the core spiritual things. For instance, in the case of Nigeria, Africa, there was a conflict with the western church theology that some of the theologian's rethink about their faith in the church and practices. What they struggled with the problems is such term of God 'name that borrowed from western culture (Bediako, 1992). They cited the book of Acts that when the fires as tongue rested upon the believers and began to speak in other tongues that those who heard them understood in their language. This the same thing that African theologian felt that the church must have its own identity that God must speak to the people of Africa in their tongue and culture. Their church theology must not come from western culture.

Discussing more changing faith and moving out of the old church has a connection with the word crusade and evangelistic meeting. The American Baptist Mission Church was the first church established in Hmawngtlang and after a few years, the new belief introduced. Thawng Hlei Thang, who researched how the Stavanger Church split into many churches. he comes up with some reasons why the existed church of the United Pentecostal in Chin State, Myanmar. The idea that UPC founded in Hmawngtlang village was because of the Hlim Sang movement that comes from Mizo ram, India. In Russia, because of the missionary, the existed church called the Russian Orthodox Church was split into several churches. Because of the missionaries from the western and Asia, introduced them to their own beliefs system that causes the split (Thang, 2015). Therefore, the Russian Orthodox Church considered the missionaries the destroyer of the unity of the spirit (Bourdeaux, 1999).

The foreign missionaries miss applied the location for their mission field that from the human right perspective, their evangelism considered as proselytizing which the negative connotation. The proselytism is the illegal term for evangelism that caused the Russian Orthodox Church to split. Therefore, proselytism is called a War of Souls. Proselytism is which contributes to shifting faith and switching denomination. The outcome of proselytizing had the negative connotation that it is the improper term that miss applied in the mission field by the missionaries. This proselytism has a connection with the believers that why some brothers and sisters in Hmawngtlang, shifted their faith and changed their church because of the new belief that introduced by the evangelist from a different denomination. Thus, proselytism is which cause the existed sect called American Baptist Mission Church split into three denominations in Hmawngtlang village.

By the human right perspective, proselytize is viewed as stealing other church members and also violate other religion right and freedom. The evangelism must take place where there is no existing church. For instance, the Hlim Sang movement that introduced the Hmawngtlang village the new denomination called the United Pentecostal Church that forced the old church called the American Baptist Missionary Church segregated. Assembly of God has the same reason as UPC in her existing in Hmawngtlang village.

6.3.1 Experience of faith' transformation from shifters

6.3.1.1 Interview 1

In the change of the faith of the shifter, one is the program called crusade from outside the former church. This crusade of the soul's renovation program was which some believers from the old church faced and stolen their members. The word proselytizes in the first century, and it has a positive connotation that the people of the Jews concern and reverence because of what the God of Old Testament said that you also had been a stranger in Egypt that you must love them. The problem of the crusade and proselytizers is the intention that the "Proselytizers want to turn aliens into kin, and they are often motivated by the belief that it would be good for those who are still alien to become part of the fold" (Fr. Leo Walsh, 2002:2).

The proselytizing is what the old church faced in the past that evangelistic meeting held by the other denomination, such as UPC and AG that the former church segregated. This case also is faced in Russia mentioned in the first chapter in Introduction that the only church that existed known as the Russian Orthodox Church split because of the missionaries from Europe and Asia that brought their doctrine of a belief system that they evangelized them instead with the unbelievers or unchurched (Bourdeaux, 1999).

For some churches, they have a church plantation program that evangelized the other church members and converted them into their beliefs and planted a church in that area that some believers considered them such churches as stealing other church members. In the book of Stetzer called *Planting missional church* states that some missional churches were missing applied, the location of their mission field that took place in where the churches were already existed (Stetzer, 2006: 5,43). Therefore, what they did good things, but it becomes the wrong thing because of such the intention of the church and the evangelists.

The second reason that she had mentioned is spiritual freedom that after being changed her faith, to practice and exercise her faith freely, the place is significant for her soul. Therefore, she finds out the denomination called the Assembly of God. The African theologian named Bediako commented on the issues that they faced in the church of Nigeria that he called the church as a place where all the believers expressed their faith freely and encountered and experienced the Spirit and nurture their faith as well (Bediako, 1992).

The last reason that why she had to move out of the old church was the form of worship in the old church is not helping her in her spiritual relationship with God. Therefore, it is said by Kinnaman that why the young people left the church was because of the culture (Kinnaman, 2011). Since the culture is changing as time pass through, the people of this new generation also were changing. Therefore, leaders must consider the form of worship.

The old way or traditional worship does not apply to this young generation anymore. There is no connection between the old and new age that forced them, young people, to leave the church. The culture must be the bridge of the past and the new generation that the leaders of the church must consider the literature as the bearer of the gospel. This problem faced in other parts of the world also was affected in my place, especially to the young people and this interviewee one is one of them.

6.3.1.2 Interview 2

The second interviewee gives some reasons of how he and his wife shifted their faiths and changed their denomination was simply by reading the Bible cover to cover three times within a year that which he discovered changed his faith. In the case of his wife, it was quite different from her husband that her change of faith is through been attending the conference.

The second reason is on the doctrine between trinity and oneness that the former church differs from the new one; therefore, to practice his newly discovered faith, then left the old denomination.

The doctrinal issue is which caused him and his wife to find out the new church. In the thesis of Thawng Hlei Thang, the segregation of the church of the Stavanger was because of doctrinal issues within brothers and sisters that separated the believers according to the doctrine that they had and practiced their faith in the past when they were in Myanmar (Thang, 2015). Regarding the belief which the shifter mostly wanted to have is baptized in the name of Jesus.

6.3.1.3 Interview 3

The third shifter described how and what caused her whole family to accept the new teaching through crusade which held by the Assembly of God church. Through attending the crusade, which touched her heart wonderfully was a sincere believer must have holy life, and avoid such as drinking alcohol, wine, smoking cigarette, and chewing tobacco. She said that in the old church such practices were not strictly concern. By hearing the preaching on the subject of holiness in the crusade, it helped our family more to dedicate our lives closer enough and to have a better relationship with God.

The holy living of the Christian lives is part of the doctrine; therefore, their beliefs were transformed and changed by the message of holiness in the evangelistic meeting. , which most of the shifters of faith have mentioned that was crusade which is treated and considered as a program for stealing other church members and used for destroying the spirit of unity in the Russian Orthodox Church.

According to Bourdeaux, John Witte Jr. & Michael and Stetzer, they come out with the conclusion that why some believers changed their former beliefs and switched their church. The changing church was caused by the wrong application of the mission field that stated in the book of Acts that the gospel must preach accordingly in the given location such as Jerusalem, not within the already disciples of Jesus, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the world (Bourdeaux, 1999) and (Stetzer, 2006). Not applying the proper commandment of Jesus, some missionaries and pastors, and evangelists, caused the problem of believers to shift their faith and to switch their church. , this is the right things to do in the wrong way which is both sides from human rights perspectives and theological perspectives.

Additionally, spiritual freedom is highly emphasized how important a believer have it to worship freely and practice in the church that has his or her faith that suit. This interviewee also has reasoned that doctrinal issue is one of the causes of moving out from the former church to the United Pentecostal Church. In the study of church history, some reasons that caused the split of the church based on the doctrine such as the belief system and practices (Peterson, 1993) and (Rhodes, 2005).

6.3.1.4 Interview 4

The fourth shifter described two reasons that first, doctrinal issue, and spiritual freedom. The first reason that the shifter moves out from the old church is a doctrinal issue that he was convinced that baptism in the name of Jesus crucial for his faith. In talking about a person's belief is based on which kind of practice and teaching that one belongs to it.

Secondly, he mentioned that after being converted to a new belief system, since the previous church's doctrine is against the new one that I have to leave the old denomination to nurture my faith and where my spiritual food will be more fed. The person to find out the new church where he or she could meet God according to what she or he had faith, it is essential to have a church that helps her confidence to grow. Therefore, once Kathy Escobar said that it is good to leave the old faith and find out a new one because leaving the old belief is not meant that we lost God (Escobar, 2014). Losing old faith without losing God is more meaningful for a believer.

6.3.1.5 Interview 5

The fifth interviewee is who currently who belongs to the Assembly of God Church that switched from the American Baptist Mission Church. The reason why she left the former faith was because of the church doctrine. In 1996, there was a crusade in the village from a different denomination called Assembly of God. Because of the crusade, her faith changed into the crusader that offer as the best faith.

The crusade is somehow good for their church members to grow in their faith and spirituality. And also, to help all members to know what doctrine they belong to stand firm in their faith. Again, the crusade is which cause her faith to get in the new one. She said that the one church is more helping her faith to grow spiritually, and her spiritual life is more fed in the new church belief system so-called the doctrine of the church. The original hope and religious freedom offered to her through the work of the crusader that completely changed her old faith. , the reason that her faith was changed because the old belief is not supporting her relationship with God that Gary Thomas illustrates how one believer has a relationship with God is based on how God created him uniquely which mean that everyone has a different personality that applies the way how one has communion with God (Thomas, 1996). The nine sacred pathways are one of the reasons that her personality suit to the crusader had offered it to her.

6.3.2 Perspectives of shifting faith from pastors

6.3.2.1 Interview 1

The interviewed one with the pastor; these are what his expectation and perspective upon when someone has a new belief system and left the former church. First, he points out not affirming own belief deeply that when someone introduced a new belief system, quickly went their old faiths. Therefore, regarding the growth of the church, biblical growth, which is each member should know own belief foundation. Gary L. McIntosh comes up with the result that the biblical growth of the church is not the building, but the people of the church, not the exponential growth but spiritual growth (McIntosh, 2003).

Those who do not have a theological understanding of their faith lead to leave the old faith. The second thing that he points out is a conflict with leadership and freedom. When someone from the members of the church experienced his or her spiritual renewal and wanted to control the leadership in the church, but against by a leader that effortlessly left the church. He wants to have authority, power, and higher position over others. Lastly, he mentioned that to prevent such problem in the church, the particular program that called crusades, campaign, and revival is needed to have as a church at least once a year with the purpose of the members to help their spiritual growth.

6.3.2.2 Interview 2

The other pastor comments on the causes of changing faith and church like this, first, the discrimination upon the church pastor over the members that when the pastor has shown favor on a person more than another, a person who felt that he did not care that find out a new pastor. Secondly, a spiritual freedom which he meant some of the members were renewed and revive their souls that want to adopt the way of worship style outside the church, but the church pastor did not allow them such things to practice in the church. , the overstrictness and overprotectiveness of the church doctrine, force them to leave the church. The pastor leadership style is more on traditional ways of doing worship which the old men and women love it. In this case, the disconnection culture between the older generation and the new generation such as the young people of the church more love in the contemporary way of worship style which is mostly influenced by Pentecostal and charismatic techniques. Therefore, according to

Kinnaman, the leader of the church must be considered the culture of young people that connect with them, Christ (Kinnaman, 2011).

Since the old way of worship style did not help them, then they move out of the church and find out a church where they can enjoy worshipping and experiencing God through the way they preferred. From talking about contextual theology is not only aside from the mission, but also within the church that the church must contextualize the old road to the new way that the people of the new generation love.

6.3.2.3 Interview 3

According to the third pastor, in the village, there were only two kinds of doctrine basically that trinity and oneness. Those who lived in the trinity denomination and accepted the oneness doctrine then move it to that denomination likewise the oneness to the Trinity church. He also mentioned the reason that some believers merely left the old faith because of not having a deep and firm foundation of faith while he was in the old doctrine. The personal ties or family ties that if the relatives belong to a different church that they invite their relatives to move with them so that all family members will belong to the same church.

Thawng Hlei Thang concluded that one of the reasons that the church in Stavanger division is because of family socio-culture which a family invites their relative to move the church where they belong (Thang, 2015). The research notes on the subject of the denominational switching among protestant young adults, Dean R. Hoge, Benton Johnson, and Donald A. Luidens, they found out six types of switching denomination and shifting beliefs. They found out a reason is called personal ties which mean a person move out from the old church because of the new church and new pastor is more welcome him or her, and also a friend simply left the early church in order go with his or her friend church so that they will live in that church together (Hoge, Johnson, & Luidens, 2006). The shallow faith also is pointed out because of not engaging and studying own theology is one reason that a person allows for shifting the faith and switching the church.

6.3.2.4 Interview 4

The fourth pastor highly emphasizes on the form of worship styles. For instance, some churches love to sing the old hymnal during the service, but for the young people, they love to sing contemporary songs and revival songs which are more relevant and draw them more in-depth in their spiritual meaning of life. The worship style and form of worship have a connection with the contextual theology that has to do with culture. The old people or the parent's perception or the traditional way that they love does not apply to their sons and daughters concerning their spiritual lives. Therefore, in missiology, contextual theology is mostly comprehended as a missionary. The African Theologian, Kwame Bediako and the modern contextual theologian, Steven B. Bevans, highly discussed about contextual theology that in doing mission, it must be applied by every missionary because this brings the gospel to the indigenous culture and the old culture to the culture of the new generations (Bediako, 1992) and (S.B.Bevans, 2018).

6.4 *Key factors contributing to shifting faith and denomination*

6.5 *Summary*

The movements of the faith transformation of the shifters that allow and force some believers in Hmawngtlang would describe here as the result of the inquiry. The findings are from those who experience in person and the perspectives upon the shifter's faith of the former pastors. First, proselytize, crusade, conflict, socio-culture, a family tie, doctrinal issues, lack of knowing the own core belief, contextual theology that has to apply in a current church situation, freedom, spiritual refuge, a form of worship, and weak faith.

The shifting faiths are the consequences of the existence of so many denominations. The findings from the research, these are which caused the transformational of the shifters and switching faith in Hmawngtlang such as proselytizing, church leadership, personal opposition, conflict, doctrinal issues, socio-cultural, spiritual freedom, spiritual refugee, cultural issues, and souls war. the transition of the causes of shifting faith and switching denomination based on the "so many faiths, so many shifters." The reason why the shifters existed is because of so many religious beliefs that existed that offer the choice.

Ravi Zacharias (September 16, 2013) in online, YouTube, he talks about being the follower of Jesus is not by which denomination a person belongs. Shifting faith and switching denomination

is not leaving God but try to find which church is fit for use according to which we have a conviction about our faith. In gotquestion.org (Got question, 2019) in the subject of stealing sheep (church members), it said, all Christians "the sheep" ultimately belongs to Christ, the great shepherd. Even if we leave on Bible-believing church to attend another, there is no ultimate sheep stealing taking place. When someone moves out from the former denomination to the new one does not mean that he has no relation with Jesus Christ. We remain His sheep no matter which "Pen" we find ourselves. However, crusade, proselytism is causing faith transformation, leaving the old church, stealing members, it based on personality sacred pathway which a person finds a new way that fits with his personality with God.

Michael Ramsden talks about how a person will get to the one true God in online YouTube (Ministries, Feb 20, 2015). His talk was reversing the way Ravi Zacharias and got a question that deals with how a person supposed to change his faith or change the denomination. He entitled the subject as "one God, many paths?" When someone discovered the truth and encountered with God, he changed his faith and changed church because the old church is not fit anymore with him that he finds out a new one. The intention is not changing faith and denomination. It is about changing the way we think, and the way we see things, not the way to God. Jesus is the only way, truth, and life. Therefore, changing faith and changing the church is not changing the way to God, but in doctrinal issues, when a person has an own conviction about the specific doctrinal issue or method of worship, many changed over time, requiring turning the church and minded body of believers.

6.5.1 Spiritual Issues

In summing up, the first reason is the religious issues that caused one shifting faith and switching denomination. The outcome of the research, most of the shifters shifted their beliefs simply because the old church did not support and feed their spiritual lives concerning God in their daily lives. Some brothers and sisters left the former faith and the church because of the new conviction that they have discovered a conflict with the church doctrine. Since they could not worship God freely in the Sunday worship services because what they have a new beliefs system was prohibited and abandoned by the church doctrine. Therefore, to have their spiritual freedom, and to nurture their spiritual lives, they discover a place in which the church offers them and welcome them. Naturally, men and women who want the freedom that they are

searching for the meaning of their spiritual lives every day that when someone received it and wanted to live according to which he perceived it. The good faith and a better church are which everyone longing to have it once in life.

Because of the concern of the spiritual lives, believers in the world are searching for new places where they could exercise and practice. Therefore, all shifters according to the interview, when they are converted and found out the truth about God and the way to God, in order to have a better relationship with God, they simply get out from the old church and faith because they have in mind that the most essential things in life are their spiritual lives. The new experience of spiritual growth is the reason that some believers in Hmawngtlang are fighting for their souls when they have received a new spiritual blessing.

6.5.2 Personal Social Issues

The second reason that the believers in Hmawngtlang left behind their old faith and left former church lies on which are not relating to their spiritual lives. These are more on their personal social experiences that have a conflict with the members and the leaders in the church. For instance, during the general meeting of the church, if one against the agenda of another that not succeed then the argument happened. On these issues, one left the church because of that conflict between the church members. Another case is rooted in a social tie. For example, family ties which the third pastor has said that some believers in Hmawngtlang left the former church because they were invited to join the church that their relative belongs to live together which is part of the chin people' culture.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

The title of the thesis is "Rethinking about shifting denomination in the believers of Hmawngtlang." The perspective of the researcher will define the title of the argument. The research explores the theological issues faced by many Christian churches in the world. The faith shifting also is happening in Hmawngtlang. That draws me to find out what are the causes of the three churches in my place. The answers to the research sub-questions are present in this section, and the answers to the main research question also are summarized.

Faith shifting and Rethinking about moving from one denomination to another for the believers of Hmawngtlang had been an issue for the churches for some time.

The shifting faith prompted the researcher to explore the theological issues that cause such changes. The title of this study- Rethinking about shifting denomination in the believers of Hmawngtlang will be defined by the perspective of the researcher. The answers to the main research question and sub-questions are present in this chapter.

7.2 The research question and sub-questions

This research has aimed to investigate how changing faith and switching church are experienced and understood in the Christian among Hmawngtlang village, Chin State, Myanmar. I wanted to rediscover the past experiences of their spiritual lives of the faith shifters. Furthermore, I have the desire to gain information about the shifter's faith transformation that how all shifters were converting into the new doctrine which forcing them to leave the former church. Reflecting upon the data collected from the interview, related to the church history that how all the denominations get started and split. Contextual theology is deal also because the need to change the culture in the church is one of some believers that not enjoying the form of worship that rooted in the old traditional way and based on the old generation which the younger generation did not like much. The issues in the church also deal with the missionaries works in Russia that faced the problem with the Russian Orthodox Church.

The research aims to investigate how changing faith and switching church are experienced and understood in the Christian community in Hmawngtlang village, Chin State, Myanmar. The researcher seeks to rediscover the past experiences of the spiritual lives of the faith shifters and

what motivated them to radically embrace the new doctrine and leave their former church and tradition.

7.2.1 Research main and Sub-questions

How is the shift of the shifters 'faith that leads to switching denomination is understood and valued by the pastors, and how the shifters understood and gone through their beliefs changed in their past? What are the causes of their faith change?

Sub-questions:

1. What is the main reason that makes some believers shift their denomination?
2. What is the different experience of the shifters between the old and new denomination?
3. How do the pastors understand when some members leave the church?
5. How is the feeling of a person that moves out from the old denomination?
6. What are the differences between the old denomination and the new denomination?

The six sub-questions have used the guide for the research interviews with the four pastors and the five shifters of faith. The result of the interview answered the main research question. The findings from the literature review are used to support with the research problem and linked with the thesis problem that caused the shifter to change their former faith. These findings are used to evaluate and will serve as proof of the problem being faced by the believers in Hmawngtlang.

7.3 Research Design

To answer the research question and sub-questions, I collected data from the interviews with the pastors and shifters. In this qualitative research, I chose nine informants, including pastors and shifters to gain their perspectives on understanding and evaluation upon the shifting and experiences of the transformation of the shifter's faith. The basic theory that the research based on is so many faiths, so many shifters, therefore, the many beliefs that causes are dealing with, which could be found in the church history who the churches split. Finding out the origins of the segregation of the universal church, theological issues that every church need to contextualize not only the gospel but also contextualize the worship form which is related to

the new generation that the young people of the church are not satisfied with the old traditional way of worship which the old men and women loved. Finally, I used the findings from both interviews and results from literature reviews, theories and my insights which I based on the facts of the church history and missionaries in the Russian Orthodox Church, and the nine personalities that all people possessed that linked to our souls to God.

The research design of the qualitative prefers to use in this study. Nine respondents, including pastors and shifters, give their perspectives and share their experiences. The questionnaire which is the central question and six sub-questions are used as a tool.

7.4 Views of Shifting Faith

7.4.1 Negative Thoughts

When faith shifting happens among believers, people would most likely criticize them of having immature faith who holds no deep foundation of belief. Some thought that shifting faith was caused by having weak faith. Thus, when someone proposes different doctrines, they indulge in the new faith easily. Shifting faith also is caused by proselyting, which is view as stealing other religion from one faith to another. The faith's shifting also causes personality conflicts with the church leaders and other fellow believers. Furthermore, the free will also is a determinant as to whether one will shift from one faith to another.

7.4.2 Positive Thoughts

While some believers view shifting faith and switching denomination negatively, some believers accepted it positively. One of the reasons that come up from the research result that the changing faith happened because the shifters experience a deeper meaning of their spiritual lives. There are two kinds of believers according to this research that those who shifted belief and remained in the old church.

In the positive view upon the shifting faith, those who change their beliefs are considered them as sincere believers because they want to find out the truth by them. When they found it, and the former church does not suit them that they merely left the church while the stayers are less considered them unspiritual believers because of not interested in personal experience of the spiritual things and they are satisfied with the old church because they think that to follow their parent footstep is essential for them. Some people believe shifting faith only in positively

because to find out the best belief that suit for their spiritual is crucial and also necessary to understand which. In reality, changing faith is not as cynical because of some researchers and those who moved their beliefs have bright minds and conscious that leaving the old faith is not referring to losing God.

To have a pleasant atmosphere where one can experience God and freely communicate with God by using their unique personalities in a sense that some love music and noise during worship, but some other still prefer silent worship without any noise not to disturb their minds. They love to worship God quietly which is related to their personalities.

7.5 Answers to the sub- questions

7.5.1 Evaluation of Pastors

The review by the pastors about shifting faith and switching denomination rooted more on a kind of the shadow faith that holds no deep root. To abide firm in own belief, so he recommended training programs and revival meeting to facilitate each member to wake up their spiritual life to stay in the church without encountering a young church. The freedom of their spiritual matters and physical matters are a believer in keeping his or her faith in the former church. Thus, a pastor is somehow contributing the shifting to own member. The pastor points out that shifting one of the members is not caused only by his or her problem but also with the church pastor. A pastor who practices favoritism, when some members want to exercise their faith without respect the church leaders and persuading their relatives to join them and belong the same church are mostly all of the pastors believed the causes of the believers in Hmawngtlang to shift faith and switch their denomination.

7.5.2 Contribution of Shifters

All shifters, according to the interview with them, the results come up with a clear conscious, confident, and decisive stand upon which allowed them to shift their beliefs and denominations. They changed their beliefs and churches because of did not support the former church doctrine to the new experiences that they discovered the new spiritual things. Compare with the pastor's views on the shifters, some have a connection, but in some sense, their spiritual freedom which related to God is which urged them to leave the former beliefs and the churches. Of course, believers or non-worshippers alike, we all are searching for life meaning.

Physically needs to survive, when the Israelites encountered severe famine while they were approaching to the promised land. The people to find the place where they can discover for themselves whether they like or not. This kind of situation is sometimes each one of us leads us to such a physical need. Both the needs of material need and spiritual needs are not separate because the spirit dwells in the body that if the physical body has good health then help the spiritual need as well. God wants to save not only our souls but also our physical bodies as well. These are the reason that the bodily resurrection will take place in the second coming of Christ that all shifters were searching the better beliefs and churches where the place they can have a better feeling, freedom, and nurture their faith.

7.6 Answers to the main question

The answers to the sub-questions, contribute to the answer to the main research question: How is the shift of the shifters 'faith that leads to switching denomination is understood and valued by the pastors, and how the shifters understood and gone through their beliefs changed in their past? What are the causes of their faith change? The answers come from the four pastors of each denomination that how they give evaluation about the shifting faith according to their experiences and perspectives upon the shifters. The findings from pastors and shifters have no differences, and therefore, since the results both agree with one another, the research could be concluded by listing the findings from interviews both pastors and shifters then analyze by the conclusions of the literature review. According to the three types of outcomes, pastors, shifters, and literature reviews have a similar and connection, and it proves that the answers to the main research question.

First, those who shift faith and denomination are the believers who are highly prioritized and concerned their spiritual lives compare to the remainders in the old church. The leavers have also considered them also as sincere believers. They further view them as who want to exercise their freedom that they leave the church and find the new one and in order to nurture their faith and where they could be fed their spiritual food more, second, the personal issues that I refer to the matters of societal and physical problems that deal with not spiritual things.

Most of the shifters left the old faith and former church because of conflict with the leaders of the church and with their fellow especially in the agendas of the meeting of the church. Some issues also deal with a family tie which is all relatives want to live in the same church regardless

of faith. They persuade their relatives who did not belong to their church because of their love and concern for them. Third, some shifter leaves the church because when they experience in the lives, the strange one that not keep them to live in the old church because of the different doctrine of the church such as the doctrine of God and the practices of the church.

Fourth, theological understanding upon own belief that has no deep foundation lead some believers to leave the old faith and church quickly when someone offers and introduces the new system of faith. Therefore, some pastors have mentioned in the interview to prevent such faith shifting regarding their members to remain in the church.

Fifth, the changing faith is happening among the believers because of some evangelist's intention to conduct crusade and evangelist meeting, where their church does not establish to steal other members. So much so that the existing members of the church will take which has the same case with the Russian Orthodox Church that some missionaries brought their denominations and doctrines where already exist the church that caused conflict among the believers and build their church. The misapplication of the mission field was causing the split and destroyed the unity of the spirit of the church.

The crusade and the evangelism program are sometimes considered as the program that used to steal other church's members. Therefore, most of the Christian leaders sometimes called them as proselytizers which means "doing the right things in the wrong ways." These programs are causing some believers to change their faith and denomination in Hmawngtlang within the three churches. The misapplication of mission field which founded in the book of Acts that the disciples were given by Jesus Christ the location of the mission work toward the unchurch and unsaved brothers and sisters. If the crusade is using the intention of the soul's revival and the awakening for souls, it will be the right things.

I want to conclude with *the Nine Sacred Pathways Book*, that which contributed the causes of shifting that I agree with that the reasons that why the churches segregated because of a person who has a different and unique personality that each one uses for a relationship with God (Thomas, 1996). The summary of the book which found in online entitled as (*Nine sacred pathways- focus on the family*) the author is not mentioned and summarized as:

The spiritual temperaments that God creates in human beings so that we can connect and worship Him in unique ways.

1. Naturalists- love God best outdoors. These people worship in the midst of God's creation. They celebrate His majesty and discover spiritual truths through nature.
2. Sensate- Love God through their senses. These people worship through sensual experiences= sights (like art), sounds (music), smells, and more.
3. Traditionalists- love God through religious ritual and symbols. These people worship through the traditions and sacraments of the church. they believe structure, repetition, and rigidity, like weekly liturgy, leads to a deeper understanding of God and faith.
4. Ascetics- love God in solitude and simplicity. These people worship through prayer and quiet time, and the absence of all outside noise and distraction.
5. Activists- love God through confrontation, fighting for godly principles and values. They worship through their dedication to and participation in God's truth about social and evangelistic causes.
6. Caregivers- love God by serving others, and worship by giving of themselves. They may nurse the sick and disabled, adopt a prisoner, donate time at a shelter, etc.
7. Enthusiasts- love God through the mystery and celebration. These people worship with outward displays of passion and enthusiasm. They love God with gusto
8. Contemplatives- love God through adoration. These people worship by their attentiveness, deep love, and intimacy. They have an active prayer life.
9. Intellectuals - love God with their mind and their hearts are opened up to a new attentiveness when they understand something new about God. These people worship through intense study, Apologetics, and intellectual pursuits of their faith.

The nine sacred pathways are each different person possess as the personalities are importantly related to our spiritual lives because some want to praise and worship God with some noise, music, but some want quiet and silence worship that the sound is which distract and disturb them. Therefore, according to the author, nine personalities find a way that suits them in worshiping God and want to have a relationship with God by using their characters. If the one personality is not suited to the old church where his or her parents belonged, one finds out and move out from the church and searching the church and doctrine of belief that suit for him or her. These issues caused the shifting faith and switching denomination among the Christian.

7.7 Researcher's contribution

In the procedure of looking for solutions to the research question, some conclusions derived from my research that can offer insights into the faith transformation program regarding faith shifting and switching denomination in Hmawngtlang.

The goal of my thesis is to investigate how one's changed his or her faith and denomination in Hmawngtlang. Many beliefs, many shifters is which I used as the research's theory to find out the problem that caused faith shifting. So, foremost of all, it draws me to ascertain out what generate many faiths through studying church history. The information gathered from the interviewees are evaluated by the causal agencies of the church history that how the churches split into many denominations. The origins of both shifting faith and changing churches in Hmawngtlang and the church history from the first century to the 19 centuries show the robustness and the trustworthiness of my thesis because of the same campaigns from both proof how its problems are related to each other.

The troubles that are coming up from the causes of the splitting of the churches in the past has a connection to my research, in the hereafter, it aids to forestall such troubles that cause the faith shifting and changing denominations. The program that called as a crusade in evil intention by the evangelists and crusaders, all the people who are inhibiting in Hmawngtlang would know the causes of the problem in the preview years that would help them to keep off such matters that bear no association with spiritual lives. The issues that contributed to the root of changing faith and changing the church is because of the misuse and the evil intention of the crusade, proselytism, and revival program.

Through reading my thesis, the readers will know the concept of the kingdom of God. Throughout the Scripture, Jesus Christ several times explains the kingdom of God by applying so many object lessons. The mystery of the kingdom of God is the people heard and perceived them, but they do not understand because they were not interested so much that hindered them to know the truth near the kingdom of God. Along the other hands, the kingdom of God is established by those who ready to receive and to seek by personally. In the Bible, when Jesus teaches about the realm of God, there were two groups that both groups heard the message of the kingdom, but for some, it was difficult to see. It seems so deep to get the meaning. The great

multitude heard, but since they were not interested in getting the core message to apply in their lives. For them, the precept of the kingdom of God by Jesus Christ is from the parable. The parable is, which has no meaning in the narrative itself. The parable is used only for those who did not interest the message of the kingdom of God which I refer to the crowd. When the disciples too did not perceive and understand the same as the crowd, but since they are ready to discover by themselves, instead of leaving Jesus like the crowd, they approach and follow Jesus to ask the teaching about the kingdom's meaning. Since they are ready to receive, Jesus explains them plainly to them.

Those who take my thesis will come to realize that the spiritual blessing that needed to experience by one's self that important for the worshippers. The readers will come to conscious about the reasons why the faith shifters and switchers of the denominations are not mere Christian, but the sincere believers that considered them as those who ready to receive the kingdom's message. The shifters of faith and the switchers of the denomination are like the one who is waiting for the kingdom of God by self. When some believers discovered which faith and denomination that suit and serve them their spiritual lives to stand strong enough to overcome the environmental care that leads to leaving the faith and the church.

The kingdom of God is founded by those who are searching and seeking. The Bible says that knock the door, then the doorway will open for you. Seek and you will find it. Therefore, I considered those who shifted their faiths and changed their denomination to the different one that the most the shifters prefer to belong is the seeker of the spiritual kingdom that all believers, we are looking to experience it. For those who found the kingdom of God, left they have and sell it all and buy the kingdom of God is like some brothers and sisters in Hmawngtlang that faced in their lives about their spiritual shifting. I as the researcher, to taste the core life of the religious, ones must seek and search for the truth. I did not consider the shifters and switchers that some people think negatively. I aside from a positive view that I have no problem with those who shifted and switched their spiritual understanding. I considered them as those who experience the core kingdom of God.

The thesis will give the readers a clear apprehension of the realm of God that must and essential to have one's life though during this lifetime. Compare to shifters and remainders in the old church, and the shifters are more having confidence in their faith because of testing and sensing

by personally. Even the people complain and disagree, and talk about their faith negatively, the shifters do not care and mind because of their actual testimony.

The insights will help and inspire the believers in Hmawngtlang to find out the truth of the spiritual life by experiencing. This research provides all people in Hmawngtlang how ones need to infer about the mission fields, the design of the crusaders, not to do the stealing members of the nearby church.

The programs that caused the believers to shift their faith and changed their church these programs must be used for own faith and own belief as the church to strengthen and assist each member of the church in their sights. The weakest faith that has not deep root allow some believers do not continue in the former religion.

The weakest faith is which give shifting faith and changing denomination negatively. These programs are vital and essential to have as the church to make all members have a strong faith and enable them to prepare them to stand on their beliefs.

According to the outcome of the research, proselytism, crusade, and evangelist meeting, and revival are used to find members to own church members to increase. On the other hands, the pastors and the evangelists sometimes misunderstand about the growth of the church that not deal with the building and members instead each member lives in their spiritual relationship with their God. Spiritual growth does not imply the physical structure and the number of worshippers.

The scope of the research is limited. Hence, the field will not go beyond far, except for the selected position. The focus of the thesis and the research interest of doing this investigation is that even though it is relating to other places in the world, the focus is only as a set and selected place which is known as Hmawngtlang, Chin State, Myanmar.

8 APPENDIX 1

8.1 Research Main question and Sub-questions

Research Main Question

How is the shift of the shifters 'faith that leads to switching denomination is understood and valued by the pastors, and how the shifters understood and gone through their beliefs changed in their past? What are the causes of their faith change?

Sub-questions:

1. What is the main reason that makes some believers shift their denomination?
2. What is the different experience of the shifters between the old and new denomination?
3. How do the pastors understand when some members leave the church?
5. How is the feeling of a person that moves out from the old denomination?
6. What are the differences between the old denomination and the new denomination?

9 APPENDIX 2

9.1 *Interview guides*

Interview question with the Pastors

1. Name of pastors
2. Ministry experiences
3. Is there shifting faith and switching denomination when are serving the church?
4. What are the causes of the shifters to move out of the church?
5. How can the church prevent leaving the church?
6. Do you think the cause of shifting faith has positive and negative?

The interview question with Shifters

1. Name of shifters
2. Former denomination name
3. Year of shifting faith and switching over the church
4. What is the case of his or her faith transformation?
5. Are there any differences between the doctrine the old and the new church?
6. What is the benefit of having and belonging the new denomination?

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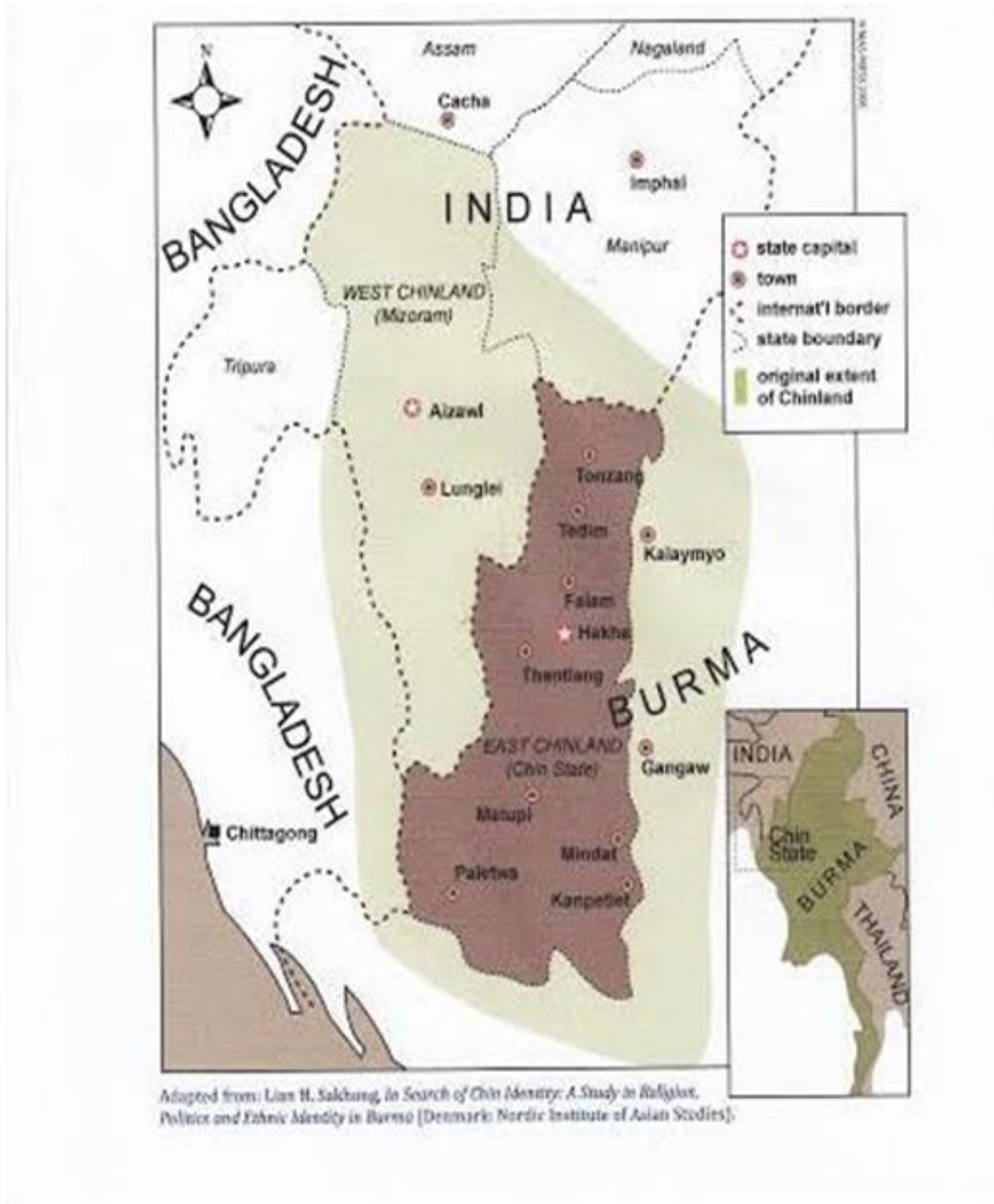
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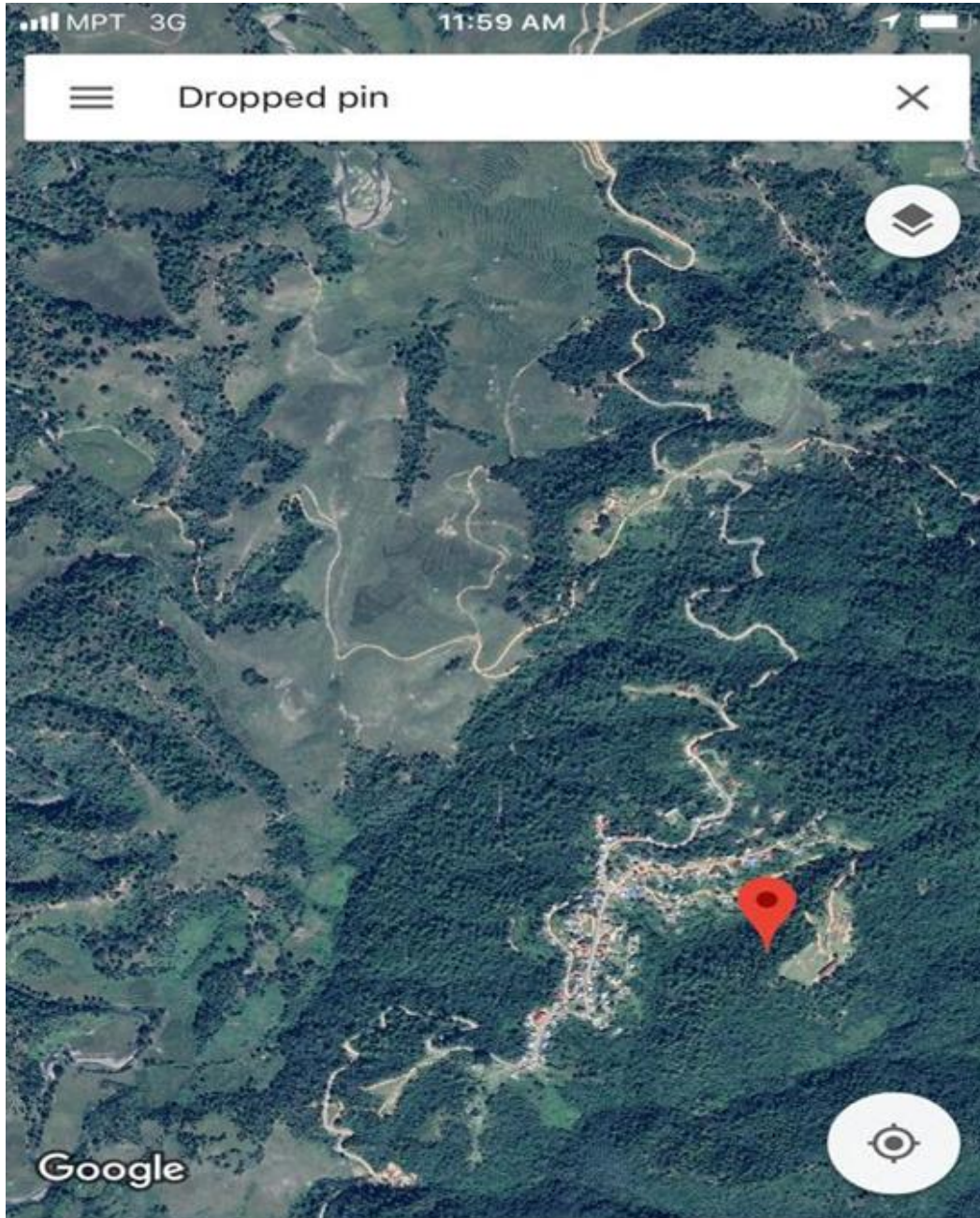
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Attachments

9.2 Map of Chin State 1



9.3 Map of Hmawngtlang 2



Dropped pin
Near Falam