

An Assessment Of The Impact Of Sabbath School Lesson Study Programme

On Seventh Day Adventist Church Adherents: A Case Study Of

Homa-Bay District, Kenya.'

By

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A Thesis Submitted In Partial Fulfilment Of The Requirements

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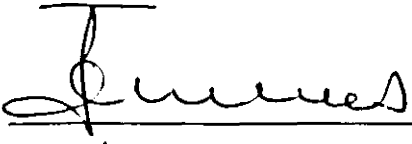
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**DECLARATION**

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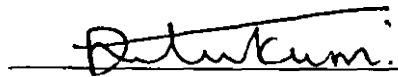
  
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## ABSTRACT

Despite various documented works on Seventh-Day Adventists, there has been no specific study conducted on the impact of Sabbath school lesson study programme on Seventh-Day Adventist Church adherents yet lesson study motif is and continues to be a pillar in the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Without the lesson study, the SDA Church would <sup>be</sup> <sub>more</sub> vulnerable to criticisms by non Seventh Day Adventists and would be pushed to the periphery by other denominations.

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church has been in Kenya since 1906 yet it is a movement that many people have not understood its tenets, organization and practices. Sabbath school motif in particular, has been misunderstood by many due to misrepresentation and misinterpretation by both Adventists and non-Adventists, as they do not know what it entails. Some critics have argued that Sabbath school lesson study programme is just a brain storming session or interaction of ideas of people and as a result, it has no spiritual consequence and does not stir or arouse faith and strong conviction. The lesson study programme influences lives of Seventh - Day Adventist church members from childhood, youth and adulthood. By reading this work, the reader will be able to see the fruits of Sabbath school lesson study programme and therefore find a reason as to why the programme is crucial in the SDA church.

On the ensuing above, it is worth commenting that an unreasonable faith or belief does not stand the test of time, because in the event of new discoveries old beliefs are abandoned altogether in favour of the new discoveries and this renders belief systems or churches volatile. Sabbath school lesson study programme being a well thought out programme caters for spiritual development of SDA church adherents.

It makes Bible study possible and in fact easier for all classes viz children youth and adults. Through memory verses, bible stories and general discussion on the Word of God Biblical knowledge is imparted to SDA church adherent. Lessons booklets used during lesson study programme systemises bible study making it easier for the students to study the Bible.

The work comprises the background to the study, founding of the S D A church in America, origin and development of the Sabbath school lesson study programme, its influences on the Luo of Homa-bay, its impact on children, youth and adults and finally, conclusions and recommendations. The thesis is a result of both secondary and primary data. The secondary data was collected from Jomo Kenyatta memorial library, Maxwell S D A Church Library (Nairobi) and seventh day Adventist East - African union headquarters (Nairobi). The primary data was collected mainly through administration of questionnaires, direct personal interviews as well as group discussions.

Informants comprised, Pastors, Sabbath schoolteachers, superintendents, elders and other informed S D A members.

The research findings confirmed that the S D A Church its Sabbath School lesson study programme has played a significant role in the disintegration of Luo cultural practices by condemning such customary aspects as initiation, widow inheritance, polygamy, dietary prohibitions and practice of magic.

The study has highlighted that it is the Sabbath school lesson study programme which makes Seventh-Day Adventist Church service peculiar, unique, sober, stable and organized compared to other Church services. It is hoped that this thesis is going to open doors to a

better understanding of Seventh-Day Adventist Sabbath School lesson study programme. This study among other things shows how the lesson study programme has been used to inculcate moral values to children, youth and adults.

The study concludes that Sabbath school lesson study programme is the most popular programme in the SDA church and SDA church members should devote more time to it because it holds the church together as a medium of instruction for the children, youth and adults. It makes Adventist church members become good Bible students who are equipped with scriptural arguments to face any adversaries.

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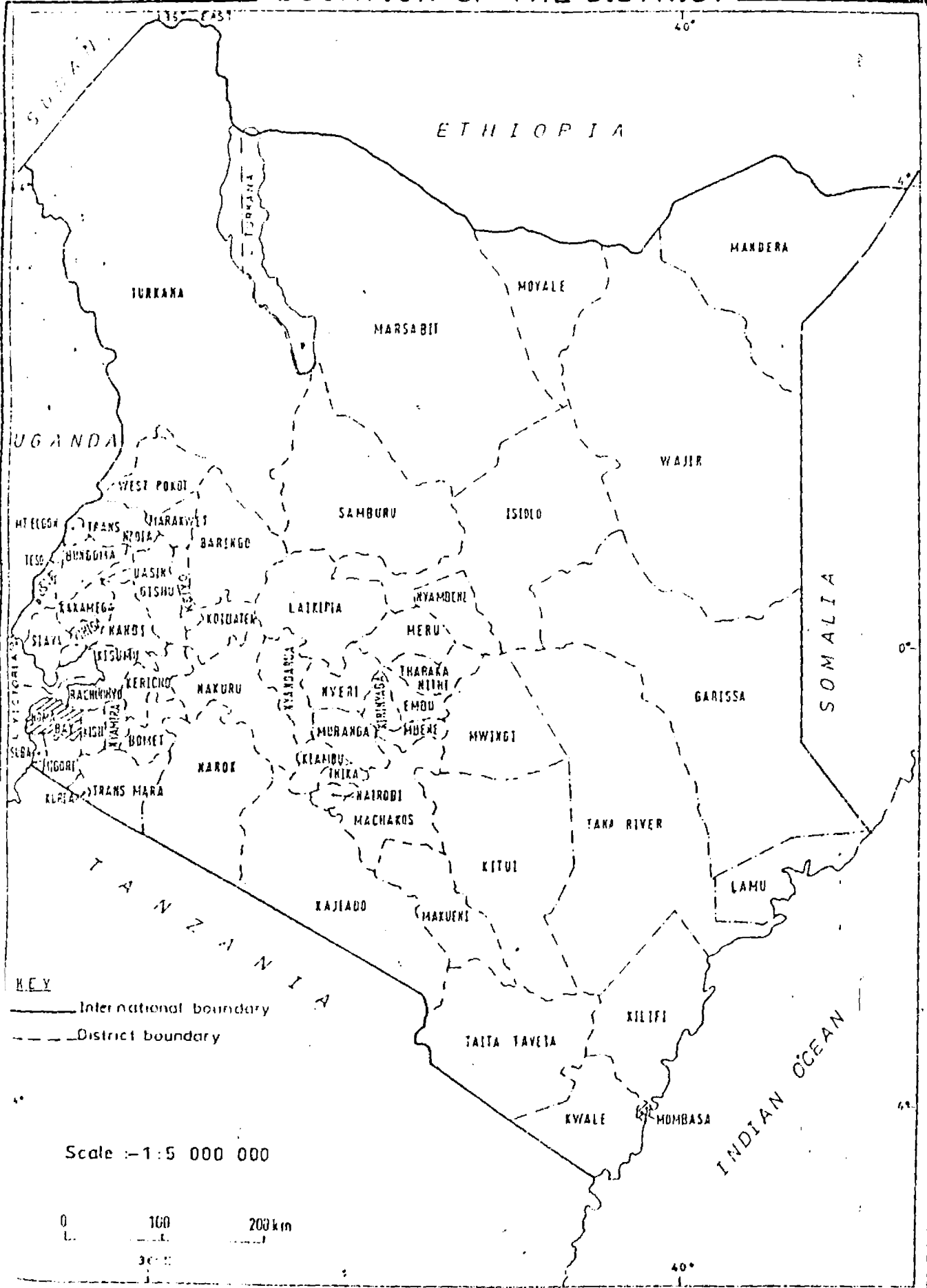
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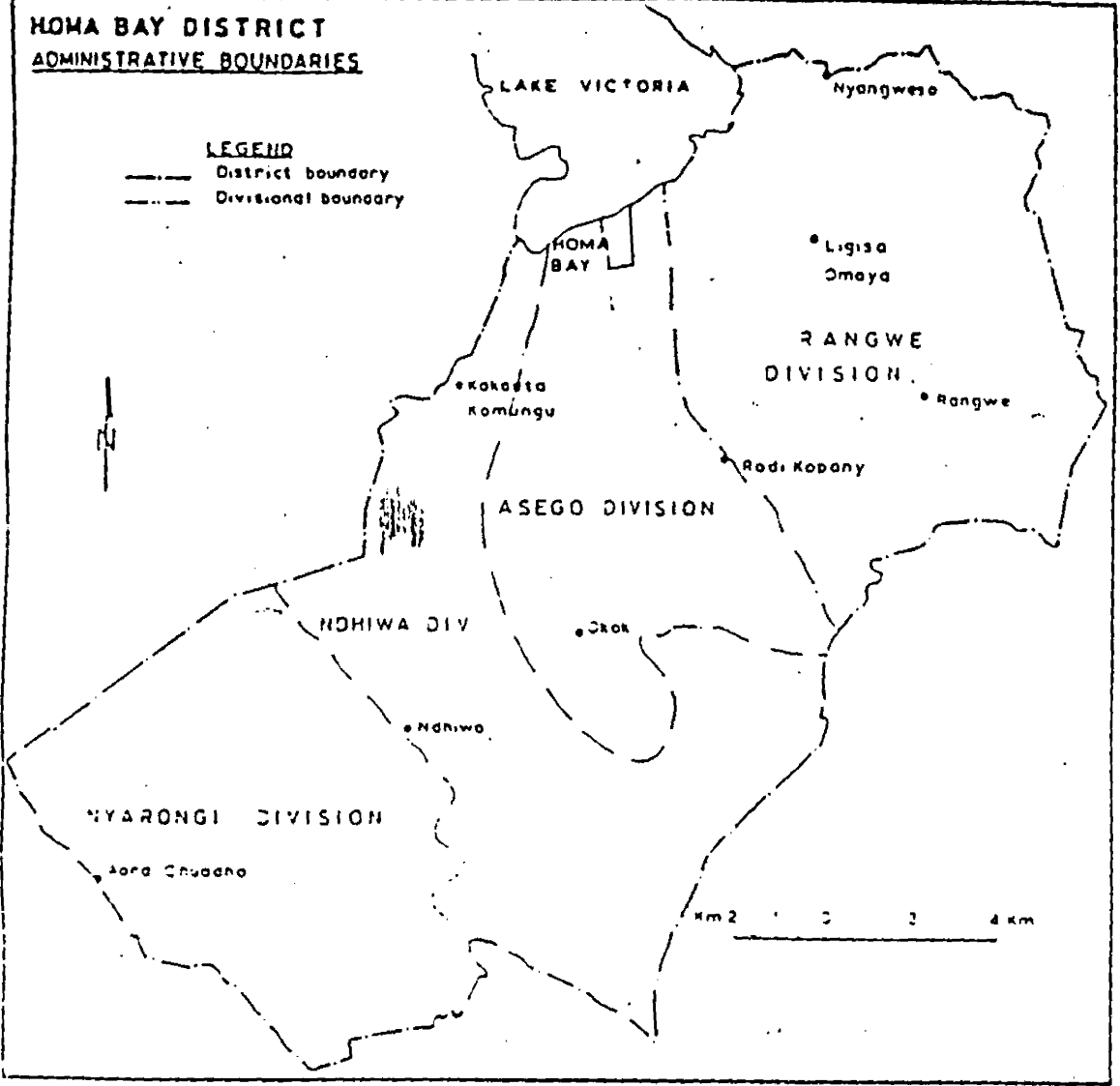
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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

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Special thanks also go to brother Caleb, Deacon Maxwell S D A Church (Nairobi) who introduced me to Maxwell Church library. I would also like to thank Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library Staff for the cooperation they showed during my literature review in the library.

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# **DEDICATION**

**TO MY PARENTS**

SILA ONYANGO

**AND**

ESTHER OYUGA

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church has been in Kenya since 1906, when it reached Gendia (Kendu Bay) yet members and the general public have not fully understood and appreciated the Sabbath School lesson study programme.<sup>1</sup> During the field study some Protestants who do not cherish Sabbath school study programme, argued that the word of God is inspired and therefore should be accepted by faith as divine revelation. It is a futile attempt by human beings to discuss and reason out in order to comprehend God's message. They said that discussion over the Word of God can lead to distortion of message, unbelief and curtails the work of the Holy Spirit. The answer given to these critics of Sabbath school lesson study programme by Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath school manual is that:

All who study the Word of God are represented as eating the word, feeding on Christ. Evenly as the bodily necessities must be supplied, so the Word of God must be daily studied - eaten and digested, and practised.<sup>2</sup>

Reasoning over the Word of God leads to better understanding, and nourishment of the soul.

Again Sabbath school lesson study programme has been taken for granted by the Adventists themselves. In rare occasions, if at all, do the seventh - Day Adventist Church members question themselves as to what impact the Sabbath School lesson study has to their lives, as individuals and also as a church.

Most Adventists think that lesson study is just part of SDA worship programme, which is used to bring about unity and organization in worship. Thus there is a dilemma as to real purpose of Sabbath school lesson study programme.

Most people especially non-Seventh-Day Adventists, have taken lesson study to mean a general study without taking into account that there are several classes and different materials used for different classes. For example we have cradle roll class, youth class and adult class each with different literature used for teaching. Also there has been a misconception among adult SDA members that lesson study refers to adult's lesson class. This study among other things intends to show that there are different lesson study classes and that impact of Sabbath school lesson study programme cannot be assessed without considering these classes.

Another issue is that Sabbath school lesson study programme originated from U.S.A. in 1878,<sup>3</sup> and to date all lesson booklets are published by the General Conference Sabbath School department in U.S.A.<sup>4</sup> The question that arises is that why do Kenyans cling to the lesson study programme and materials unquestioningly? What is the lesson doing to Kenyans, which makes them cling on to it? This study among other things intends to provide recommendations to these problems raised.

### **Definition of concepts**

Sabbath - A day of rest, (Saturday) set aside for worship and fellowship with God and man. The SDA adherents believe that God rested from the work of creation on Saturday (Genesis) 2: 2 - 4).



Sabbath School - A session in the SDA worship programme when children, youth and adults meet to discuss the Word of God by use of lesson booklets in different classes. The entire Sabbath school programme takes 70 minutes.

Seventh day - A day of Sabbath, members of SDA Church work for six days (from Sunday to Friday evening). The seventh day, which is Saturday, is a day of worship, thus they rest from work.

Adventists - All members of the seventh day Adventist Church.

"District"- Seventh day Adventist use the term "District" to refer to small coordinating centers of conference. A "District" can be made of three or four Church congregations.

Thirteenth Sabbath school programme- Sabbath school programme held every thirteenth week of the SDA Church calendar. For twelve weeks the SDA Church dedicates its offering to the local mission. Representatives from one or two children's divisions may take part in this, together with others who make a special appeal for mission's in talks, recitations and songs.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study.**

The objectives of the study include;

1. To establish the origin, development, and organization of the Sabbath school lesson study programme.
2. To find the source and relevance of materials used for the Sabbath school lesson study programme.
3. To find out and assess the impact of Sabbath school lesson study programmes on SDA Church adherents.

### **1.3 Rationale for the study**

The study found it necessary to investigate and identify those changes in order that SDA Church adherents may be able to appreciate and understand the role of the Sabbath school lesson study programme. In his book Captains of the Host, A.W. Spalding, writes:

Open the Bible to you, draw their attention to hidden treasures, teach them to search for its truth, and they will gain strength of intellect such as the study of philosophy could not impart...<sup>5</sup>

Many scholars have written works on the programmes of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. For example, studies have been done on historical background of the SDA Church in Kenya, little has been done on Sabbath school lesson study and yet it is the pillar of SDA Church without which the church cannot stand.

It is hoped, that this study will fill the gap that has been created by highlighting the role played by the Sabbath school lesson study programme in the SDA church.<sup>6</sup>

Another issue is that there is lack of literature related to Sabbath school lesson study programme. Most scholars have not bothered to conduct study on Sabbath school lessons. This means that it is difficult for non-Seventh - Day Adventist church members to know exactly what the Sabbath lesson study programme is all about. Since non - SDA members do not attend SDA service, one of the ways through which they can know about Sabbath school lesson by reading literature found in the libraries. This study will therefore expose both Adventist and non-Adventist church members to lesson study programme and all that it entails. Despite the various documented works on Seventh-day Adventist Church, there is no study that has been specifically conducted to assess the impact of Sabbath School lessons study programme.<sup>7</sup>

In this study Homa-Bay District was selected because; one, there is a high concentration of SDA church adherents who could provide information easily; two, Homa - Bay District is adjacent to Kendu - bay (Gendia) where SDA church (Kenya) was founded in 1906 - this enabled the researcher to get information easily; and three, the Africa Herald Publishing house which deals with translation of lesson booklets is situated nearby at Gendia (Kendu-bay) so the researcher could easily get information related to Sabbath school lesson study materials.

It was also observed that even new members continue coming to the church and are involved in lesson discussions where it does not involve those in the church record book<sup>8</sup>. The new comers often count themselves Seventh-Day Adventists and identify with the church. Parents who are new members encourage their children to participate in lesson discussions. Few backsliders of the Seventh-Day Adventist background join other churches. This study among other things will provide reasons as to why SDA Church members do not opt to join other churches when they backslide.<sup>10</sup>

In his (1989) M. A thesis, P.M. Mumo, observed that in Kenyan society moral standards is on the decline.<sup>11</sup>

There is an increase in abortions, divorce, suicide, drug addiction and other immoral activities<sup>12</sup>. This study will show how Sabbath School lesson study programme has been used in the Seventh-day Adventist Church to curb moral vices.

## **1.4 Literature Review**

During the study, literature review was mainly done at Maxwell SDA Church (Nairobi) and Jomo Kenyatta memorial libraries.

In her (1985) M.A Thesis, "The establishment and history of the activities of the activities of the Seventh-day Adventist SDA Church among Abagusii of Western Kenya 1912 - 1985" M.N Getui, covered the SDA church establishment and its role among the Abagusii from a purely historical perspective<sup>13</sup>. She defines Sabbath as:

Church at study ...and lesson as a booklet issued quarterly and has sections for study on a daily basis. These sections cater for a whole week such that each week Sabbath members are expected to have studied their lesson and be able to participate in the discussion. <sup>14</sup>

Getui lays emphasis on how SDA was started in Gendia Kendu-Bay in 1901 and how it spread to Abagusii in Kisii therefore creating a gap for a study on the Sabbath School lesson study programme.

In his 1989 M.A. Thesis entitled, " A study of Christian Sunday School programme in African Inland church" P.M, Mumo looked at Sunday School as a programme conducted for children in the African Inland Church <sup>15</sup> he quotes A concise Dictionary of Ecclesiastical Terms which defines Sunday School as: a school mainly for children and young people held on Sundays for instruction in the Bible and the teaching of the Church <sup>16</sup>.

Mumo acknowledged the role played by Sunday school lessons in the instruction of children<sup>17</sup>.

However, in his work, Sunday school has only been restricted to children yet in the Seventh-day Adventist church lesson study programme has been extended to cover youth and adult classes.

In his (1973) Ph.D. Thesis "A History of the Adventist Christian Education in Kenya, 1906 - 1963", G.N Amayo covered the role SDA plays in Education in the whole country. In his work Sabbath school lesson study has not been taken as an integral ingredient of Seventh-day Adventist Christian<sup>18</sup>. To cover the gap, this study has focused on impact of Sabbath school lesson study has played in educating members of the seventh - day Adventist church at large.

General conference of SDA (1986), Sabbath school manual, gives a historical background of Sabbath School lesson study, its organization and the need to contribute towards church activity in other parts of the world<sup>19</sup>. Sabbath school manual does not throw light into the impact of lesson study programme on SDA church adherents hence creating a gap, which needs to be filled.

General Conference Sabbath school (1949) in a book, Teaching Teachers to teach, provides guidelines to Sabbath School lesson teachers on how to teach the various lesson classes properly.<sup>20</sup>

All teaching aids and methodologies are explained for better teaching and understanding so that pupils in the different classes (cradle roll, kindergarten, earliteen, primary, youth and adult) may be able to understand and appreciate the Word of God.<sup>21</sup> Little is mentioned about what lesson study does to the pupils in the aforementioned classes, what impact does better teaching have on pupils? Among other things, this study will highlight the impact.

In his book, Magnificent disappointment, C.M Maxwell mentions in passing that Sabbath school lesson study helps in better understanding of the Bible by giving an opportunity to participate in class discussions<sup>22</sup>

He did not focus on what lesson study does to adherents of SDA church. It is hoped that among other things, this study will fill the aforesaid gap in her book, Our High Calling, E.G., white (1961) argues that;

There is no book the perusal of which will elevate and strengthen the mind as the lesson. Here the intelligent will find themes of the most elevated character to call out its powers, there is nothing that will endow with vigour all our faculties as bringing them in contact with the stupendous truths of revelation... here we learn the true way to live, the safe way to die."

It is hoped that this study on impact of Sabbath School lesson will establish the truth in White's argument.

In her book, The Great controversy (between God and Satan) E.G. White asserts that:

...the first and highest duty of every rational being is to learn from scriptures what is the truth and then walk in the light and encourage others to follow his example.<sup>24</sup>

White's view is that we should day by day study Bible diligently, weighing every thought and comparing scripture with scripture. <sup>25</sup> This study will show that Sabbath School lesson study programme makes Bible study easier for the SDA church members.

In another books, Upward Look E.G. White writes:

Every man, Woman and child should read... and study the scriptures for himself and interpret it for Christ... <sup>26</sup>

White advances the argument that the Sabbath School lesson study was not meant for Ministers and learned men.<sup>27</sup> This study will show the impact of lesson study on all classes viz. children, youth and adults in the Sabbath school.

In yet another book, Testimonials Vol. iii, E.G. White argues that:

...We obtain a correct knowledge of how to live so as to enjoy the greatest amount of unalloyed happiness. The lesson student is also furnished with scripture argument so that he can meet the doubts of unbelievers.<sup>28</sup>

This study has been carried out in order to find out the kind of knowledge Sabbath school lesson study programme imparts on SDA Church adherents.

## **1.5 Theoretical Framework**

In his book System of positive polity. A. Comte (1968) purports that from the nature of the human intellect each branch of knowledge in its development is necessarily obliged to pass through three different theoretical states: the theological or the fictitious state: the metaphysical or abstract state; lastly the society supernatural ideas serve to bind the small number of isolated observations which constitute Science in other words the facts observed are explained and conceived a priori, by means of invented facts. Such is the necessary state of all knowledge in its infancy.

The second state is destined to serve as a means of transition from the first to the third. It has ideas which are personified abstractions, which the mind can at will regard as the mystic name for supernatural cause, or abstract statement of a mere series of phenomena, according as it approximates more nearly to the theological or the scientific state.

The third is the definitive state of all knowledge whatsoever, the first two having been destined to prepare it gradually. In this stage facts become connected by general ideas or laws of a completely positive kind, suggested or confirmed by the very facts which are themselves frequently only simple facts sufficiently general to be elated to the rank of principles. Comte's theory of progression in knowledge in religious terms can be equated as progression from spontaneous then inspired and afterwards revealed religion.

Comte acknowledged the fact that there are different stages in human learning process. The SDA church through the lesson study programme has recognized the same by having different lesson classes for children, adults, and youths.

In this study the assessment of the impact of Sabbath School lesson study programme is done on children, youth and adults.

It is in these three stages in human life that changes in religious understanding takes place. In the first stage, children are initially fictitious and are controlled by feelings, when they change to be youth in the second stage they start imagining and having abstract ideas and finally in the third stage when they become adults they start reasoning. It is for this reason that the SDA church has three Sabbath School lesson classes' children, youth and adults. For Sabbath school lesson study to have any impact, the three classes have to be taken into account.

In the three Sabbath school lesson study classes' different lesson study materials are used. Children use picture rolls, youth's use collegiate quarterly while adults use adults Sabbath School lessons. Lessons regulate all Adventist Sabbath School classes all over the world. Lessons also regulate Adventist lives by providing a moral base of unity.



They also co-ordinate individual and social life of SDA adherents. The Sabbath school programme takes care of the entire SDA adherent who is in different state of mental development articulated by Comte.

## **1.6 Methodology**

This study is based on both library and field research. The library research was mainly conducted at central SDA church (Maxwell), SDA East Africa union headquarters (Nairobi). The library research provided information on the origins and spread of Sabbath school lessons study programme. It was also from the library sources that information was acquired on the missionary enterprise and its impact on Kenya in general and on Homa-Bay district in particular.

The study intended to get different views on impact of Sabbath lesson study from parts of Homa-Bay District where SDA has extended its influence.

One reason why Homa-Bay District was selected is because SDA first mission station Gendia (Kendu - Bay) is nearby. The African herald Publishing house that deals with translations of the lesson is also located there. So this made it easy to interview some key informants such as Sabbath school directors, pastors, superintendents, colporteurs, students and lesson teachers who had experience on what Sabbath school lesson study does to SDA church adherents.

The SDA church in Homa-bay District is co-ordinated mainly from Ranen field (Fields are small administrative units of Union).

Each field is further subdivided into stations (both headed by directors), and stations are subdivided into "Districts", which are headed by local pastors. For easy administration of the field study, Ranen field was divided into "districts" Rapedhi, Kamagambo, Asego, Ranen, Langi, Got Kojowi, God Brua, Kuoyo, Godbond, and Nyalkinyi. Since there are many districts, only four "districts" were selected because of the short time that the researcher had in the field. These are Rapedhi, Langi, Asego and Kuoyo Kochia. Under each of the four "districts" eight churches and eight Sabbath schools were selected for study. Selection of these Sabbath schools was mainly based on the fact that they are easily accessible.

For the field research the following three methods were used:

#### **a. Personal interviews:**

Personal interviews were conducted with thirty-three informants who included two field directors, two Sabbath school directors, five pastors, five church elders, five deacons, five superintendents, five lesson teachers, and four pupils from four lesson classes (children, Baptismal, youth and adult). Those who were interviewed were selected because of their long association with Sabbath school lesson study programme or because of the role they play in Sabbath school lesson study programme. Generally there were free discussions between the researcher and informants.

The key informants provided information, which filled in the gaps left by the information obtained through questionnaire and participant observation.

#### **B. Participant Observation**

In all the four "Districts", eight churches and eight Sabbath schools studied, observations were made on facilities offered or provided for Sabbath school lesson study programme.

Worship sessions and lesson classes were observed while attending worship sessions and while teaching. Lesson pupils were observed while attending worship sessions and lesson classes. In participating, indicators of the impact of Sabbath school lesson study as attendance, attentiveness, participation in discussion, contributions (offerings), punctuality, number of people with Bibles and lesson booklets, and number of lesson teachers were all observed. During the two months the research was conducted attendance of church services and participation in lesson classes was done.

### **(c) Questionnaire interview:**

Since all informants could not be interviewed orally due to limited time that was available, twenty eight key informants were covered by questionnaire which involved two categories were not posted but taken personally to the four districts and eight Sabbath schools. Sabbath school lesson teachers were given one week to fill the questionnaires and hand them back. Out of the five lesson teachers who were given questionnaires all returned them.

Two research assistants were also involved in the research in order to cover the four "districts", eight churches and eight Sabbath schools within a short time. They were trained for two days before they went to the field to conduct interviews. Their training covered how to approach informants, how to probe vague answers, how to interpret the questions and how to write down information that could be read and understood. Each research assistant was given ten questionnaires to administer, they also conducted oral interviews. Before analysing information on questionnaires of the area covered by the research assistants the

researcher approached some informants for verification of information filled in the questionnaire forms.

## **NOTES**

1. General Conference of SDA Church, Sabbath School Manual (Washington: Herald press 1986) p.52
2. E.G White, Upward look, Washington (Review and herald, 1982), p.325
3. Sabbath School Manual op.cit p.564.
4. Ibid.
5. AW. Spalding, Captains of the Host (Washington D.C: Review and Herald Press 1949) p.397
6. M.N Getui, " The establishment and history of the activities of the SDA among Abagusii of western Kenya" 1912 - 85 (UoN 1985 M.A Thesis) p. 70
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
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12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Getui op.cit.
15. Op.cit Sabbath School Manual p.26
16. General Conference Sabbath School, Teaching Teachers to Teach (Tennessee: Southern Publishing association, 1949) p.79
17. Ibid p.249
18. C.M Maxwell, Magnificent disappointment (U.S.A Pacific press, 1994) p. 142

19. E.G white, Our high Calling, Washington: Review and herald, 1982) p 321
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24. E.G White, Testimonials Vol. 111 (Mountain view, California: pacific press 1946) p. 227
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26. Ibid P.7
27. J. Odhiambo, interview, 14.1.99 Nyalkinyi
28. Ibid.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SEVENTH - DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH (S.D.A)**

#### **2.1 FOUNDING OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH (SDA)**

The roots of the Seventh-day Adventist Church lie in the words: "I was thus brought to the Solemn conclusion that in about twenty five years... all the affairs of our present state would be wounded up".<sup>1</sup> These words were uttered by William Miller the leader of a group of people who were later referred to as millerite Adventists because they expected Christ's second advent in 1843 or 1844. Miller's prophecies that the world would end then never became but out of them seventh - day Adventist church was born. It is worth noting that Miller himself did not get an opportunity to be a member of the Seventh - Day Adventist church. He died in 1849, fourteen years before the official emergence of the Seventh - Day Adventist church.

Miller was born Pittsfield Massachusetts in 1782. While he was still young, his Family moved to low Hampton, New York, close to the Vermont border.<sup>2</sup> He was a farmer but also spent time reading at night when the rest of the Family had gone to sleep. Out of sixteen children in their Family he was the eldest and there was not enough money to provide him with advanced education.

At the age of twenty-one in 1803, Miller got married to Lucy and settled at Vermont.<sup>3</sup> His scholarly interests brought him into contact with the local village intellectuals, most of whom were deist believers. These friends were to draw him away from his Baptist faith, which he had inherited from his parents.

He believed in the Bible but often found it inconsistent, ineffective and contradictory. He read writings of Deist writers like Hume, Voltaire and Thomas Daire.

In his book Magnificent Disappointment, C.M Maxwell states that:

*According to deism, God created the world and set it in operation under unalterable laws of cause and effect. In with these laws, men ought to live clean, kindly and honest lives; but to believe in prayer, a savior, or life after death, was regarded as childish superstition...<sup>4</sup>*

During Americas (USA) second military struggle for political power, between 1812 and 1815, Miller saw some of his companions die in war in which British were defeated by Americans.

After the war he returned to Low Hampton, to care for is recently widowed mother. During this time he attended a local baptism church where his uncle was a pastor. Occasionally he could be invited to deliver a sermon, then gradually he became dissatisfied with deist lack of hope beyond the grave. He resolved to become a committed Christian, and in order to meet the ridicule and challenge from his deist friends, he took to a programme of systematic Bible study. Two years of careful Bible study led him to the conviction that Jesus' return was imminent.<sup>5</sup>

He studied prophetic books from the Bible, especially Daniel two and seven about rise and fall of world kingdoms. From this he concluded that the Second Advent would take place literally. As he studied Daniel chapter eight verse fourteen "and he said unto me, unto two thousand and three hundred days; and then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." He became convinced that the sanctuary to be cleansed at the end of the 2,300 days of the church, which would be purified at the Lords return.

By connecting the 2,300 days of Daniel chapter eight, with seven weeks of Daniel chapter nine, he deduced that both periods had begun about twenty five years... all the affairs of our present state would wind up.<sup>16</sup>

Miller felt a strong need to spread the Good News, but to his disappointment only a few people showed enthusiasm. He consoled himself that he was not a trained public speaker.

In her M.A thesis, M. N Getui reports Millers prayer as follows:

*O Lord, I will enter into covenant with thee. If thou wilt open the way: I mean if thou will send an invitation for me to preach, why them, o God, I'll go...But is not very likely; that one will ask a fifty year old person like himself to preach on the second coming of the Lord<sup>7</sup>.*

Later Miller was invited by his brother in law to Dresden while he started an intensive campaign on the advent hope. The following eight years he spent heeding and honoring invitation from various small churches in little towns. The churches he visited ranged from Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians to Congregationists<sup>8</sup>.

His appearance in a major town came in 1839, at the invitation of Joshua V. Himes a man who was interested in making the world a better place to live in. Himes strongly resisted slavery, liquor, and war, and this earned him a good name in England. He was greatly impressed by one of Miller's sermons at Exeter, New Hampshire and invited him to deliver the same sermon in chapelatchardon street, Boston. Later he urged Miller to form his own church.<sup>9</sup>



Miller's views attracted so many people in America that in 1840 a conference of all leaders and even laymen of the advent hope took place. In his book Magnificent Disappointment, C.M Miller, says that the conference was so successful. Millers Adventism was proving stronger as the "end drew nearer, so that the last year, reckoned as between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844 was a year of great activity and expectation. There were many meetings and wide circulation of literature such as "signs of the times", the Midnight Cry", "The voice of truth and "voice of Elijah". According to Miller, they had to be prepared for imminent return of their master Jesus Christ.<sup>10</sup>

On the day of 1844 millerites (followers of Miller) waited for Jesus' return but he did not come. After the disappointment critics of the millerites jeered them leading some of them to return to their old churches, others became skeptical while majority remained with him. Miller lamented that:

*Were I to live my life over again, with the same evidence that I then had to be honest with God and man, I should have to do so as I have done... I confess, my error, and acknowledge my disappointment; yet I still believe that the day of the Lord is near, even at the door; and I exhort you, my brethren, to be watchful and not let that day come upon you unawares.<sup>11</sup>*

The above view was also articulated by one of the millerite leaders, Samuel S. Show. He came up with a new concept of "Seventh month Movement by arguing that the 2,300 days of Daniel 8:14 were to end not in the spring of 1844 as Miller predicted, but in the fall of that year on October 22, 1844.

S. Show's view appealed to Miller and his followers. It was a time of great preaching because the date had been set. The peak of their preaching was between August and October 1844. October 22, 1844 reached and many had prepared to meet the Lord. Once again there was a disappointment more dramatic this time for a date had been fixed.

After October 22, 1844 disappointment Joseph Bates introduced the concept of Seventh-day (Saturday as the day of worship) out of those faithful who still believed that Jesus Christ would return, the seeds for Seventh - Day Adventism were laid.<sup>12</sup> Bates converted several people to Sabbath keeping after Miller's death in 1849.

From its earliest beginnings, Seventh - Day Adventism has been a movement with a message and sense of mission. James White in 1949 wrote, "Let the message fly for the time is short"<sup>13</sup>.

Like other Adventists, White believed that the Lord's return was imminent. It was the responsibility of the people, so they too would prepare themselves to meet the Lord.

The period shortly after 1844 witnessed minimal missionary enterprise because of the October 22, 1844 disappointment. With the memory of the disappointment fading, however, Adventist Sabbath keepers practiced their sense of mission among former Millerites. By 1850 this was being extended to "outsiders" such as Methodists and Baptists. The 1850's also saw Adventism reach Ireland through publications such as *Voice of the Truth and Sign of Time*. Notable in using the press as a tool of mission was James White. Time was not ripe for physical overseas engagements because, as yet, the Sabbath keepers were not organized. The few ministers available were mainly volunteers who were overworked, underpaid and inadequately led. They were unable to meet the demands at home.

With the organization of the church in 1863 missionary activities among the Seventh -Day Adventists took a better turn. Before venturing into foreign lands much was accomplished at home in America. Some of the areas evangelized included the far West, California, and the North West of America. Whenever Adventists went, they found time to pray, to visit and help the sick, and their publications continued to play a significant role in winning souls to the Adventists faith.

The first official overseas missionary was J. N. Andrews who went out to Switzerland in 1871. In the same year he was followed by M.B Crechowski, a former catholic priest who had renounced priesthood and Catholicism and fled to North America. He got converted to Adventists and became an active preacher.

1887 - 1900 was a period of mission advance when the Adventist message reached England, Scandinavia, Central Europe, Russia, Germany, Southern Europe, the Near East, Australia, the Pacific islands, South Africa, Rhodesia, Middle America, Mexico, South America, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Indiana and the far East.

Adventism in East Africa was introduced by German missionaries J. Ehlers and A.C. Ern. They came to Tanzania (the then Tanganyika) in 1903. In 1906, more missionaries arrived in Tanganyika. This same year, saw the arrival of Seventh - Day Adventist missionaries in Kenya. The Seventh-Day Adventist church on the eve of entrance to Kenya had established about 2,274 churches, congregations with a total world membership of over 82,5336 baptized adult believers. It had sent its missionaries to various parts of the world. Every inhabited continent had been reached by Adventist message.

SDA had become a universal organization with new global headquarters established in Washington D.C. The American capital served as a strategic point from where the church transacted its world wide denominational business and mission.<sup>14</sup> In 1863 the headquarters was relocated to Battle Creek, Michigan.

## **2.2 INTRODUCTION OF THE S.D.A CHURCH TO HOMA-BAY DISTRICT**

The pioneer Missionary of the Adventist faith in Homabay was Grandville Carscallan, a Canadian born in 1897. He received his college education both at Union College; Nebraska (1900-1901) and at Newbold college; England (1904 - 1906). During his last year at Newbold College he responded to the need for a missionary to Kenya. He made arrangement for his fiancée Miss Helen Thompson to follow him. Carscallan was accompanied to Kenya by an African teacher; Peter Nyambo; a citizen of Malawi who had gone to Britain for studies, shortly after the Adventist work had started in his home territory in 1902.<sup>15</sup>

When Carscallan and Nyambo arrived in Kenya; they set-up the first mission at Gendia (Homa-bay district) in Luo Land.

Getui M. N in her 1985 M.A thesis quotes Carscallan as saying:

*Our first two workers crossed the gulf from Kisumu on November 27; 1906 and camped for a few days on the shore of Kongo Bay. During these two or three days we looked around and chose Gendia hill for our mission site. We at once applied to the government; for the same and our workers were not moved from the place.*<sup>16</sup>

From here; the Adventist message was to spread to other parts of the then Kavirondo, under which Gusii fell. Taking the message was I.R. Evanson; an English Missionary with the help of Jakobo Olwa. Olwa was a Luo teacher who had been converted to Adventism and was now sent out as a missionary.<sup>17</sup> In 1913, Carscallen opened another Adventist station at Kamagambo In Homa-Bay<sup>18</sup>. At Kamagambo very many people were converted, trained and sent out to evangelize in other parts of Kenya. In Homa-Bay, the African catechist provided local people with booklets and taught them by way of questions and answers. They used Luo language which local people could understand and this made local people appreciate Sabbath school lesson programme. They also provided local people with Bibles so that with lesson booklets they could have Bible study on their own. Some catechist went to Ndhiwa (Rapedhi), others went to Mbita (Suba) and Nyakach.

### **ATTITUDE OF SDA MISSIONARIES TO LUO CULTURE**

When the SDA Missionaries reached Homa-Bay, they found the Luos already living according to their culture and traditions. The SDA considered their main mission in Homa-Bay District as they did in other areas in Africa where they worked in, as that of evangelizing and converting Africans into Christianity. They did not study Luo culture as a preparation for life among the Luos, nor were they encouraged to study their practices since they arrived at their mission stations.

They concentrated in converting Luos to Christianity without any knowledge of their beliefs and practices in order to convert them fully.<sup>19</sup>

The SDA missionaries required the Luo to abandon some of their customs and practices and adopt western ideas and practices.

The Luo were to abandon some habits and norms they had known for many years in order to become seventh-day Adventists. The late Tom Mboya had said that:

In the early days the church objected to the African dances as primitive and uncivilized and for years there was complete conflict between the church and those Africans who wanted to continue African customs and stood for African culture..<sup>20</sup>

Drinking Alcohol, smoking bhang, initiation rites; and consulting of traditional Medicine men were some of the practices which were to be abandoned.

In their evangelical preaching; Missionaries emphasized on Jesus second coming.<sup>21</sup> The Luos were made to believe that Jesus was to come any time. To prepare themselves for parousia (second coming of Jesus Christ) Luos were to abandon "worldly things" and concentrate on "heavenly things". Worldly things meant African cultures and practices and "heavenly things" meant Christian values and Western ideology. Those who abandoned certain African values aforementioned were praised by missionaries and promised that after death they would go to heaven. Those who adhere to the customs and practices were told by the missionaries that after death they would go to hell. This Christian message was passed across through songs and sermons.<sup>22</sup>

The SDA missionaries just like other missionaries in Kenya during the colonial period were given privileges, which Africans did not get.

Although some appeared to be friendly and considerate towards Africans, many considered Africans as unequal to them. Africans were seen as inferior; and needed to be taught western values.

### **2.3 LUO CULTURE BEFORE THE COMING OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST MISSIONARIES - TRADITIONAL LUO IDEA OF GOD**

Before the coming of the missionaries the Luos had their own cultural ideas about God. In his M.A thesis (1975) entitled "A historical analysis of the Luo idea of God" G.E M Ogotu noted that:

*The traditional way of life of the Luo was directed and controlled by social interdictions, which were accepted, by the society and the clans and families, which constituted it. Their religious life was made manifest by a series of rites and ceremonies which were deeply entrenched in their way of life and believed to be defended by ancestors.<sup>23</sup>*

According to Ogotu; Luo people belonging to the traditional religion believe in only one God, Nyasaye,<sup>24</sup> who is Supreme Being; or sky god. Nyasaye is not a remote and inactive god; who is seldom worshipped. Nyasaye is not a mere force; man; acting dynamically; but is regarded as a personal deity; having a "mind" which can be influenced" insulted; or pleased; by men. On Nyasaye B.A Ogot writes the following:

*The term Nyasaye among the Luo, is not only restricted to God: it is applied for instance, to the uterus, which the Luo regard as the source of life... The Luo also use the same Nyasaye to mean luck, good or bad.<sup>25</sup>*

In his book, Luo customs and their culture, P.Mboya writes a story which made the Luo believe that Nyasaye existed. "Once upon a time, a woman got pregnant and on the day of giving birth, she had extended Labour pains and while she was in Labour, an eaves dropper was hiding behind the house listening to whatever was going on.

As soon as the woman delivered, the eaves dropper heard God saying the following:

*Now that this child is born, let us decide how his death will come about as well. What will cause his death? A buffalo will come to the neighborhood and when the villagers come out to kill it, the buffalo will kill the boy when the boy is a mature youngman.<sup>26</sup>*

The eavesdropper went and told everybody how he had heard Nyasaye talking. Years later this story came true. They indicated that as soon as one is born, his death is also planned. Nyasaye is believed to have an influence on human life here and now. The God has an ethical relation to man, upholding justice and punishing wrong doers. He is the great giver of gifts and protector of man.



Nyasaye is especially resorted to in prayers and sacrifices when serious calamities such as droughts, war and epidemics have struck the population.

Many people also worship Nyasaye individually or on a family basis by praying to him everyday. Concerning the frequency of sacrifices made to Nyasaye there has been a marked change during the century. According to one informant great sacrifices involving the slaughtering of a bull often took place in the 1930's.<sup>27</sup> Since that decade public sacrifices to Nyasaye have gradually decreased, although they are still conducted by some people, often (but not always) in secret.

The sacrifice always involved meat, usually a bull, but sometimes a smaller animal (sheep or goat) without blemish, which reflects pastoral way of life, indicating that agriculture has played an inferior role until recently.

As far as most of my informants are concerned, there are no religious ceremonies connected with sowing and harvesting (first fruits offerings). This indicates that agriculture has been of minor importance and is a relatively new occupation compared to cattle raising.

The lack of special buildings or temples dedicated to Nyasaye indicates a nomadic way of life, in which the place of worship changes according to where the men have temporarily settled.

Nyasaye is not, however, the only source from which men can get help and protection against misfortune or disease. There are other agents such as medicine men, the spirits of the dead who intervene actively in everyday life, and sought for protection against and prevention of different kinds of calamities<sup>28</sup>.

## **ANCESTOR VENERATION**

The spirits of the dead "jachien" rank next to Nyasaye in power and importance <sup>29</sup>. Some are evil while others are good. They are often believed to be the cause of diseases and misfortunes, but they also help people and bring good fortune. They are worshipped with prayers and sacrifices, but never collectively. This practice of always addressing a particular individual ancestor reflects the social organization of single Family settlements.

The sacrifice consists of an animal, hen, a sheep, a goat, or more rarely a bull, never agricultural produce, and is conducted as a rule at the place where the ancestors die or on his grave or shrine. In his book Religion of the central Luo, Okot P'Bitek notes:

*It can be said among the central Luo totemistic belief and avoidances were aspects of ancestor worship. The species or class of objects was important, not because they were emblems or representation of the spirits. Spirits either of the totems themselves or of ancestor, or any kind of spirit. It was the creatures themselves that the Central Luo respected, feared and abided not because, along time ago, an ancestor pronounced a curse on all those who would break a taboo concerning the Totem* <sup>30</sup>.

When the Luo wished to offer sacrifices to their ancestors, either for joyful events such as success in battle or hunt, birth or recovery from illness, or when an epidemic or failure of crops or animal disease threatened they gathered before the ancestral shrine Abila or Kac.<sup>31</sup> This was the center of religious worship of the lineage group, and in pre-Christian days it was found in every homestead;

The shrine assumed various forms and sizes, and some had more, others less, of the additional parts. The most important part of the shrine was Ot Jok, (the hurt of Jok) an untidy made structure which in some localities was a miniature hut no higher than two feet, and often without walls, and in other parts it was built of stones in the shape of a small table, or two slabs of stone were placed on the ground so that their tops met.<sup>32</sup> It has already been pointed out that it is in the interest of the old people to encourage the attitude of respect and fear towards jachien by the younger generation. This belief that jachien will take revenge if the person has not been properly treated during his lifetime this insures that the old people are treated with great respect and have a position in the community.

### **DISEASE SPIRIT**

The Luo do not believe in spirits of nature (spirits of water, rocks...) unlike other tribes. But they believe in Juogi and Nundu, which are spirits causing madness, and small pox.<sup>33</sup> The first category (Juogi) can be pacified or driven away by a Jabilo or jajuogi<sup>34</sup>. Afterwards the afflicted person may become a sooth sayer or a medicine-man.

### **MEDICINE - MAN**

There are many different kinds of medicine-men, some of whom are purely benevolent, others mostly malevolent. They are endowed with a special power, called Bilo which is morally neutral and strengthens the skill of both benevolent medicine-men<sup>35</sup>.

Bilo is like mana; many of the Luo medicine-men are skilled herbalist's and treat diseases and misfortunes. The Jabilo, and sometimes also the Ajuoga, conducts the sacrifices to Nyasaye.

Sacrifices to an ancestral spirits are mostly conducted by an Ajouga, Ajadolo, or the head of the Family after having received sufficient advice from one of the medicine men.<sup>36</sup>

Apart from these powerful medicine-men there are many minor ones who do not possess Bilo (magical power). People consult them for minor troubles before consulting a more influential and expensive Jabilo or Ajouga.

## **INDIGENOUS FORMS OF EDUCATION AMONG THE LUO**

Like many other African societies, there was no formal System of education among the Luo prior to the coming of the missionaries.

The art of writing and reading was unknown. On tradition, P.M Mumo in his (1989) M.A thesis quotes P. Erny that:

*Dynamically considered education is first, the transmission of a heritage from one generation to another. It aims at assuring continuity, at being the instrument by which civilizations perpetuate themselves. Secondly, it appears as the heritage and equipment that the individual receives in order to be able to integrate himself into his community.<sup>37</sup>*

Education was a life long process in which an individual progressed through predetermined stages of graduation from birth to death. The Luo have a saying that dhano ipuonjo nyaka tho, meaning that a human being is taught from birth to death.<sup>38</sup>

The Luo did not have an institution equivalent to the modern school. Children received their basic education and training at home from their parents, grandparents, other relatives and peers. Education was at the center of Luo life.

It was through it that basic knowledge about economic activities, social activities and social organization was passed from one generation to another.

It allowed gifted people to specialize in certain aspects of knowledge. All children had to be equipped with necessary knowledge. Specialization only came in where, for example, one had special talent. If one was gifted as a seer, or herbalist then he specialized in that career. In most cases one followed the job he found his/her parents doing. If one is a medicine man one of his child at least trained to become a medicine man.

Religious education was learnt as part of other types of education offered. P.M Mumo Quotes J.S Mbiti as follows:

*Religion permeates into all departments of life so fully that it is not easy to isolate it...*<sup>39</sup>

All aspects of life had a religious dimension. In agriculture, for example there were religious rituals that had to be performed before planting and after harvesting. In social life, there were also religious rites that had to be performed for instance at birth of a child or death of a member of the Family. In his book Luo Kitgi gi timbegi (Luo customs and their practices)

P. M. Boya reports that:

*When a woman was giving birth an experienced old mid-wife was summoned. If the delivery was difficult, the father in law went to collect grass from a denudated home. He tied it into a small knot and brought it into the house where the woman was delivering. He then untied the grass on the woman. He also wiped her with grinding stone as he prayed uttering these words: Please mother, if it is you, let these people's daughter deliver safely. I pray for the evil to be removed.<sup>40</sup>*

At infancy a Childs upbringing was mainly the responsibility of the mother. After weaning, the grand parents and other children also participated. Apart from knowing how to walk and talk, a child was introduced to customs and traditions. The infants were taught how to sing, which introduced them to the communities religious beliefs, laws and history. Virtues like respect, obedience, generosity and unselfishness, courage and endurance were taught.

The taboos, which were taught, formed the child's code. For example, children were told that:

*If you whistle at night, you are inviting a snake to your house. If you kill a frog one of your mother's breast will drop off.<sup>41</sup>*

A common story told to children at this stage was that of Simbi nyaima, which tells how there was a big home of the Waswa built on a hill, also told to children is the story of the hare and the crocodile.<sup>42</sup>

When a child was old enough to go out, he was exposed to the community at large, which took up the task of training him. He was expected to lend a hand where or when he could, for example in activities like fishing, herding cattle, hunting and nursing younger siblings and building house. The girls took feminine duties such as collecting firewood, pottery, smearing houses, picking vegetables, and cooking. Education got at this stage was practical and involved activities such as basket weaving and blacksmithing. Different trees and herbs were introduced and their uses specified.

Whatever one had learnt in his youth was greatly valued and treasured for as one advanced in age, he acquired the status of an instructor. He did not cease to learn because even an old man felt he would not survive without the ideas of others. There were frequent visits and beer parties where old men shared ideas.

Traditional Luo System of education was very relevant for it involved virtually everything that went into making and identifying these people as Luo.

Though informal, the education System took care of the People vocational and practical needs, moral needs and all aspects of man. With arrival of the missionaries traditional needs were to change, so as to meet the demands of their settings. The Seventh-day Adventist scholars provided one of the avenues for meeting this needs, thus making its contribution to the Kenyans and the Luo significant.

## INITIATION RITE AMONG THE LUO

Initiation was a process of incorporating an individual into the community of adults in the society.<sup>43</sup> In the process of initiation the boys and girls were made to understand the ways of adult life so that when they entered into marriage they went into it knowing all that it entails.

Luo initiation was done by knocking out of six lower teeth of the initiates, a process called Nak.<sup>44</sup> In his 1980 M.A thesis entitled "Education values of SIGENDINI LUO" ODAGA a.b.c writes that:

*Traditionally both men and women went through nak; which was extraction of the six lower middle teeth.*<sup>45</sup>

If the initiates were both boys and girls, their ages were not necessarily the same. Their ages would range between 15 - 20 and 13 - 18 years respectively.<sup>46</sup> During the field study one of the informants said that:

*Nak to us is comparable to circumcision, which is practiced by other ethnic groups...*<sup>47</sup>

Through initiation, the individual was introduced into the full adult community life, which in essence called for the full participation of the individual in the Society so that ones dignity was respected and upheld.



During Nak (the knocking out of six lower teeth) the shading of blood signified the solemnity associated with initiating him into adulthood. He was linked with his ancestors by blood. That blood too joined him to his land and God. He became identified as a full member of the community, and could begin taking responsibility of owning property, and could sooner or later get married and take part in decision making. He was urged to be obedient to the tribal practices and respect the ancestors.

When the six lower teeth were being knocked out, great pain was inflicted. This pain inflicting was a test of physical and psychological endurance in time of crisis such like war for boys and labour pains for girls.

Several reasons have been advanced as to why the Luo extracted their six lower teeth. For example, Odaga notes the following:

*The practice of nak made Luo distinguishable from their Bantu neighbours, some of whom extracted a few teeth or no teeth at all. If a person fell sick with lock-jaw which is said to have been prevalent around the lake, or with any other types of sickness, he could be given medicine through the gap using narrow end of the gourd or calabash.<sup>48</sup>*

Nak was done by a specialist referred to as Ja Nak. He was an experienced person in the extraction of the teeth. The instrument he used to extract initiates teeth was called Riwi meaning a wire with sharp end.

During Nak all initiates were expected to be together in one of the initiates home waiting for Ja Nak to extract their six lower teeth. He came with Riwi or pliers and permanganate or a hen's fat, which he rubbed on the initiate's teeth to avoid over bleeding. After five minutes, Ja Nak instructed his assistants to get hold of the initiates one by one he inserted Riwi into the initiates mouth and forced out six lower teeth. Initiates were challenged or threatened by their parents that if they cried, a lot of blood would come out till they die.

After Nak initiates ate pumpkins, sweat potatoes, vegetables and fresh milk and blood, which were prepared for initiates in advance before extraction of their teeth.

After the knocking out of teeth, the community was fully involved to initiate the youth into adult life to enable him realistically move from childhood to adulthood and becomes mature socially.

This period was therefore characterized by social training in the community required skills. It took along time to train the individual. Moral values were instituted in him to enable him fit among his peers and the Society in general. Through stories, proverbs, riddles, and taboos he was introduced to future experience in life. Odaga notes for example that:

*After nak, a young person was not supposed to open the door of his/her parents living house any time he /she found it closed.<sup>49</sup>*

After Nak, the elders narrated to the initiates the story of the clan and the tribe. They were told of the wars their people fought, their victories and defeats, their friendly neighbours, their past enemies and potential enemies. These elders were a source of knowledge and children were encouraged to develop a strong respect for them.

Luo men and women also used to pierce holes in the lower lobes of their ears through which ornaments were inserted. Again between the ages of forty and fifty, a man could Kayo Nganga, that is, he could have holes pierced around the outer edges of both ears and have beads of varying colours fixed in them. Kayo Nganga was a rank, which a man entered only when he felt that he was mature enough and also that he had accumulated enough riches in the form of cattle.

## **MARRIAGE AMONG THE LUO**

When a father considered his son old enough to marry, he allowed him to look for a wife. He advised the son to propose to a girl from a good family where people were known to be of good character and whose lineage had a good name.

This kind of information was obtained from a go-between, jagam.<sup>51</sup> The go-between, chosen by the boy, was usually his aunt, cousin, uncle or any other relative who knew the girl and her parents well. All information and messages from either side was passed through the go-between.

The go-between was expected to know matters concerning the bride wealth, how many cows went to the girl's home and what kind of livestock were to be slaughtered for the guest from the brides side.

A relative from the girl's side was expected to act as a go-between the girl the bride. He was to know all that was happening in the marriage process, the cows and other matters that concerned the marriage and what was slaughtered for various occasions. The two go betweens were important witnesses especially later on if the dowry was to be returned. The go-between informed the groom's parents if more cows were still required and when the girl would pay a visit.

When the boy and his party went to woo the girl, the go-between from the girl's side stayed with them till they left. The go-between from the girl's side received rewards in the form of meat from any animal slaughtered for the in-laws. The go-between from the man's side took meat from the cows slaughtered for the confirmation of the ceremony, where he took buoch bat, or he might choose meat that is assigned to the girl's mother as a reward for the efforts undertaken in their marriage process.

After the two go-betweens had finished the negotiations and both sides had accepted, the man could visit the girl. Odaga reports that:

*Every girl had to pass through Siwidhe, a kind of dormitory where grown up of about seven to fourteen spend the nights. In siwidhe they, received sex education.<sup>53</sup>*

On arrival at the girl's home, the go-between went to the parent's house and the other two visitors went to the parent's house to confirm their agreement concerning marriage, they assessed the home. After assessing the mother's opinion, he proceeded to hear the News from the father. If matters were all right, he went to the Simba and told the groom to be.<sup>54</sup>

Afterwards, the girl's mother released her from her duties to go and greet visitors. She was accompanied by some other three girls. After the greetings, they talked on the matter, which had brought the visitors, and if the girl accepted the proposal, she said: "The matter rests with my parents". The next morning, the go-between reported back to the parents of the girl and said:

"Yesterday, we talked to the girl and the matter is now left upon you"

The father then asked: "has the girl agreed and... are they well mannered or they will disturb me on bride wealth?" The go-between then said "They are good people and they will not disturb you on that issue<sup>55</sup>. The girl has left the matter with you."

If the father agreed that the marriage should take place, the three visitors went back to their homeland. If they did not get an opportunity to capture, Mako<sup>56</sup> the girl, they went without her on returning home, the bridegroom sent a force, Jomeko to go and capture the girl. The force escort set off for the girl's home at dawn carrying Neline for bribing the grandmother in whose Siwidhe the girl slept. If one of the parents of the girl was not in, they could not take her. They went back without her and came back when they learnt that the parents were all in.

It was forbidden, Kwero, to capture a bride when either of the groom's or the bride's parents was not in their homestead, for it was forbidden, Kwero, for the newly married couple to have first sexual relationship before the parents on both sides had done so on that day. This was why the bride was captured only when parents on both sides were at their respective home.

Among the Luo, marriage was not an individual matter. The whole Family, the community as well as close relatives, were involved in its arrangement.

But sanctioning it, and agreeing on the number of heads of cattle for bride wealth, was left to be discussed and fixed by the girl's kinsmen. The livestock that were given to the bride's parents had been referred to variably by western anthropologist as bride price or dowry.

But in thinking of the Luo, the livestock given to the girl were seen as bride wealth. It was a symbolic gift of gratitude. In his book entitled African culture and Christian church A. Shorter notes that:

*If bride wealth is compensation to the living, it is also often compensation to the spirit of the dead members of the lineage. Sometimes a cow or animal paid as bride wealth is ear marked for or consecrated to one of the ancestors. In this way, the spirits of the Family are also witnessed to the marriage and to the continuance of their line.<sup>57</sup>*

The family of the bridegroom was responsible for the giving of the bride wealth as compensation for they were in a process to take away a girl or had taken her and she had been able in doing domestic chores. Shorter comments further that:

*Nobody in Africa knows who invited bride wealth. Individuals contribute to the continued existence and development of customs.. Bridewealth is trasmissible and continued existence and development of customs. Bridewealth is transmissible and continued over many generations, who never practice it.<sup>58</sup>*

Bride wealth was paid in the form of cattle. Up to thirty heads of cattle could be paid for the bride. Goats and sheep, and of course nowadays money as well, are paid as bride wealth. However, due to changing economic situations, as little as three or four heads of cattle; or a few hundred shillings to two or more thousands of shillings may be paid.

In fact broadly speaking, marriage is the one institution, which has not been overtly commercialized among the Luo. They expected every bride to be a virgin on her bridal night. This was a source of great honour to the parents, the husband and the girl herself.

## **2.4 THE INFLUENCES OF SEVENTH - DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH ON LUO CULTURAL PRACTICES.**

Early this century when the European Missionaries arrived in Homa-Bay, they found this Society had evolved its own unique System of living.

This System, however, was not to continue because the European Missionaries had demands which would be met with changes being effected in the Society. The missionaries, for example, introduced the Luo to Christianity. Those who had accepted Christianity had to adopt to its teaching accordingly. In this study, we see how and where changes were effected on the Luo Society as a result of intergrating with Seventh - Day Adventist missionaries. The three, that is initiation, marriage and death are of interest to us because they have undergone unnoticeable transformation among the Seventh - Day Adventists when comparing them with other Christians in Homa- Bay.

### **(i) INFLUENCE ON MARRIAGE**

The practice of polygamy was acceptable among the Luos and men were allowed to marry subsequent wives, so the first wife knew very well that if she ran away without apparent reason, the husband would marry another wife, so the practice of polygamy among other things acted as a form of discipline to the wives who would wish to ran away or divorce without good reasons. In his book African religion and Philosophy J.S Mbiti aptly points out that:

*Once fully marriage contract has been executed it is extremely hard to dissolve it. If a dissolution does come about then it creates a scar in the community concerned.<sup>59</sup>*



Therefore polygamy stabilized marriage, more over polygamy provided room for sexual satisfaction, hence promiscuous living of male and females was non - existent for each woman had a husband and every child had a socially recognized father. No man or woman had good reason to engage in loose living cases of prostitution were therefore not there in Luo traditional Society.

At the initial stages the missionaries welcomed polygamists in the mission centers. They taught them that monogamy was better than polygamy and urged them to give up polygamy in order to become true Christians. This seems to have worked for many people gave up polygamy and remained with their first wives as recognised marital partners<sup>60</sup>. However, later on, after becoming Christians some men returned to their second wives after discovering that Christianity was not about abandoning their culture but accepting Jesus Christ.

Today, however, many Christians pretend to maintain ideal Christians monogamous marriages yet they lead promiscuous lives with other women in the bars or hire them houses paying for them regular visits in their bedrooms. It is really doubtful whether such a Christian husband really believes to be maintaining a model of Christian monogamous marriage.

Among the Luo, the widow could not divorce from the deceased husbands family by marrying another man. She could only enter leviratic union with one of the brothers of the deceased husband. The living brother continues to fulfill the function of the deceased brother - in law with whom she cohabits.

He is merely continuing to fulfill the sexual needs of the woman as well as procreative and economic needs on behalf of the deceased brother. He is not her husband at all, and she is not her husband at all, and she is not his wife.

The S.D.A church saw this leviratic marriage as equivalent to polygamy. The church stood firm that the widow should be left free to choose a man with whom she can wed.

The church further suggests that if she is old she can stay in the husband's homestead without cohabiting with a man in a leviratic marriage.

## **(II) INFLUENCE ON INITIATION**

The early Seventh - Day Adventist missionaries in Luo land did not interfere with initiation ceremonies of their converts. The rituals accompanying the traditional Luo initiation rite continued to be practiced by the Seventh - Day Adventist adherents themselves and not missionaries <sup>61</sup>.

As already noted, the Luo practiced initiation for both male and females by knocking out of six lower middle teeth. This pattern continue among the early Seventh-Day Adventist adherents. According to most informants, later, they started to question this practice. To some it was an act of idol worship So the Seventh - Day Adventist adherents started giving it up. It has gradually been stopped among the Seventh -Day Adventist adherents.

### **(III) INFLUENCE ON DEATH RITES**

Just like initiation and marriage; the aspect of controversy in death is also recognized: which is a very elaborate event among the Luos. Apart from mourning; there are also other major changes that the Seventh-day Adventist church has encouraged and contributed in bringing about; but these have not raised as much tension as the issue of mourning.

Notable is the absence of the many rituals such as Tero-buru tedo e liel:lido;ter; and Nindo Oko. That were meant to cleanse the deceased home of the evil forces associated with the death. They were also believed to bring peace between the deceased and the living; particularly those of the affected family. These rituals, were given up very early among the Seventh-day Adventist adherents.

This was because of the Seventh-day Adventist mission villages whose influence was felt even among those of the affected family. These rituals; were given up very early among the Seventh-day Adventist adherents.

This was because of the Seventh-day Adventist mission villages whose influence was felt even among those not putting up with them. The adherents were discouraged from consulting Ajuoga (traditional medicine men). This meant there was no way they would get the ancestors message and fulfill their demands.

The Seventh-day Adventist adherents were also encouraged to give up the belief in the ancestors when they were introduced to the other Christian; the Seventh-day Adventists hold that death was brought about by man's indulgence in sin. The dead are not lost forever and yet they have no control over the lives of the living.

The dead are awaiting resurrection after which the righteous will enjoy communion with God under perfect environment. The sinners will not share in this as they will be banished to external suffering.

Mourning during funerals was not discouraged in the Seventh-day Adventist church till the 1970s. The church began to show concern when it was realized that despite their understanding of death; the Seventh day Adventist adherents were not behaving any different from the traditionalists. The church has not issued a directive to this effect but she has taken to discourage her followers from mourning their dead the traditional way.

Mourning is therefore a sensitive issue among the Luo; enhanced by the fact that it is a Seventh- day Adventist idea to stop people from crying; and also the fact that death is something that men cannot easily reconcile with. It calls for careful handling since it touches to only the SDA but the whole of Luo <sup>62</sup>.

#### **(IV) INFLUENCE ON DIET**

Before the issue of righteousness by faith, the issue that brought about divisions in the church was that of diet. It is still a sensitive issue although it has lost prominence. It started in the late 1960s when educated Seventh-Day Adventists started having more access to the writings of Ellen. G. White.<sup>63</sup>

She saw that temperance included far more than the simple abandonment of liquor; pure soft Water was revealed to be a much better medicine than the many drugs in general use.

A meatless diet; abstinence from alcohol; abstinence from tea and tobacco was recommended.

This means consumption of natural and wholesome foods such as grains; nuts; fruits and vegetables.

The missionaries' only discouraged beer; tobacco and sacrificed meat. The idea of being partial about diet is only a characteristic of the adventurer's youth. Most of the elderly people are in favour of a relaxed diet recommended abstaining from beer because of its social evils.

Another category is of an extreme nature; made up of devout Seventh-day Adventists they consider abstaining from certain foods as a means of salvation. Not to live by recommended diet is a sin. Some of them have at one time lived on a merely boiled vegetable diet;

A third category where the majority of people who can be termed as comprising of people "hanging in the middle way" They know there is something worth while in the recommended diet. They refrain from certain foods just because they have been told or read that they are not good for one's health.

The fourth category is composed of very few people who have a clear and proper understanding of what the diet issue is all about. They maybe devout Seventh - Day Adventists and relaxed with diet which makes many people wonder whether the two are compatible. This category can be termed as the elite.

Because of their educational background, they have had access to the writings of Ellen White. They not only question some teachings, but they go further and search the truth for themselves.

## **(V) INFLUENCE ON BRIDE WEALTH**

Another area where differences have arisen with the Seventh - Day Adventist church is over bride wealth.

There are two camps, one in favour of, and another one against the exorbitant bride wealth demands prevailing among the Seventh-Day Adventists, particularly those of the upper social class. The fact that the church has not issued an official limitation of bride wealth allows room for the difference in that nobody feels he is going against the church.

The church has not seen the need for issuing their stand because as Christians her members are expected to reach agreements amicably. This however, is not enough for the church is losing the many wedding ceremonies it is expected to conduct either because the groom cannot meet the bride wealth as cited by the brides father or because the couple decide to go a head and get married anyway as involving their parents would lead to embarrassment and frustrations since chances of disagreeing over bride wealth are high.

Despite the Seventh - Day Adventist intervention in either starting or encouraging changes in initiation, marriage and death, changes would have still come about with time. The Seventh-Day Adventist has been responsible for most of these changes, with education, urbanization and the changing times also playing a considerable role.

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## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY PROGRAMME**

#### **3.1 ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY PROGRAMME**

The origin of Sabbath school lesson study programme dates back to the year 1852<sup>1</sup>. During this time, the seventh day Adventist movement had its headquarter in a hired house in Rochester, New York. Cholera epidemic was raging in the city and as a result, fear sat upon the people.

It is at this time that James and Ellen white had appointments to go to Bangor<sup>2</sup>. As they travelled by horse and buggy, their three year old son Edson revived, and continually improved as the parents traveled to Bengor.

According to the General conference of SDA, it was the sight of the sick child that stirred James Whites mind to a need in the infact cause<sup>3</sup>. He thought that there were other babies and children of believers, who were languishing from disease, but from spiritual neglect.

A.W. Spalding in his book Captains of the Host writes that:

*This man who loved children who had been a teacher of children, who early in his Ministry had taken pleasure in conflicting adults who opposed the conversion and baptism of children, was now in the midst of his cares and burdens in starting this final gospel message, stirred to the depths of his soul by the needs of children.<sup>4</sup>*

White's intentions was immediately announced in their publication at Rochester in August 1852, a month with subscription price of twenty-five cents a year, but free to children whose sponsors could not pay<sup>5</sup>. The editorship was not declared but it was James White, who was greatly assisted at its time by Annie Smith.<sup>6</sup>

Later Roswell F. Cottrell was aroused to action and he prepared a years course of weekly lessons, which in 1854 appeared in the youth instructor, and the next year were published in book form **The Bible Class**. This book served as the Sabbath school guided for two or three years, until the edition was exhausted. Like the first lessons, they were designed as food for children and youth<sup>7</sup>.

In 1861 and 1862 there appeared in the youth's instructor "questions for little Bible students" which demanded a rather extensive knowledge of Biblical curiosities and stimulated some Sabbath afternoon research by children of acute and pious nature or with parents of rectitude. They were asked, for instance. "Will there be animals in the new earth?" "What two prophets were commanded to eat books?"

This kind of Bible study came to an end in 1863, with the advent of a talented young woman Adelia Pattern. In September of 1863, she furnished a two - year series of lessons, for children to the staff of the **Youths Instructor**, of which paper she soon became the editor. These lessons were simply and graphically presented, dealing with basic concepts of Christianity: God, Jesus, heaven, angels, followed by a course in Bible history, chronologically arranged from Adam to Paul<sup>8</sup>.

In 1869, professor GH Bell furnished to the Youths instructor two series of lessons, one dealing with the Old Testament history, the other being studies for the youth in book of Daniel. Bell prepared a complete series of Bible lessons for the Sabbath school, eight little books covering the history of the Bible and its lessons from to Acts of the Apostles. These books formed the basic of the systematic and progressive education in Bible knowledge, by which Adventist children benefited<sup>9</sup>.

Later, Miss Lillian Affolter developed a kindergarten department at Battle Creek, which offered training for the youthful teachers.

Together with Frank Belden, Affolter developed the books Bible Object lessons and Songs For little ones an admirable lesson book for the kindergarten department during the year 1886-92<sup>10</sup>.

The first songbook with Sabbath school-needs in mind was published in 1878. The song Anchor. After this, J.Edson White brought out in 1886 Joyful greeting for the Sabbath school. In 1895 "joyful greeting" was succeeded by Frank Beldens "Gospel sheaf" which further recognized Sabbath school sections by being divided into departments of primary, intermediate, special and standard. Later Gospel Sheaf was succeeded by Sabbath "Songs of Praise"<sup>11</sup>

General conference of SDA in the book entitled witness of Jesus reports that:

At the General conference of March 1878, held in battle Creek, it was reported that there were 600 Sabbath schools in the United States, and between eight and ten thousand young people of Adventist Parents organization of Churches and conferences had now been established in Seventh-day Adventist ranks<sup>12</sup>.

In 1878 the **youth Instructor** was advanced to a weekly publication and a rallying point, a forum for the children, youth and even adults of the Seventh-day Adventist. Its early use as a medium for the lessons of the Sabbath school association established its own organ, the Sabbath school worker, first a quarterly and later a monthly. Another special edition appeared later in the form of a children's paper, **our little Friend**, published by the Pacific Press. Besides stories and general material fitting the child, it carried the primary and kindergarten Sabbath school lessons<sup>13</sup>

In 1882 W.C. White became the president of the General Sabbath School Association. In 1886, he recommended a change of name of the Sabbath school Association from "General" to International, because the Sabbath school lesson study programme had reached beyond national borders, to Europe and Australia. In 1887 Charles H. Jones, was elected president of the international Sabbath school Association.

Today, Sabbath school lesson study programme is known not only as an educational force but as a great agency in raising of mission funds. It began simply enough it has become a pillar of the SDA Church without which the church cannot stand. Initially it was started as a programme for children but today it covers all classes viz children, youth and adults.



Lesson booklets are published for all the classes sold at a price of thirty-five shillings per copy. In the area of study, the programme takes one hour, and ten minutes dedicated to mission story.

### **3.2 THE SABBATH SCHOOL PROGRAMME**

The Sabbath School Programme, as it is commonly called, is a vehicle, a means to an end, and not an end in itself. For it to be an effective means to the end of drawing the Sabbath school membership closer to Christ, it should be well planned and efficiently carried out. In a book entitled counsels on Sabbath school work, E.G White writes:

*The Mechanical working of the  
school is of little value of the spirit of  
God does not soften and mould the hearts  
teachers and pupils.<sup>14</sup>*

It is here that the school comes together in assembly for fellowship, for general instruction and inspiration, and it is here that the school is most truly a school as it divides into classes for the study of the word of God.

In her book You and Your Sabbath School, M.S.Ogle gives a suggestive programme for the senior as follows:

Opening exercises, songs and a prayers (10 Minutes); Secretary's report (3 minutes); superintendents remarks (2 minutes; Mission exercise (10 Minutes); lesson review (8 Minutes; Class record and offerings 2 Minutes; Lesson recitation (30 Minutes): closing exercises (5 Minutes). The real kernel of Sabbath school service is the lesson periods, and it cannot be emphasized too strongly that no other feature on the programme must be followed to detract from the time allocated for the class peiod.<sup>15</sup>

### **SABBATH MORNING ARRANGEMENTS**

The General conference of SDA, Sabbath School Manual states, "every detail of the programme should be arranged well in advance". The leader, secretary, and all others who are to participate, arrive early for instructions. Each participant is informed of the exact amount of time allocated to him/her and should stick to that time. In most Sabbath schools visited during the field study, Sabbath school programme begins at 9:30 am and ends at 12:30 pm. All those who have a part on the programme accompany the leader to the rostrum, on special occasions, such as thirteenth Sabbath, children and others taking part on the programme seat nearby awaiting call. Sabbath school is conducted in a quiet and orderly manner. Reverence characterizes the entire service <sup>17</sup>.

## PRAYER

In her book The signs of times, E.G White writes:

*Let everyone study the Bible  
knowing that the word of God is  
as enduring as the eternal throne.  
If you come to the scripture in  
humility, with earnest prayer  
for guidance...<sup>18</sup>*

The privilege of prayer is one of the greatest blessings of every individual Christian, and of the church of God as a body, for it is through this medium that we hold communion with heavenly father.

In most of the Sabbath schools studied, the person chosen to lead in prayers has to be a committed Christian, and a regular church member, and in good standing. He or she is either a deacon, lesson teacher, pastor, church elder or superintendent. In all the Sabbath schools studied, prayers are held after every session of the Sabbath school programme for example after lesson study, collecting offerings, mission story, songs, and preaching.

Through prayer, Sabbath school pupils are drawn out toward God; pupils meditate upon God's works, and his mercies. In order to commune with God, pupils should have something to say to him concerning their actual life.

The one chosen to lead in prayer in Sabbath school is always expected to recognize the difference between public and private prayer. For example, prayers offered in public should be short and to the point. Also, the one praying in public is supposed to use simple language and the voice of the one praying should be heard well. E.G. White in her book Testimonies Vol. 2 1 writes that:

"one or two minutes is long enough for any ordinary prayer"<sup>19</sup>. A short prayer can be precise and saves time. What was found out during the field study is that a lot of time is wasted especially by the old women on elaborate prayers. The issues raised in their prayers are not related to Sabbath school activities before hand. For example, it is during Sabbath school programme that women pray for those who are sick in hospitals instead of praying for understanding from God to be able to interpret the lesson properly; old men were also found to take a lot of time when praying. However pastors, and other educated church members were specific in their prayers and therefore spent little time when praying. During lesson study many prayed for understanding from God so that the class would be able to interpret the lesson well<sup>20</sup>.

Since people come together in Sabbath school for a definite purpose, prayers ought to be specific. Sabbath school teachers and students should pray for an understanding of God's word, for which the old and the young of the church have come together. General conference of SDA, Sabbath School Manual, asserts that prayer should be that each officer and teacher may have special help for his responsibilities. Prayer should be offered that every pupil of the school may be drawn near to Christ as a result of the service. Prayer should also be for other Sabbath schools scattered over the world, and for missionaries who are supported by Sabbath offerings.<sup>21</sup>

## **SONG SERVICE**

In all Sabbath schools visited during field study, song service forms an integral part of the Sabbath school lesson study programme. Although not forming part of the recommended seventy-minute Sabbath school, most respondents said it provides opportunity for praise and invitation for those arriving early for Sabbath school. It was also found out that in churches like Bonde SDA Church, Homa-bay Central SDA Church and Lala SDA Church, where song service has been made more appealing many hearts have surrendered to the saviour under the influence of song. The Sabbath school manual, stress that music of a Sabbath school should be under the management of music director- one who understands how to make its influence wholly good.<sup>22</sup>

In most Sabbath schools studied, songs used in the song service are selected before then by the director. He writes out the numbers and gives them to the pianist or organist or just the Sabbath school members<sup>23</sup>.

General conference of SDA, Sabbath School Manual, writes that:

*When songs are selected from  
songbooks not published by SDA  
denominational publishing houses,  
constant care should be taken  
that every song used in the Sabbath  
school is free of doctrinal errors  
and is spiritual in sentiment<sup>24</sup>*

In all the Sabbath schools studied the above is taken very seriously by all SDA church adherents. In the new SDA Hymn there is a special index on page 809 identifying songs suitable for use in the Sabbath School.

In most Sabbath schools the three classes children, youth and adult, the opening hymn is included in the song service time.

It is announced and led by the music director before the superintendent and participants come to the rostrum (platform). The music is planned such that the opening hymn, which is also the last song in the service, ends at 9:30 am. After the opening hymn, the next part in Sabbath school service is mission story.

## **THE MISSION STORY**

The plan of giving to missions is inseparably connected with Sabbath school. From the days of 1878, when penny collections began to be taken in Sabbath school for meeting local Sabbath school expenses, and from the days of 1885, when the first gifts to missions were made through the Sabbath school, the plan of systematic giving has grown until today more than half of all the money that comes into the foreign mission treasury of the church is given through Sabbath school.

To make available to all schools intelligent, up to date information regarding the particular field to which the thirteenth Sabbath offering overflow goes quarter by quarter, the general conference department provides the "mission quarterly", a pamphlet containing a reading for each Sabbath<sup>25</sup>. The material in this pamphlet comes straight from mission field under study, and therefore provides excellent instruction from Sabbath school membership on the conditions prevailing in that particular field, and makes heart touching appeals for help in meeting the great needs.

Ten minutes are provided on the Sabbath school programme for the mission story, and that ten-minute period can well be the most interesting on the programme. Some schools are fortunate indeed to have African church workers, visiting missionaries, retired missionaries, or travelling workers to give mission story. The actual representatives from the field can seemingly provide a more definite and vital contact with the field. They talk from their own experience, and that is easier for the speaker to do than try to relate someone else experience, and it is therefore, interesting to listen to.

Here is a short story from one of the informants during field study:

A woman and her daughter came one day to a branch Sabbath school at Ndhiwa in Home-bay district. For more than a year this good woman had been wanting to attend the Sabbath school, but her husband was bitterly opposed to her doing so. She enrolled in a bible correspondence course, however, and when she told the little branch Sabbath school group about her family troubles they had prayer for her and her family. Her husband was a heavy drinker and was not able to overcome this vicious habit. One day, after being in a drunken stupor for a week, he committed suicide.

This was a sad and terrible blow to her family. But now this woman and her children are faithfully attending Sabbath school. On the day I visited this little Sabbath school this woman read the mission story, which was on the subject of "Deliverance from the power of darkness"<sup>26</sup>.

While she read she had to stop at times to wipe away her tears. We all felt God's presence with us in a special way.

The mission story that is told with feeling out of a background of love for, and interested in the cause of missions, if not actual experience in the field itself that is given clear and audible language and cannot fail to be one of the most interesting features on the Sabbath school programme.

## **THE REVIEW**

The review is a vital part of every Sabbath school programme. It is the one feature of the evening exercises that more than any other can directly point a spiritual lesson and application. In her book You and Your Sabbath School, M.S Ogle writes:

*The weekly review offers an opportunity to test the pupils' knowledge on what has gone before and also to refresh their memory on the salient points in the previous week's lesson.<sup>27</sup>*



In reviewing the lesson the primary pedagogical principle is first to test and then teach.

The main objective of the review is to single out the great towering teachings of the past lesson and to put emphasis upon them. Especially in the children's divisions do things have to be repeated and emphasized the most important points of the lessons.

Not only does the review cause lesson scholars to look again at the high points of the last week's lesson, but also it serves as a bridge to span the gap between last week's lesson and the present lesson<sup>28</sup>

W.S. Ogle notes that the question and answer method of teaching is the method applied in reviewing. It causes the student to put forth some effort himself in acquiring knowledge and is the method recommended.

Wherever possible in Sabbath schools, both for review and lesson study, questions asked are directly related, brief, simple, interrogative, clearly defined, suggestive, pleasant and prompt.

From a review that stimulates thought and impresses spiritual lessons, the whole Sabbath school is made immediately ready to enter into the most important part of the whole Sabbath school programme, the study of the day's lesson.

### **3.3 THE BRANCH SABBATH SCHOOL**

These are usually small schools started in new places, but they often grow into regular Sabbath schools and later organized churches <sup>29</sup>

There has been reawakening in many places to the responsibility of the Sabbath school lesson study as an evangelizing agency in its community.

In an endeavor to fulfill this responsibility plan has been formulated for conducting Bible schools and children's story hours. The story hour for example, is of definite value, not only because good comes to the children from Bible stories and figure plays, but also because it provides a point of contact, which makes it easy, after weeks, to invite the children to go to Sabbath school.<sup>30</sup>

General conference of seventh-day Adventists, Sabbath School manual reports that:

*The term "Branch Sabbath School"*

*implies that the schools are*

*"branches" of the Sabbath school.<sup>31</sup>*

The branch Sabbath school is an effective means of evangelizing suitable to reach children, youth and adults. It also aids in the process of spiritual growth for those Sabbath school members who participate.

In her book, counsels on Sabbath school work, E.G White writes:

*It is useful in leading the Sabbath school*

*membership to feel an advance of the work...*<sup>122</sup>

The promotion of the branch Sabbath school is under guided by the philosophy that "the influence growing out of Sabbath school work should improve and enlarge the church."<sup>123</sup>

Branch Sabbath school also includes Sabbath school evangelistic activities which meet the following specifications:

1. Approval by the Sabbath school counselor by the local conference/mission church ministries director in the case of isolated members.
2. Use of Sabbath school materials in an evangelistic endeavor. This would include neighborhood Bible clubs and story hours, whether held on Sabbath or any other day of the week.
3. Meetings that follow the general pattern of a regular Sabbath school, it is being understood during the early development of the school, there may be some necessary adaptation.

General conference of seventh-day Adventists, Sabbath School Manual says, the term "Branch Sabbath School" may refer to either of the following categories:

1. Outreach programme. A group meets under sponsorship of a Sabbath school and use recommended Sabbath school materials and programmes to foster spiritual interest in a community for the purpose of adding new members to an existing school, and eventually a church. This programme is directed by Sabbath school members, and those attending are predominantly non-Adventists.

2. Swarming programme- a group separates itself from one or more regular Sabbath schools to establish a new company. This branch Sabbath school usually meets Sabbath morning at the regular Sabbath school time. Although most of those attending are seventh-day Adventists, non - Adventists are welcomed and encouraged to attend. The regular Sabbath school form and lessons are used in this type of programme.

Most branch Sabbath schools meet in the homes of interested persons. However the meeting place may be a hall, church (Adventist or non-Adventist), hospital prison or under trees.<sup>34</sup>

### **3. VOCATIONAL BIBLE SCHOOL**

Another fruitful soul-winning service fostered by the Sabbath school department is vocational Bible school.<sup>35</sup> These schools may be held during any action period, and usually run for ten days in any evangelistic programme. It takes time to build friendship and confidence as well as to teach the truth, so an effective follow up programme should be used to maintain contacts and interest.

The vocational Bible school director in consultation with the Sabbath school council, select five months before the vocational Bible school is held and a planning countdown ought to start immediately programming, location, financing, aids, supplies, publicity, advertising, closing programme, and follow-up all require time and planning.

#### **4. COMMUNITY GUEST DAYS**

Community Guest Days are scheduled in the first and fourth quarters of each year, and listed in the SDA church calendar. The purpose of these special Sabbath school days is to introduce members of the community to the truth of God and work of the church. Community Guest day provides the Sabbath school member an opportunity to win and influence friends in the community.<sup>36</sup>

Community Guest Day Programmes are to be planned to make favourable impressions upon - church member. Guests are expected to find in every Sabbath school an atmosphere of reverence, friendship, and hospitality. Care is taken to avoid subjects that might offend those invited to continue to attend Sabbath school. Sabbath school teachers tactfully request the names and addresses of guests for future contact, or a guest register may be used.<sup>37</sup>

During the field study it was found out that the common branch Sabbath schools in the area of study are outreach programme and vocational Bible schools. However the two are only found in the urban churches like Homa-Bay central SDA Church and Bonde SDA Church. In most rural SDA Churches like Ongulu, Rabour Masawa, Adongo, and Nyalkinyi vocational Bible schools and community guest days are not taken seriously.

### **3.4 ORGANIZATION OF THE SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY PROGRAMME**

In order to conduct the Sabbath school lesson study programme more effectively in the area of study, provision is made for various age groups to meet in separate division as follows:

#### **CRADLE ROLL DIVISION**

This division was found in Homa-bay Central SDA Church only. In other churches in the area of study it is not there. Babies who have just been born are included in this division. When an Adventist child is born the leader of the cradle roll division calls on the mother, secures the baby's name, and invites the mother to bring the infant to Sabbath school just as soon as she is able.<sup>38</sup> Even before the mother brings the infant to Sabbath school the new baby's name is registered on the cradle roll chart. These cradle roll charts are attractive little devices with little booties, little cradles, or something else suggestive of a baby, suspended by ribbons on the little booties or the little cradle is a place for the baby's name and birth date.

General conference of Seventh-day Adventist, Sabbath school manual reports that:

*As soon as possible after  
the Childs birth he should  
be brought to Sabbath school  
and enrolled in the cradle  
division.<sup>39</sup>*

Usually at the age of one year the babies are able to sit on little chairs in a regular cradle roll class. When that time comes for each baby the leader takes that baby's name card off the cradle roll chart and gives it to the mother, who may wish to keep it in her baby book. When the child is able to go into a regular class with other children, the mother should leave the mother's class in the cradle roll division.

### **KINDERGARTEN DIVISION**

During the field study it was found out that kindergarten division is common in most Sabbath schools. Kindergarten division includes children from age four through six years.<sup>40</sup> they are past babyhood and yet have not learned some of the mischievous ways of the school children. Their voices are beginning to develop so that they can sing with understanding, and how they love to sing Kindergarten songs. Their imaginations and inquisitiveness are growing everyday. They can easily "see" the story that the teacher illustrates with pictures.

## **PRIMARY DIVISION**

In the area of study Primary division was found distinctly in the urban churches like Bonde. In rural churches the Kindergarten and primary divisions are merged together. According to an informant at Homa-bay Central SDA Church, the primary division is for children ages seven through nine years.<sup>41</sup>

Because children are sometimes not enrolled in school until they are of primary age, it will sometimes be necessary to accept children into the primary division who cannot read.

In her book You and your Sabbath School, M.S. Ogle reports:

*Children in the primary division  
have entered upon a period  
Marked by mental growth.  
it is an age when there is possibility  
of learning much evil and of acquiring  
many bad habits as they begin to come  
in contact with influence of the Lord.<sup>42</sup>*

It is a primary level that children begin to get a clear conception of God, of Jesus and of the plan of Salvation.

According to one informant, S. Omulo, one thing that makes the work of the primary teacher enjoyable is the ability to memorize.<sup>43</sup> The primary age is a golden age of memory. This is the time when children can memorize songs, poems, stories, and passages of the scriptures easily. The things memorized during this period will remain with him throughout life, while the things he memorizes in later years may soon be forgotten.



## **JUNIOR DIVISION**

When a child has had his tenth birthday and has completed his fourth grade in school, he is eligible to be in the Junior division of the Sabbath School. General conference of SDA, Sabbath School Manual reports that:

*It is recommended that  
Promotion from one division  
To another always takes  
Place on the first Sabbath  
Of the third quarter of the  
year<sup>44</sup>*

This brings promotion day early in July, just a few weeks after the close of the school in most places. This is an occasion that means much to the boys and girls as a rule. Promotion certificates are made available through the Book and Bible houses.

Sometimes, however, little ten-year-olds feel a bit shy upon coming into the room with twelve-to-fourteen-year-old juniors<sup>45</sup>. The ten-year-olds should be kept in classes by themselves and not mixed up with the older juniors. During field study it was found out that some ten-year-olds prefer to stay in the primary division for another year. Juniors enjoy a good, rousing song service and right kind music should be planned for in the junior Sabbath school.

## YOUTH DIVISION

In the area of study, only larger churches have a youth's division in the truest sense of the word. The rural medium- sized churches have one or two young people's classes, and in the small churches the two or three upper teenagers may also sit in class with adults, or else they continue on longer than they would like to meet with juniors.<sup>46</sup>

In a book entitled Church Growth Through Sabbath School action Units, C.L Smith notes that:

*The period of youth, from fourteen to eighteen years of age,... is the most vital one in the Christian experience of all young people.*<sup>47</sup>

The urge for new experience and adventure is characteristic of young people everywhere. There seems to be a feeling that they just have an endless capacity for pleasure, and respond to anything that promises them a thrill. These natural instincts and tendencies seem to make people susceptible to evil influences.

The principles of teaching apply to the teaching of youth's classes as well as to senior classes. The subject matter covered in the youth's Sabbath school lessons is the same as that covered in the senior lesson quarterly.

The only difference is that a youth quarterly (also called collegiate quarterly) is provided for young people, which simplify the questions and notes<sup>48</sup>. The fact that the subject matter is the same as that for the seniors means that in the smaller churches where there are not enough young people or enough space to have a separate Youth's divisions, the youth join adult class.

## **ADULT DIVISION**

This division is for persons approximately nineteen years of age and above Sabbath School Manual reports that:

*The recommended meeting place for the adult division is the main church sanctuary with the leader and participants conducting the Sabbath school programme from the pulpit.<sup>49</sup>*

In order that the Sabbath school central objectives may be promoted, every feature of its weekly programme contribute to one or more of these emphasis (i) Faith emphasis, (ii) Fellowship emphasis (iii) Community emphasis (iv) World emphasis.

During the field study it was found out that this division is distinct in all the churches studied in urban and rural areas. It is the cradle of lesson study programme in all churches.

In all churches studied every adult programme devotes:

1. The Minutes to world Mission story followed immediately by the Mission offering taken in the classes.

2. Forty Minutes to care for (i) class records (ii) The teachers shepherding and class evangelism duties, and (iii) the lesson discussion of not less than 30 Minutes duration.

Sabbath School Manual concludes that each of the four emphases above is vital to the life and ministry of the church.

## **SABBATH SCHOOL OFFICIALS**

For Sabbath school to be an effective vehicle of ministering in the SDA Church officials are appointed to be in charge of the various responsibilities<sup>50</sup>. One person, for example the superintendent or pastor cannot manage to co-ordinate all the activities of the Sabbath school. It is because of the aforementioned that Sabbath school officials are appointed by the church board. Each official is given a responsibility, which befits him on basis of participation in the Sabbath school:

### **1. Sabbath School Superintendent**

The Superintendent may be either a man or a woman, as the chief officer of the local Sabbath school, the superintendent is expected to be a man well fitted for the office. General conference of SDA, Sabbath Manual Reports that:

*A superintendent ought to be  
a Christian gentleman, with  
all that these words imply,  
a man of God who studies  
Sabbath school lesson everyday.<sup>51</sup>*

As a Christian gentleman or lady a superintendent is expected to have not only those outward courtesies that may be cultivated but also the true goodness of heart that make everything he does a gesture of courtesy because it springs from a purely unselfish motive.

During the field study it was found out that most superintendents in the area of study are men. They are largely responsible for the conduct of the Sabbath school, and the way in which the school is conducted determines to a great extent how well that school meets the chief objective of the Sabbath school. In her book counsels on Sabbath school work E.G. White reports, "The object of the Sabbath school work should be the ingathering of souls"<sup>52</sup>

The superintendent should often mediate upon the statement "The Sabbath school, if rightly conducted is one of God's great instrumentalities used to bring souls to a knowledge of the truth"<sup>53</sup>

The main responsibility of the Sabbath school superintendent is to direct and supervise the Sabbath school. He or she divides the pupils into different classes (children, youth and adult) and ensure that each class has a good teacher.

He or she sees to it that all Sabbath school lesson teachers are trained. It is also the duty of the superintendent to ensure that necessary supplies such as class registers, teaching Manuals, lesson books, blackboards, chalk and visual aids are provided for the Sabbath school. The superintendent calls Sabbath schoolteachers meetings to discuss matters affecting Sabbath school programme. He/she informs the pastor about the progress and needs of the Sabbath school. All the Sabbath schools studied during the field study were found to have male superintendent. Women took teaching and deaconess positions in most Sabbath schools. All Sabbath school superintendents in the area of study are appointed by the Sabbath school council for tenure of one year.

## **2. Sabbath School Secretary**

The Sabbath school secretary ship is an ideal gateway through which young people are initiated into church.

However, unless the young person has demonstrated outstanding ability and willingness to serve for one year as assistant secretary, working with older, more experienced person before placing upon him the full responsibility of the secretary ship of the Sabbath school.<sup>54</sup>

In her book **you and your Sabbath school**, M.S Ogle gives the following as qualification expected of a secretary (i) should be a consecrated seventh Day Adventist (ii) co-operative individual (iii) should not mind doing detail work (iv) should be of some imagination (v) should have good knowledge of English and ability to put words together and (vi) a good voice.<sup>55</sup>

During the field study it was found that the duties of the secretary are as follows:

To make a record and report the sessions of the Sabbath school

To distribute to the teachers their weekly supplies and gather their class records and offerings

To check over the class record cards, supplying omissions, recording the contents of the offering envelopes, and making a list of absent members.

To transcribe the names of all class members onto new class record cards cut at the beginning of each quarter in harmony with continuous membership plan.

To keep a record of the weekly offerings to missions, the amount of the Thirteenth Sabbath offering, the birthday offerings, the investment fund, and the expense money.

To order through the church missionary secretary all supplies and special helps agreed upon by the Sabbath school officers which must be paid for, and of the conference Sabbath school secretary all free supplies.

To keep the minutes of any action agreed upon by the Sabbath school council committee.

### **3. Sabbath School Teachers**

Since the Sabbath school teacher has a very definite relationship to the members of his class, and because the purpose of the relationship is that he might win his class to Christ, it is easy to see how important it is that he has a personality that influences others. W.T. Barlett in a book entitled Sabbath school ideals writes"

*A teacher who lacks personality  
can accomplish little. Whatever  
he knows is but dry learning,  
with little power to awake the  
dormant intellect of the pupils.<sup>56</sup>*

The following four factors of personality are important for a Sabbath school lesson teacher originality, liveliness, fairness, and a pleasant voice.

Originality - pupils do like a teacher who shows evidence of thinking for himself or herself. The lesson may be on a well - known subject, but the teacher with originality can approach it from a fresh, new view point. He's like the house holder who can bring forth out of his treasure things new and old-illustrations, lessons, applications, that will open new avenues of thought to the pupils and stimulate them to renew study of the old way remarks.

Liveliness-unless a teacher is enthusiastic about his work-about the study of the word and about the spiritual welfare of his pupils he cannot cultivate the habit of enthusiasm in his pupils. In her book counsels on Sabbath schoolwork E.G. White writes: *The true teacher is not content with dull thoughts, an indolent mind, or a loose memory. He constantly seeks higher attainments and better methods. In the work of such a teacher there is freshness, quickening power that awakens and inspires his pupils<sup>57</sup>*

With his enthusiasm the teacher ought to be well poised. E. Murray in her book, The speech and personality states, "pose is a state of inner calm, serenity, and well-being.



It is a balance of tensions, and equilibrium, as a result of both inner health and satisfactory relations with the outside environment.<sup>168</sup>

Fairness- A Sabbath school teacher is supposed to be fair in all his dealings with his pupils and with others as well. He will manifest his fairness by giving due consideration to the opinions of theirs. He will not bestow more on another. Particularly the teacher of juniors ought to be on his guard to be absolutely fair in all his contacts, because juniors are very critical in judging a man for his fairness or unfairness.

A pleasant voice - The organs of articulation can be trained, through regular system of exercises in relaxation and control, to respond immediately to the finer emotions, such as love, sympathy, earnestness sincerity, devotion, appreciation, appreciation of the beautiful or whatever feeling one desires to express.

All teachers are supposed to be chosen by the Sabbath school council to serve for one year and should be members of the church in good and regular standing and who have an aptitude for teaching, who are diligent in their preparation, regular and punctual in attendance, circumspect in character.

During the field study it was found that responsibilities of teachers are as follows: -

1. Welcome the class and introduce visitors
2. Passing offering envelopes
3. Mark attendance

4. Record the number of class members and visitors following the daily lesson study plan.
5. Teach the Sabbath school lesson
6. Encourage each member to become involved in the Sabbath school programme and its activities.

## **TEACHER TRAINING COURSES**

In the churches taken for study, it was found that:

The teacher instruction courses of the Sabbath school emphasize important principles of teaching. It would be desirable for every teacher to complete one or more of these courses. Certificates are issued by the local conference church ministries director to those who complete the course in class approved in advance by the church Ministries director.<sup>59</sup>

### **Course 1**

This is a training package for adult and youth Sabbath school teachers entitled Performance in Sabbath School Teaching.<sup>60</sup> It consists of five lessons on slides or film strip and tape cassettes (length of each lesson is about 10 minutes), a teachers manual, and a student work book.<sup>61</sup>

The audio - visuals are intended to be used as discussion starters. The whole course lasts for five one-hour periods. It is especially prepared for a weekend seminar, but it could be extended over a longer time.

## **Course 2**

This course for adult and youth leaders is based on the handbook for Sabbath school Teachers, by H.W Lowe (Revised 1982). It is a short course consisting of five lessons to be covered in five class periods of ninety minutes each. The concepts are based on principles drawn from the Bible and Spirit of prophecy.<sup>62</sup>

In this course technical terms are avoided. It is easily followed by teachers, prospective teachers and lay members who are interested in getting more out of the Bible study. It is also available on cassette for individual study.

## **Course 3**

How to teach children in the Sabbath school, by Donna J, habenitch and Ann Woods Bell, is a book of instruction for leaders and teachers of children up to and including primary level. Written in the language of laymen, it addresses the needs of the child at each stage of development and answers such questions as how can the teacher teach to meet those needs? What are the most effective teaching methods and tools? How can a teacher effectively lead a Sabbath school child to Christ? <sup>63</sup>

## **THE TEACHERS MEETINGS**

The teachers meeting are one of the most important aids for Sabbath school teachers.

In her book Testimonies Volume IV E.G. White writes:

*God has committed to our hands a most sacred work, and we need to meet together to receive instruction, that we may be fitted to perform this work.<sup>64</sup>*

The need for teachers meeting is not regulated by size of the school or by the efficiency attained by the officers or teachers. There is no attained school that does not need teachers meetings, and no proficiency in the work of leading or teaching can serve as a substitute.

During the field study, it was found out that in most Sabbath schools under study that, the division leader arranges weekly teachers meetings. He himself becomes the leader of this meeting. However, he may delegate this responsibility to an assistant leader.

In some Sabbath schools, like Bonde, Nyalkinyi, Lala, Makongeni, and Sofia, the time for teachers' meeting is the middle of the week. According to an informant, "this allows opportunity for study before the meeting.

It also provides opportunity for the teacher to make information gained his own and to work it into lesson plan.” Teachers’ meetings involve the entire teaching force. By this contact with others, the teacher will learn to group the details about the two or three vital and fundamental truths, which each lesson contains.

## **The Sabbath School Council**

General conference of SDA, Sabbath School Manual states that:

*The Sabbath school council  
is the administrative body  
of the Sabbath school.<sup>56</sup>*

It consists of the following: 1. Superintendent (Chairman) 2. Assistant superintendents 3. Secretary 4. Assistant Secretaries 5. Division leaders. 6. Investment secretary 7. Vacation Bible School Director 8. The pastor (ex-official) 9. An elder 10. Teachers. It is the work of this council to keep the Sabbath school in efficient running order under leadership of the superintendent. Everything that concerns the Sabbath school is appropriate for consideration by the council.

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11. Ibid. P 402
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- 21, Sabbath School Manual OP. Cit 26
22. Ibid. 28
23. Ibid.

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25. Witness for Jesus Op. Cit. P. 373
26. H.Odera Nyawinda, Interview 20.12.98 Ongulu
27. M.S Ogle Op,Cit,p 27
28. Participant observation 21.11.98, lala
29. Branch Sabbath Schools are schools started in new places, but they grow into regular Sabbath schools.
30. It provides a point of contact, which makes it ways after weeks, to invite the children to go to Sabbath school.
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## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **MATERIALS USED FOR SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY PROGRAMME**

#### **4.1 TYPES OF MATERIALS USED FOR LESSON STUDY PROGRAMME**

Today the Sabbath school is perhaps the main programme for SDA Church adherents in Homa-bay district<sup>1</sup>. In 1949 it had an enrolment of more than twenty thousand students who reside in different geographical areas of Homa- bay districts<sup>2</sup>. Its textbook, the Holy Bible, is published in many languages and dialects. The most common dialect in the area of study is Dholuo. The Bible translation is done by Africa Herald Publishing House (Kendu Bay). This is carried out well by specialist who understand both English and the local language. Sabbath school buildings and other large churches in other big Market Centers, some of which have classrooms, blackboards, libraries, public address systems, piano, and pipe organs. Remove parts of the district like kanyamwa/ramba, there are not even benches for seats, no papers for helps and a few people who could read them if there were.<sup>3</sup>

The materials used for Sabbath school are training and teaching materials<sup>4</sup>. Since there are separate classes or divisions, the type of material used for Sabbath school lesson study, will depend on the Sabbath school division or class. Thus each division has distinct lesson materials used during lesson study:

#### **Craddle Roll Division**

In her book You and your Sabbath School M.S Ogle Writes that:

*...there should be in the cradle  
roll room a full-size cradle.  
Painted blue, pink, or ivory, and  
kept fresh and clean with white  
sheets and a dainty pillow.<sup>5</sup>*

During the field study, it was found out that most Sabbath schools do not have the cradle roll division. The only Sabbath school which has cradle roll division is Homa-bay central SDA Church cradle roll classes are lacking and as a result this class is not taken seriously. Sometimes parents go with their babies to the adult class.

Since at the age of one year the babies are able to sit on the little chairs, little chairs should be made available in a regular cradle roll class. Babies name card and cradle roll chart are suppose to be in this class. The book Those Tiny Tots, by Clara. M. Striplin should also be made available to teachers in this division.<sup>6</sup> Teachers in this division should make a model presentation of the lesson. Teaching instructions form the cradle roll teaching Aids, issued quarterly, can also be useful and helpful.<sup>7</sup>

### **Kindergarten Division**

Children in this class are past baby hood (from age four to six years) and have leant the mischievous ways of school children. They can be taught by use of pictures for illustration and with sand table cut outs.

All that has been aforesaid about room, equipment and decoration for the cradle division holds true for the kindergarten division also, except that in this division sand tables are used instead of the flat top table, and the chairs should have twelve-inch seat height. In her book entitled You and Your Sabbath School M.S Ogle reports:

*In addition to the regular sand tables for class work, there should be a low sand box, which may be used for devices in stimulating either attendance or offerings.<sup>8</sup>*

Also, it is well for each teacher to have a small blackboard, because some lessons may be difficult to work out in the sand table, and the teacher can sketch them on the blackboard.

Workers in the kindergarten division will find, principles and methods laid down in those Tiny Tots and Kindergarten Teaching Aids very helpful.

## **Primary Division**

The primary division is found in all Sabbath schools except that children are mixed up in one class. The Sabbath schools in the rural areas of Homa-bay district have separate divisions for children according to their age.

In the matter of furnishings the primary division should have single, comfortable chairs with curved backs and saddle seats.

If the seats are so high that legs are left dangling in the air, it is impossible for children to give close attention, and restlessness results. It would be desirable to have some twelve-inch chairs and some sixteen-inch chairs for the shorter and taller pupils respectively. There ought to be a piano, picture roll and backboard in this class. During the field study it was found out that most of the aforesaid facilities are lacking in most churches in the area of study.

For children in this division, the little book Teaching Primary Children, by Mary Grace Martin Published by the Judson Press is heartily recommended in the area of study. Also recommended for teachers be the Primary teaching Aids issued quarterly. These two books can be got from Africa herald Publishing House, Kendu-Bay.<sup>9</sup>

### **Junior Division**

When a child has had his tenth birthday and has completed his fourth grade in school, he is eligible for promotion into the junior division of the Sabbath school.

Juniors are taught how to pray by being given written prayers to read and recite. M.S. Ogle recommends the book Those Juniors, by Eric B. Hare.<sup>10</sup> Also recommended is the use of maps, Our little friend, Uncle Arthur's Bedtime Stories, The Bible Story, The Bible and Story Hour (Cassettes or records), and visual aids. Use of neighborhood Bible club material and guide is recommended too<sup>11</sup>.

## **Youth Division**

For the youth class, the collegiate quarterly by B. Swanson reports: "Collegiate quarterly gives seventh day Adventist young people aged 18-35 a unique opportunity to grow spiritually, to share the benefits of their Bible study, to exchange ideas and contribute to the mission of the church"<sup>12</sup>

Each year 300 young adults from around the world participate in the collegiate quarterly writing programme. Worldwide circulation is about 59, 000. It is published in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Finnish languages.

The collegiate quarterly is based on the conviction that the word of God offers transforming power and that group study is one important way to tap in that power. It also provides young adults with a resource for devotional study on mutual topics, which can then be discussed each week in Sabbath school.<sup>13</sup>

Many who use the adult quarterly find that because collegiate quarterly deals with the same topics as adult lesson quarterly it enriches lesson study and discussion as supplemental aid.<sup>14</sup>

## **Adult Division**

During the field study it was found out that the materials used in all Sabbath schools in the area of study are Dholuo lesson booklet, Dholuo Bible translation, and SDA Dholuo Song book (Wende Nyasaye).

General conference of SDA, Sabbath School manual reports; there are four editions of adult lesson: standard, large print, teaching Aids, and Easy English.<sup>15</sup>

The General conference is regarded as the publisher (though not printer) of all Sabbath school lessons for the world.<sup>16</sup>

However, where it is necessary to adopt and translate the Sabbath school lessons in order to meet the language, educational, or cultural needs within its territory, a division committee in consultation with the General conference Sabbath school department appoints those responsible to adapt and translate, and also establish appropriate committees to supervise the task.

### **Vocational Bible Schools**

Vocational Bible Schools are institutions where the word of God is learnt. They undertake to train church personnel. Vocational Bible Schools are not common in the area of study. This is because most rural churches have not been enlightened on the need to have vocational Bible Study especially for children and youth. Bonde SDA Church is the only Church with an active vocational Bible School. According to an informant vocational Bible Schools are not active because of lack of vocational Bible Study materials.

Denominational Vacation Bible School Materials are available in three sections -i, ii, iii, for a three-year cycle. These materials include Directors manual, teacher's guides, activity sheets and programme helps.

Every school that can possibly afford it should have a good set of maps of Bible lands, and also maps of the different countries of the world where mission work is carried on. A good portable blackboard illustrations story and the review, as well as in class presentation occasionally.<sup>18</sup>

In her book You and Your Sabbath, Ogle emphasizes the matter of the Sabbath school library, which can be correlated with the church library, where officers and teachers and interested members can secure the books that will be helpful to them in their work. She notes that every library should contain as a minimum the following:

What Sabbath School Teachers ought to know by General Conference of SDA, Teaching Teachers to teach, Those Juniors, Those Tiny Tots, The soul-winning Sabbath School Work, a number of the Sabbath school Reading course books, such as Sabbath School ideas by W.T Bartlet, They that be teachers by Mary E. Moore, The making of a teacher by Martin G. Brumbaugh, and Evangelism in the Sabbath school by Harry W. Lowe, and then the current Reading Course book as it comes from the press year by year. In addition to these, a good Bible dictionary and concordance should be made available for teachers and pupils in the area of study.<sup>19</sup>

## **1. LESSON QUARTERLY**

Lesson quarterly should be made available in the rural Sabbath schools. The lesson Quarterly delivers the lesson material to the individual, the teaching outlines in the Sabbath school worker prepare the lesson material in the lesson Quarterly in an appetizing way for little children, juniors, youths, and adults.

In other words, the lesson Quarterly deliver to the mind the material, which the teacher with the aid of the worker outline, arranges and presents in such a way as to cause the great underlying theme to be implanted in the heart of the learners.

## **2. SABBATH SCHOOL WORKER**

The Sabbath school worker is written for teachers. It contains teaching outlines for seniors, juniors, as well as primary, kindergarten and cradle-roll children. These outlines have been prepared with these teaching principles in mind. Suggestive aims have been chosen, themes developed, and suggestions also for the application have been made, so it follows that it would be much better for a teacher to teach from the Sabbath school worker than from the lesson Quarterly.

## **3. TEACHERS NOTES**

This is the best method of teaching. First the teacher goes through the lesson Quarterly to acquaint himself with the material from which he can develop the theme. Then with a picture of his own class in mind he returns to the suggested teaching outline for his own division in the Sabbath school worker. As he studies each question and each note he checks mentally to see how it fits his or her class for both style and content.

With a picture of his class in mind, he then makes his own outline of questions and notes following the plan of lesson development-introduction, presentation, summary conclusion and application.



## **4.2 SOURCE OF MATERIALS USED FOR SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY**

The work of this great world wide school, with its many extensions and branches, is headed up in the General conference Sabbath school department in Washington D.C (U.S.A). It is staffed by a secretary, three associate secretaries, an assistant secretary, an office secretary, and six stenographers and editorial secretaries.<sup>20</sup>

In her book you and Your Sabbath School Ogle reports:

*Here is where one can really  
see the wheels of machinery  
turning.*<sup>21</sup>

Day in day out something is in the process of preparation, something to be sent out to all the big schools and all the little schools through out the world.

The preparation of the syllabi to be followed as the course of study in all grades is the most important thing.<sup>22</sup> Five lesson quarterlies are prepared from the printer every quarter, as follows: the Senior, the youth's, the junior, the adult for mission fields, and the primary. Kindergarten and cradle roll lessons are prepared to be printed in our Little Friend and My Bible Story. In addition to these most important Bible study outlines there is the mission quarterly, which is used for the course in missions, Geography, people, and customs.

Another regular production is the monthly journal "The Sabbath School Worker", which serves as a teaching guides.<sup>23</sup>

### **How a Manuscript becomes a lesson Quarterly**

M. S. Ogle notes that the work on the lesson quarterly is done a full year in advance, but even before that someone has to get the idea for a set of lessons.<sup>24</sup> Lessons are written by experienced Bible teachers or ministers sometimes an individual with a particular love and burden of some subject will write out a set of lessons and send them in unsolicited. There is of course, no obligation on the part of the committee to accept such manuscripts when they are unsolicited. All these are given a careful study to see whether they contain material that can be used.

When the committee decides to a secretary, the text is looked up in the Bible to make sure that it is correctly quoted and that it correctly answers the questions to which it is attached. Every reference book is carefully checked for exact wording and punctuation. When verifying a manuscript the readers may have stacks of books on the desk. These books have been sought out and gathered from the department's own library, the theological seminary library, the review and Herald library, and perhaps the ministerial association library. When a particular book cannot be found in any of these libraries, a trip is made to the library of congress to try to verify the quotation.

When the verifying and general editing have been done the manuscript is mimeographed in the form of a committee copy, and the copy is sent to each member of the Sabbath school lesson committee, numbering about thirty people. About a dozen copies are sent to the non resident members of the committee, numbering about thirty people. About a dozen copies are sent to the non resident members of the committee, those who live out side Washington in the united states, and a copy is sent to the Sabbath school department secretaries of four divisions (SDA Church Major Administrative Boundaries). These non-resident members are Bible teachers or experienced ministers. Copies are distributed to the resident members of the lesson committee, who, a side form departmental staff, include General conference officers, Theological seminary teachers, and Review and herald Publishing association editors.<sup>25</sup>

A date is set on which the committee will meet. The non-resident members are asked to return their copies of the manuscript with their corrections and suggestions before that date. On the day of the meeting the resident members are called together in a committee room. where they sit along a table and go through the manuscript lesson-by-lesson, page-by-page. All suggested changes are presented, discussed, weighted one against another, and decided upon for acceptance or rejection. Often the committee refers items back to the department for rewording, clarification, new notes etc.

After the committee meetings is over secretary of the department and the office secretar carefully go over manuscript together and prepare a master copy in which all changes are carefully noted. It is then given to a stenographer for stenciling and mimeographing again.

In its final form seventy-five copies are sent overseas divisions for translation and publication.<sup>26</sup> Copy for the English quarterly is sent to the Pacific Press Publishing Association at Mountain View California.

When the manuscript has been set in type the Pacific Press sends page proof to the general department, where it is proof-read, and little more cutting is done if the manuscript is still too long to fit into the forty pages of the quarterly. The page proofs are air mailed back to the Pacific Press. The corrections are made, and the press begins to turn. In another month the printed lesson quarterlies are on their way to the Book and Bible Houses throughout America and other English-speaking fields, and one year from the time the general department first began to work on the manuscript it is being used as the guiding outline for Bible study in English-speaking fields, and one year from the time the general department first began to work on the manuscript it is being used as the guiding outline for Bible study in English-speaking local Sabbath school. In schools abroad, where the manuscript has to be translated into another language, the lessons are studied from three to six months behind the schedule followed by schools in North America. This is necessary because of the extra time required for translation.

In Homa-bay and Kenya in general, the success of the Sabbath school lesson study through publication centered on the establishment of Africa Herald Publishing House located at Gendia station, Kendu-Bay central Karachuonyo.<sup>27</sup>

Since 1913, this printing House has produced countless of publications of lesson booklets for use in the Sabbath schools. The architect of Sabbath school E.G. White remarked:

*The press, if controlled  
by men who are sanctified  
to God, can be a power indeed  
for good in bringing men to the  
knowledge of the truth.<sup>28</sup>*

With that realization in mind, E.G. white urged leaders of the Adventist movement to have the denominational publications are printed in different languages and distributed to every land at any cost. Currently Africa Herald press Publishes lesson quarterlies in about sixteen languages from the original, English.

The languages in which publications are produced include Dholuo, Kiswahili, Ekegusii, Kikuyu, Luhya, Kalenjin, Kpsigis, Kiganda, Acholi, Kirundi, Kinyarwanda, Kipare, and Lutoro. The Africa herald Press is to meet the needs of the local people by publishing lesson each quarter in dholuo. However, there are cases whereby church members do not get the lessons in time. In some cases the lesson quarterlies are not enough, making it difficult for the members to study the word of God.

### **4.3 CONTENTS OF MATERIAL USED FOR SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY PROGRAMME**

For the cradle roll division, Clara M. Striplin, in her book Those Tiny Tots, has set forth in a very comprehensive way models of Sabbath school for the cradle roll and kindergarten divisions, including equipment and decorations. The book has many colour plates and many line drawings for devices, memory verse booklets, and even for trellise and furniture.

For the primary division, in her book Teaching primary Children, M, Grace Martin has provided an outline on methods which can be used by teachers to teach primary children, their psychological development, equipments used in teaching like piano, songs, poems, stories and passages from the scripture.

General conference of SDA, Sabbath School Manual recommends the following programme for the primary division.

Precession: Quizzes nature table or story, part of continued (9:15 – 9:30) story, grouping singing, Bible games, other learning activities which could include the use of an overhead or slide projector.

Opening exercises: songs; Welcome guests; Birthday exercises; (9:30 - 9:45) leaders announcements including recognition of Bibles brought to use through out Sabbath school; Bible text quiz; devotional thought; prayer.

Memory verse: Children use their Bibles to read, review and (9.: 30 - 9:55) explain the memory verse where different translations are used this gives an excellent opportunity to clarify the meaning of the verse.

World Missions; Mission story or report, goal device, offering if (9:55 - 10:05) not collected in procession, offering prayer, investment/promotion activity or songs.

Programme Theme: Story, talk, participation activity or object (10:05 - 10:20) activity.  
(10:20 - 10:45)

Closing prayer: Following lesson application in classes.

For the juniors, Eric B. Hare, Those juniors explains the psychology of pre-adolescent behaviour, how to gain the attention and had the interest of juniors in the Sabbath class.

General conference of SDA, Sabbath School manual recommends the following programme for the junior division.

Precession: Quizzes, Quiet Bible games.

(I: 15 - 9:30)

Thanks offering: Special Music

(9:30 - 9:40)

Theme time: Theme device, theme talk, Theme related story, quizzes, Bible games and special feature.

Missions: Junior mission quarterly; Special mission speaker; junior/Early youth mission spotlight (Hall of faith).

Lay Activities time: Class records, offering, outreach plans and reports.

Lesson study (Classes): Lesson discussion, Application, Appeal, Closing prayer, Distribution of guide. The Sabbath school manual reports that:

*Lesson topics for juniors and earliteens are entirely  
different from any divisions.<sup>30</sup>*

Earliteen or junior teachers edition, issued quarterly, contain teaching instructions and suggestions for preparation and presentation of current lessons. All experiments, puzzles quizzes and the like are thoroughly explained supplementary illustrations and ideas for discussion and group activities are presented.<sup>31</sup>

For the youth division, The Collegiate Quarterly is highly recommended by the General Conference Sabbath school department. Adventist young adult groups work together in producing the Quarterly each year. The wide variety - and occasional repetition - of the content reflects the great diversity of its contributors around the world as they respond creatively and individually to subject<sup>32</sup>

General conference of SDA in a collegiate quarterly entitled To Your Health (October-December 1997), has the following as the main contents of the collegiate quarterly:



## Pointers for Study

1. Through prayer, one opens his/her mind to the Holy Spirit's guidance as he or she studies
2. The Bible passage on which each week's lesson is based appears in bold type in the "logos" (Mondays portion of the lesson). This passage is to be read entirely in conjunction with the quarterly introduction to give you an overview of the lesson.
3. The Bible passage for the week is divided into section; one ought to carefully re-read the Bible passages indicated in the bold headings before reading the comments beneath the heading.
4. One is expected to read the remainder of the sections for the week with the perspective he/she has gained from personal study of biblical passage.
5. The person studying has to keep in mind the purpose of each section of the quarterly.

Each Collegiate Quarterly has these sections:

"Introduction" (Sunday) is designed to stimulate one's interest and focus his/her thinking on the week's theme.

"Logos" (Monday) as already described, is a guide for direct study of the Bible passage for the week.

"Testimony" (Tuesday) presents Ellen White's perspective on the lesson theme that week.

"Evidence" (Wednesday) approaches issues raised by the lesson from a historical, scientific, philosophical or theological perspective.

"How- To" (Thursday) discusses what the abstractions in the lesson mean for the day-to-day living.

"Opinion" (Friday), a personal viewpoint on the lesson is meant to encourage further and discussion.

Collegiate Quarterly editor G. Swanson notes that:

*the collegiate quarterly is the General conference approved quarterly for the collegeaite /young adult group...<sup>33</sup>*

It upholds the beliefs of the seventh-day Adventists church. However, its contents ought not to be regarded as official pronouncements of the church.

For the adult division, Adult Sabbath school study Guide (Teachers Editions April, may, June) has the following methods of teaching for teachers in its contents:

1. Key text, lesson Aim and outline: The key text is taken from the standard edition lesson.

The lesson aim is designed to:

- a. Help class participants understand and know about the lesson material
- b. Evoke an appropriate feeling about the lesson material that complements the lesson content and helps to internalize it, and

c. Help class participants apply the lesson material to their lives. The lesson outline may not always follow exactly the material that appears in the standard guide. It may reflect additional perspectives as it attempts to stimulate class discussion.

2. The commentary follows the traditional teaching methods of Sabbath school. It explains Bible passages and provides appropriate information leading to spiritual applications.

3. The induction bible-study method emphasizes careful method discovery of the meaning in a text.

The teacher encourages and supports the learners investigation and discovery, using distinctive approaches:

A. Study a text thoroughly and systematically before drawing a conclusion.

B. Look for textual meaning carefully and thoroughly; understand the passage in context; avoid misquoting the author. Opinions should not be developed without biblical proof.

C. Share insights through group discussions as students examine a Bible passage together.

D. Apply the text to life today.

E. Allow the Holy Spirit to minister to class members during Bible study.

4. The Focus- on- Witnessing Approach should be used in conjunction with other methods of Bible study to demonstrate how particular passages of scripture can be used to encourage people to commit themselves to Christ and to nature spiritual life once it has been awakened.

5. The Life-Application Approach demonstrates how issues that grow out of Bible study can be shared in a small group setting. This section uses an approach suitable for discussion in a small group in which interpersonal sharing and dialogue are key elements.

Use of a combination of teaching methods: Within one class period, it is often possible to draw from all five methods demonstrated in the teacher's comments. Some teachers will prefer to focus on one method of teaching, drawing heavily on the material in the teacher's comments.<sup>34</sup>

Each Adult pupils Sabbath school Bible study guide has thirteen lessons. Each lesson covers a whole week from Sabbath afternoon (Saturday afternoon) to Friday. Each Sabbath school Bible Study Guide has a topic or theme, which cuts across the lesson booklets for an entire Quarter. Within the lesson booklet, each week has a lesson, which is connected to that Quarter's main topic or theme of the lesson.

For example, the main lesson for study during April, May, June 1999, was the nature of Man. This was further subdivided into several weekly lessons like:

1. Created in the image of God
2. Our physical nature
3. Our social nature,

4. Spirit, soul and body.
5. Origin of sin
6. The fall
7. The restoration of human nature.
8. Condition in death.
9. Invented by the devil
10. Human vulnerability
11. Encounter
12. Scripture twisting.
13. The last fight for human freedom.

The lesson booklet is so systematic and orderly such that on each day there is something special to be learnt for the three months.

The Sabbath school manual suggests the following programme for the adult division: precession (9:15 - 9:30); Opening prayer (9:30 - 9:34); World mission emphasis (9:34 - 9:44); Class activities (9:44 - 10:24); musical selection (10:24 - 10:28); keeping on course (10:28 - 10:36); Lastly, programme preview and closing (10:36 - 1040)

#### **4.4 CRITIQUE OF SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY MATERIALS**

The Sabbath School lesson materials like lesson booklets are prepared in America in a totally different cultural setting and yet Africans and Kenyans in particular are expected to embrace it wholly.

Here the problem is, "why should Kenyans accept materials of different cultural origin as authentic and applicable to them?" Africans through the herald Publishing house ought to be allowed to prepare their own Sabbath school materials which reflect true African way of life.

The lessons are brought to Africans on assumption that all African Adventist know how to read and write, which is not the case. If the lessons are only meant for the educated Adventist adherents, then they will not serve the objective of fostering spiritual growth since not all African Adventists will be able to read and understand them. The kind of pictures and illustrations on the front and back pages of lesson Quarterlies ought to be of African children not European. The kind of environment depicted ought to be of African children not European. The kind of environment depicted ought to be truly African consisting of Animals, frosts, deserts and extended homes. For Africans to feel at home with SDA church lesson study materials, their context has to be taken into consideration in preparation of such materials. If enculturation does not take place, Africans are going to consider lesson study material alien, foreign and inapplicable to them.

The kind of materials used especially in the children division is very unfair to the African child because the kind of environment in which they grow is rural based leading to low literacy levels. Surely, how can African children operate at Par with American children who grow in urban set-up and are exposed to literacy skills? African children need their own lessons to enhance their understanding of the word of God.

Sometimes the idea seems to prevail that the Sabbath school lesson study materials make the Sabbath school well organized and fixed, like a perpetual-motion machine has yet been perfected, however, and nothing completely runs itself. At the back of everything in the universe there is a powerhouse of some kind. Some Christians argue that the use of lesson booklets makes the Sabbath school mechanical and that this prevents creativity, emotional religiosity and innovation from taking place in the church.

From the field study, it was found out that out of the seven divisions most of the churches had only two divisions. Adult and children divisions. The reason most informants gave for this is that they cannot afford training and teaching materials for the seven divisions. Even buying Adult Sabbath school lessons and picture roll for children is not easy. In most church congregations all the children are brought together in one class of their age.

Adults and youth are taught together by the use of Adult Sabbath School lessons because the youth cannot afford Collegiate Quarterly coupled with the aforesaid is the fact that the collegiate Quarterly is written in English, yet many youths in the church do not understand English very well. Teachers instead of using Teacher's Bible Study Guide, which is sold at 140 shillings, they use pupils (students) edition sold at 35 shillings for the reason that they cannot afford the teachers guide. This leads to lack of proper knowledge and understanding of the Bible for both teachers and their various divisions.<sup>35</sup>

Another problem with Sabbath school lesson study programme is that materials used for study such as lessons, picture rolls, teaching aids are not readily available in the area of study yet Africa herald Publishing House is just some forty kilometers from Homabay town.<sup>36</sup>

This happens because lesson study materials are ordered by pastors in most of the churches and a church pastor as several churches under him, it is therefore not easy to be always available at any one church. The church elders and other members of the church are left with the responsibility of running the Sabbath school affairs. This makes it hard for church members to get lesson study materials such as Bible and lesson Quarterlies.

Despite the fact that the seventh day Adventist in Homabay are faithful in Sabbath school offerings thanks giving and tithes, and gifts, it is a small fraction of these offerings that is utilized at local level. Many churches and Sabbath school are in dire need of funds for buying Sabbath school materials such as teaching aids, improving old Sabbath School, erecting new buildings, and buying teaching Aids. Lesson classes cannot be done effectively due to lack of enough lesson materials. The funds are not offerings, thus burdening the ordinary Sabbath school member to buy lesson booklets and Bibles.<sup>37</sup>

Through Sabbath school lesson study materials the Sabbath school objective of bringing pupils to Christ is achieved. In her 1985 M.A Thesis "The establishment and history of the activities of the Seventh-day (SDA) church among Abagusii of western Kenya, 1912 - 1985, M.N Getui reports that Sabbath school is:

*A place where children youth and adults are educated, where the Bible is opened to the understanding, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.*<sup>38</sup>



Through Sabbath school lesson study literature, SDA church expand to new areas and Christianity is spread to non-Christian families. This is effected by colporteurs who sell Sabbath school literature to Adventist and non-Adventist church members.

Sabbath school through lesson study materials offers the church an opportunity to educate church members. In her book, Testimonies for the Church, E.G. White wrote:

*In every town city and village, there are persons  
who would embrace the truth if it were brought before  
him or her in a judicious manner<sup>39</sup>*

In African traditional societies, educating children was the responsibility of both the family and the society. Education in traditional African Society was aimed at teaching children taboos, norm's, etiquettes, values like respect for the old, and where they have come from and where they are going. Religion permeated all spheres of life social, economic and cultural. The lesson discussions do not take into account the African cultures; all they aim at is bringing Africans to Christ. Taboos, norms, etiquettes and cultural life of the Africans are ignored as primitive, weird, backward and a stumbling block to Christianity. As a result African children do not understand where they have come from and where they are going.

This has led to lack of self-realization on the part of African children. The values promoted by lesson are respect; love hospitality, generosity, but African taboos, norms and etiquette are not inculcated.

NOTES

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6. Ibid.

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9. Ibid P.123

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12. General conference of SDA, Collegiate Quarterly, (Kendu-bay: Africa herald Publishing house, 1997) p.7

13. Ibid p.8

14. J. Odeko Interview 19.11.98 Lala

15. Sabbath School Manual

16. Ibid.

17. M.S Ogle OP.Cit p.25

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid. P. 29

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3. Ibid.  
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6. R. Ochom, Interview 19.11.98 Bonde (Homabay)

7. E.G white, Counsels on Sabbath School Work, (Washington D.C: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1938) p.71

8. S.Otieno Dede, Interview 14.1.99 Magare SDA Church.

9. Sabbath School Manual Op.Cit P. 71

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14. Ibid.

15. M.S Ogle Op.Cit.P.12

16. O Omulo, Ibid.

17. M.N.S. Getui, "The establishment and history of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church among the Abagusii of Western Kenya, 1912-1985) p.64

18. E.G. white Testimonies of the Church (Mountain view, California: pacific press 1955) p.227

## CHAPTER FIVE

### IMPACT OF SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY PROGRAMME

#### 5.1 OBJECTIVES OF SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY PROGRAMME

There are various objectives of lesson study programme. The objectives have different areas of emphasis such as fellowship, Faith, community and world emphasis.

General conference of SDA, Sabbath School Manual emphasis that

*That Sabbath school was developed  
to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ  
in response to the command of Jesus,  
and in the setting of the three  
angle's messages.<sup>1</sup>*

In loyalty to this original purpose, the Sabbath school continues to communicate the Good News with the objectives win, hold and train for Jesus Christ, boys, girls, men and women over the world.

#### FAITH EMPHASIS

1. Make the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ Central in all Sabbath school plans, projects and programme ensuring that materials are Christ centered. Bible based and person oriented.

In her book Testimonies for the church. E. G. White wrote that:

*In every town, city and village,  
there are persons who would  
embrace the truth if it were  
brought before him or her in a judicious  
manner.<sup>2</sup>*

In the Sabbath school lesson booklets (Teachers Guide) Sabbath school teachers are given instruction to follow in ensuring that children, youth, and adult are brought to Christ.<sup>3</sup> Those pupils who have already accepted Christ are required to repent their sins. During the school study it was observed that after the Sabbath school programme is over, children, youth and adults are asked to accept Jesus Christ as their savior. In some Sabbath Schools this happens every Saturday.

Cultivate the attitude of prayer and devotion on the part of all members. In her book The Great Controversy E.G. White writes:

*The Bibles should never be studied  
without prayer. The Holy Spirit alone  
can cause us to feel the importance  
of those things easy to understand,  
or prevent us from wrestling with  
truths difficult to comprehend.<sup>4</sup>*

We should not engage in the study of the Bible with that self-reliance with which so many enter the domains of science, but with a prayerful dependence upon God and a sincere desire to learn.<sup>5</sup>

3. Foster spiritual growth through regular study of the word of God, and sharing with others. In her book The Great Controversy; E.G. White writes:

*The first and highest duty of every rational being is to learn from the scriptures what is the truth, and then to walk in the light and encourage others to follow his example.<sup>6</sup>*

A familiar acquaintance with the scriptures sharpens the discerning powers. Fortifies the soul against the attacks of Satan.

### **FELLOWSHIP EMPHASIS**

The following are the fellowship emphasis of Sabbath school objectives:

Foster Christian fellowship in every aspect of the weekly Sabbath school.

Work together to develop and implements programmers and projects for recruiting new members. Sabbath school children and youth are considered as very important segment of the church because through them the continued existence of the church is assured.

Like in A.I.C. where Sunday school enables children to participate in church affairs, in SDA Church Sabbath School lesson study programme enables children, youth, and adults to participate in the church.

3. Enlist the help of all leaders, teachers and regular members in helping to restore inactive members of the church and Sabbath school to regular attendance, and active participation in the life of the church.

4. Carefully nurture the spiritual life of newly baptized members. After baptism a Christian is entered into the SDA Church record as a church member. After baptism one is given a membership card, which entitles him or her to participate in all church affairs. During the period when children, youth and adults attend Sabbath school, they are baptized and introduced to other church programmes. By the time the young people stop attending children and youth lesson classes, most of them are already full members of the SDA Church.

## **COMMUNITY EMPHASIS**

The following are the community emphasis of Sabbath school objectives:

1. Make every part of the Sabbath school programme and class contribute to the Christian experience of each member so that he/she serves as a spiritual magnet to draw others to Christ.

2. Make certain that all teaching is soul winning, soul holding in nature. Sabbath school lesson booklets contain Bible stories, which are extracted from either the New or Old Testament.

The songs that are used in Sabbath schools have Christian messages from the Bible. At the end of the thirty minutes lesson study a child youth or an adult is equipped with Bible memory verses. They come to know important personalities and events in the Bible.

3. Be alert to opening providences that present to the Sabbath or its individual members opportunities for soul winning.

## **WORLD EMPHASIS**

1. Maintain a clear vision of the global mission of the church.

2. Constantly foster in children youth and adults a desire to serve in gospel promulgation wherever the lord may lead.

3. Teach and promote systematic and self-denying stewardship in support of world missions.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF OBJECTIVES OF SABBATH SCHOOL**

### **LESSON STUDY PROGRAMME**

#### **Faith Emphasis:**

1. Encourage members to study God's word daily through their Sabbath school lessons. In her book entitled counsels on Sabbath schoolwork E.G. White has counselled:



*Everyday some portion of time  
should be appropriated to the  
study of the lessons... Parents  
set a part a little time each day  
for the study of the Sabbath  
school lesson with your children.<sup>7</sup>*

During the field study it was found out that most Christians in the area of study use lesson booklets on Sabbath day (Saturday) only.

2. Urge all Sabbath school teachers to set a right example to the class members by faithfully daily study of the Sabbath school lessons, and to follow the plan of calling attention to the importance of daily lesson study by asking the class each week for a show of hands as to how many are following the daily study plan. During the field study it was found out that lesson teachers in the area of study are a very big encouragement to their pupils by telling them to study the word of God daily.

### **Fellowship Emphasis:**

1. During the field study it was found out that Sabbath school superintendents lay plans to enroll in the Sabbath school, every member of the church all their children and other person who express a desire to become members.

2. Superintendents and Sabbath school lesson teachers encourage and inspire regular and punctual attendance at Sabbath school by all members. Contact absentees as soon as possible, and maintain a relationship of Christian fellowship with them to encourage them in Sabbath school attendance.
3. In the area of study, plans have been made in the local Sabbath schools to manifest true Christian hospitality, giving to all that attend a cordial welcome. Every member is encouraged to be friendly and hospitable in some Sabbath schools like Homa Bay central.
4. Hospitality is also practised by making plans to ensure that guests are entertained for Sabbath lunch. However this happens occasionally.
5. In some Sabbath schools teachers arrange occasional meetings of their classes for informal prayer, study and/or social activities.
6. In the area of study Sabbath schools like Bonded have lay plans for nurturing the spiritual life of newly baptized members, involving them as soon as possible in active meaningful service for Christ and his church.<sup>8</sup>

### **Community Emphasis**

1. Sabbath school strengthen the concern of the church for the spiritual needs of the community and encourage each member to be trained in the art of visitation and personal witness for Christ.
2. Sabbath schools in the area of study make opportunities and take advantage of special days and occasions to invite members and of the community to share in Bible study and worship.
3. Sabbath school encourage each class to set a goal for souls and actively foster and support the regular community out reach programmers carried on under the auspices of the Sabbath school.

## World Emphasis

1. Sabbath schools foster interest in mission's emphasis in each Sabbath school programme in all divisions of the Sabbath school.
2. They also establish goals for Sabbath school mission offerings, and encourage liberality in giving for this purpose. In her book counsels on Sabbath schoolwork E.G. White writes:

*To show a liberal self-denying  
spirit for the success of foreign  
missions is a sure way to advance  
home missionary work. For the prosperity  
of the home work depends largely,  
under God, upon the reflex influence  
of the evangelical work done in countries  
a far off<sup>9</sup>*

From the above statements of objectives, it is clear that this is an undertaking tremendously comprehensive and of consequential importance. It is the history of the External's response to human dilemma of conflict between good and evil during the few thousands of years of recorded human history, as these are contained in the Holy scriptures.<sup>10</sup>

## **5.2 IMPACT OF SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY**

### **PROGRAMME ON CHILDREN**

From the field study conducted, it was found out that most of those who attended lesson study programme from childhood serve the SDA Church in various capacities. Some are Sabbath school lesson teachers, superintendents, pastors, deacons, deaconesses, church secretaries, and clerks. Others are colporteurs, church elders and choir members; in the section emphasis is laid on impact of Sabbath school lesson study programme on children.

Sabbath school lesson study programme provides children with Biblical teachings.<sup>11</sup>

Sabbath school lesson booklets contain Bible stories, which are extracted from either the new, or old Testament. During an interview with pastor Jacob Odhiambo of Nyalkinyi SDA Church, he said the following:

*As a child I attended lesson  
study programme because of  
Bible stories" Little did I know  
that this was a preparation  
for my later carrier. <sup>12</sup>*

The songs and choruses children sing in Sabbath school contain Christian messages from the Bible. At the end of the Sabbath school lesson study programme children are equipped with Bible memory verses. Each Sabbath school at least one memory verse is learnt during lesson study programme.

during important Sabbath occasions such as camp meetings, thanksgiving Sabbath, and thirteenth Sabbath, children referred to as pathfinders memorize relevant Bible verses which they recite to the congregation. This makes them develop qualities like courage, personality, and confidence. Such qualities become very important in youthful life and adulthood. In some Sabbath schools it was observed that children perform drama and recite poems composed from the Bible.

The aforementioned activities performed by Sabbath schoolteachers and children avail the latter with Biblical teachings. By the use of picture roll children come to know important personalities and events in the Bible such as Adam, Eve, David, Jesus Christ, creation, crucifixion, covenant and resurrection. The Biblical teachings assist the children to know what is good and what is evil. For example they come to know from the ten commandments that they are supposed to respect their parents, they should not steal, they should not indulge in sexual promiscuity by practicing fornication. By being taught the Ten Commandments children are capable of leading a virtuous life.

Since Sabbath school is the organ through which Adventist children come into contact with the church, it gives them an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the Bible and life through singing, songs, lessons, and memory verses. Children begin to have better understanding of Christianity early enough, the application given of what the Bible verses mean mould the children's characters. By application of lessons children learn the right things to be done and wrong things to be avoided.

Children learn through observing and imitating and therefore there is need for them to see examples of Christians who strictly follow Christian teachings. Teachers should act as role models to be emulated. Observing teachers and other Christians with good behaviour helps Sabbath school children to mould their characters.

When children attain the age 12-13 years they start attending Baptismal classes.<sup>13</sup> In the Baptismal class, instructions take between one to two months depending on the church and pastors programme . After receiving instructions candidates are tested. Those who pass the test are baptized after which their names are entered into SDA Church record as members. After baptism, one is given a membership card, which entitles him or her to participate in all church affairs.

In the SDA Church, Sabbath school lesson study programme is the means through which children are recruited into the SDA Church.<sup>14</sup> Sabbath school lesson study programme ensures that children are recruited into church participation as they grow instead of waiting until they are grown ups.

This process of children joining the church as they grow ensures that as old members of the church fade away through death, new church members take up their places.

Through the Sabbath school lesson study programme Children from Adventist families encourage their non-SDA counterparts to attend. This leads to spread of the gospel of Christ. Some parents who are not Christians encourage their children to attend Sabbath school so that they can be like Adventist children in their areas.

in the Sabbath school important moral values cherished by all in the society are taught. As a result most of the children who attend Sabbath school become morally upright.

The Sabbath school lesson study programme prepares children for conversion experience.

General conference on Sabbath school in a book entitled, Teaching Teachers to Teach

notes:

*The word conversion literally means,  
"to turn with" and it is the experience  
in the heart of man in which he turns  
from selfish expression of his desires  
in harmony with the will of God.<sup>15</sup>*

Sabbath school lesson study programme lays the foundation for children Christian development. One informant said that Sabbath school succeeds in conversion of children into good Christians during lesson study, the pupils are generous such experiences assist children in molding their characters and strengthening their conscience <sup>16</sup>.

Most of the lesson teachers interviewed said that while young they were attracted to Sabbath school because of the songs and choruses, to see picture roll, meet other children and recite Bible memory verse.<sup>17</sup> Most of them did not understand repentance and baptism. When they came to know that to be baptized meant to accept Jesus Christ and to follow his teachings, they decided to have a personal experience of being baptized. The following table shows the relationship between Sabbath school attendance and baptism.

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SABBATH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND BAPTISM

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Those who were not Baptized during Sabbath School lesson study attendance (at ages 12 - 18)	10	33.3
Those who were Baptized during Sabbath School Lesson Study attendance (at age 12 - 18)	20	66.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

**TABLE 1**

Out of the thirty Sabbath school lesson teachers who filled the questionnaire ten were not baptized during childhood attendance of Sabbath school lesson study programme. Twenty out of thirty said that they got baptized while attending Sabbath school lesson study programme at ages between twelve and eighteen years. This shows that most of those who have gone through Sabbath school lesson study programme at childhood have been baptized.

During the field study, some informant accepted that Sabbath school programmed has negative impact in that it is rigid, rational fixed and curtails the work of the spirit. But none suggested that it should be abandoned.<sup>20</sup> Out of thirty, twenty informants said that they got baptized while attending Sabbath school lesson study programme at ages between twelve and eighteen years. This shows that most of those who have gone through Sabbath school lesson study programme at childhood have been baptized.



One of the weaknesses of Sabbath school lesson study programme which was observed during field study is that after the lesson study discussion some teachers ask children question in order to find out whether they have understood the lesson. In some case, children raise up their hands because other children in the class are doing so or because they want to please their teachers.

Although the main aim of Sabbath school lesson study programme is to produce new life in Christ there are other things that children learn by attending Sabbath school. For example children learn to live with other children. Sabbath school lesson study programme is used to educate and prepare children to be happy and useful people of the society in which they live.

During the field study it was found out that Sabbath school lesson teachers in some churches come to their Sabbath schools late or they don't come at all.<sup>21</sup> This is a bad practice because when such absenteeism occurs teachers are forced to combine several classes children become disappointed because they are unable to continue with their usual lessons and are forced to learn a differently by joining a different class. Children and teachers are not supposed to absent themselves. Teachers set bad example when they absent themselves.

In conclusion, the father, the mother and the Sabbath school teacher, by their life, and example by their study of the scriptures around family table, by their faithfulness in attendance at church and Sabbath school, and by their living the life of Christ in daily experience, have a tremendous influence upon a child.

This parental influence, together with the tasks and duties, which the child is assigned, the companions he plays with mould the mind of the child. The afore said enable the child to come to concrete decision for Christ, to complete surrender to the master when the time is ripe.

### **5.3 IMPACT OF SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY PROGRAMME ON THE YOUTH**

The urge for new experience and adventure is the characteristic of young people everywhere.<sup>22</sup> there seems to be a feeling that they just have to try things out for themselves. They seem to have an endless capacity for pleasure, and respond to anything that promises them a thrill<sup>23</sup>. These natural instincts and tendencies seem to make young people susceptible to evil influences.

Through the Sabbath school lesson taught in Sabbath school, the special music, the mission stories, and congregational singing leave a mark for God on the lives of the young (Those aged between 18 to 35 years)<sup>24</sup>

During the field study it was observed that in Sabbath schools where teachers and the youth are closely united, the most definite leadings toward conversion ought to occur. In her book counsels on Sabbath schoolwork E.G. White reports: The object of Sabbath schoolwork should be the in gathering of souls.<sup>25</sup>

As a teacher, selected for his or her special fitness in understanding, sympathetic approach, and tactfulness, deals with the youth aiding them in the solution of their spiritual problems, the most effective work can be accomplished. Through the Sabbath school programme lessons leading to conversion are given to the youth<sup>26</sup>

In her book entitled steps to Christ E.G. White writes the following:

*The youth's heart is evil and he  
cannot change it. Education,  
culture, the exercises of the will,  
human effort, all has their proper  
sphere, but here they are powerless.*<sup>27</sup>

The above-mentioned can produce an outward correctness of behaviour, but they cannot change the heart. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above before the youth can be changed from sinfulness to holiness. That power is got through Sabbath school lesson study programme by studying the collegiate quarterly. It is through prayerful study of the word of God that the youth receive guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>28</sup>

Through the Sabbath school lesson study programme, the youth receive biblical teachings.

In her book our high Calling E.G. White writes:

*There is no book the perusal  
of which will so elevate and  
strengthen the minds as the study  
of the Bible...*<sup>29</sup>

White also notes that during lesson study the intellect will find themes of the most elevated character to call out its powers. There is nothing that will so endow with vigor all the youth's faculties as bringing them in contact with the stupendous truths of revelation.<sup>30</sup> The effort to grasp and measure these great thoughts expands the mind and enriches the soul. During Sabbath school lesson study the youth learn the true way to live, the safe way to die.

Regular attendance of Sabbath school sharpens the discerning powers, fortifies the soul of the youth against the attacks of Satan. It is the only guide in all matters of faith and practice. According to one informant, the reason why Satan has so great control over youth is that they have not made the word of God their counsel.<sup>31</sup>

During the field study most informants noted that if the youth simply receive information about the word of God from other people, there's a good chance their information concerning Christianity is going to be based on behaviour. If one relies upon the other people for information they are likely to end up with a misunderstanding of God. The Sabbath school lesson study programme therefore gives the youth an opportunity to participate in the search for Christ through group discussions.

The Sabbath school lesson study programme also give the youth opportunity to study the scriptures and obtain a correct knowledge of how to live so as to enjoy the greatest amount of unalloyed happiness. The youth are furnished with scripture arguments so that they can meet the doubts of unbelievers and remove them by the clear light of truth.

those who have searched the scriptures may be fortified against temptations of satan. They may be thoroughly furnished to all good works.<sup>32</sup>

In order to exercise intelligent faith the youth ought to attend Sabbath school because it is by studying the word of God through the lesson that the youth can come to the knowledge in Bible pages. The conditions on which they (youth) hope for eternal life are explicitly stated<sup>33</sup>

Sabbath school lesson study programme through its lessons with their accompanying discipline, produce cold factual voice of reason in the youth. The feelings accompanying the knowledge, the sabbath school, the teacher, the associates, the home and the family produce the warm, passionate voice of the hearts ideals.<sup>34</sup> According to an informant, conscience is a faculty given to all the youth by God, but it is trained by the standards of the family, the sabbath school and the church. The conscience is, therefore, not necessarily infallible in every circumstance of life, but as it is constantly re-examined in the light that shines from heaven, and it is revised by the Holy Spirit, it becomes the faculty through which the spirit of God speaks to the youth.

One informant said the Sabbath school lesson study programme leads the youth to become new creatures in Jesus Christ. New creatures are expected to bring forth the fruits of the spirit, love joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith meekness, temperance, (Galatians 5:22,23). They (Youth) will no longer fashion themselves according to the former lusts, but by the faith of the son of God they will follow his steps, reflect his character, and purify themselves according to his purity.

the things they once loved, they hate. The proud and self - Assertive become meek and lowly in heart. The vain and supercilious become very serious and unobtrusive. The smokers quit smoking, the drunken become sober. The vain customs and fashions of the world are laid aside.<sup>35</sup>

According to some adult informants, the youth are recruited into church participation instead of waiting until they become adults.

This process helps to ensure that continuity in the church is guaranteed. As old die the young take up their positions in the Sabbath school, all the pastors who were interviewed during the field study said they were once members of Sabbath school in their youth. In some Sabbath schools shortage of Sabbath school lesson teachers prompts superintendents to encourage young men and women to become lesson teachers. When young people serve as lesson teachers they learn to be responsible leaders. In this way the church gets leaders who do not need to be introduced to the church, because they are familiar with operation of the church. The leadership skills learnt by the youth in the sabbath school can be used by those who are employed as civil servants or even as good mothers and fathers.

However, the Sabbath school superintendent should ensure that the sabbath school teachers are trained, so that they can deliver effectively to their pupils. Young people should be recruited and trained to become lesson teachers. Superintendent should ensure that teachers arrived early enough so that they have enough time with their pupils.

Sabbath school lesson study programme by way of class discussions offers the youth an opportunity to meet and socialize. <sup>36</sup> As the youth discuss lessons in the class by using the Bible quarterly, they make friendly relations among themselves. Socializing enables the youth to practice things they are taught such as obedience, sobriety, discipline, chastity and holiness.

Although Sabbath school lesson study programme has played a major role in recruiting young people into becoming lesson teachers, not all recruits have been trained. Youthful volunteers' embark on teaching without undergoing any training at all. In some churches such as Bonde, Makongeni, Homa-bay central, Sofia and Lala, where there are more than one teacher for every class, the new teachers are attached to a trained teacher to learn how to teach. In churches like Nyalkinyi, nyagidha, Ongulu and got Rabuor, where there is shortage of teachers recruitment of young men and women is followed by immediate deployment. The table below shows the number of trained teachers in the sabbath schools included during field study.

**TRAINING OF SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON TEACHERS IN SABBATH SCHOOLS STUDIED**

	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Trained Sabbath School Teacher	18	60
Untrained Sabbath Teachers	12	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

**TABLE II**

Out of the thirty Sabbath school lesson teachers interviewed sixty percent have been trained and forty percent are untrained. Most of the trained teachers are in the well established churches. In upcoming Sabbath schools where teachers are mainly youthful volunteers the number of trained teachers is low.

Due to lack of adequate staff, Sabbath schools have recruited uncommitted young Christians who have been detrimental to the spiritual progress of the church. In some Sabbath schools uncommitted young sabbath school teachers, secretaries, culpotours, choir members, deacons have been involved in immoral activities such as sexual immorality, drunkenness and even smoking. Instead of setting good example to other church members they have set bad example. <sup>37</sup> This is because some of the youths are attracted to the above positions by prestige and honour rather than commitment to serve God. Some youths are appointed to such posts because of exceptional talents rather than desire to serve. Others, take such positions because of peer group influence and influence from their parents or local church leaders. The Sabbath school council should consider and approve only young people who have proved their commitment in the church over along period of time.

In conclusion, despite the aforesaid above, special attention ought to be paid to the activities of the youth, without whom the Sabbath school and church would not have grown the way it has done. While not overlooking their role in the past, starting from the early 1970's and continuing into the 1980's the seventh-day Adventist youth in Homa-bay have displayed a lot of zeal and vigour towards winning souls into the sabbath school.



Under the able leadership of the Adventist youth organisation (AYO) the youth have engaged in evangelistic efforts. They are organised at Sabbath school, church and 'district' level.

#### 5.4 IMPACT OF SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON STUDY PROGRAMME ON ADULTS

In his book entitled Church Growth Through Sabbath school action units C.L Smith writes:

*The objective of lesson discussion is to assist each adult members of the SDA Church grow spiritually by applying God's message to his or her life that week.*<sup>38</sup>

Sabbath school action unit are lesson discussion groups held outside side church based Sabbath school. They may involve a group of five to six people in a given locality, estate, village, or profession. Through the mutual sharing of burdens, sorrows, and joys, each adult member learns to understand and appreciate god's unique dealings in other people's lives, they learn to minister to needs and support other class members. This type of interaction helps prepare each to witness in outreach situations. They are usually held in the middle of the week before the main Sabbath school programme, on the Sabbath day.

through sabbath school action units (groups or classes of six to eight adults or seniors) lesson study programme provide a solution to the challenge of nurturing members, reclaiming the mission, and fulfilling the mission of the church.<sup>39</sup> Action units give church members an opportunity for total involvement in sabbath school activities and this leads to church growth. Action units are designed to assist pastors and church leaders in their efforts to help their members have a joyous experience with their Lord.

During the field study most informants confirmed that the small group Sabbath school class action units if properly conducted provide the supporting fellowship and relevant nurture needed to adults. It also provides the caring atmosphere, inspiration, and training needed to bring missing members back, so they will stay and assist in reaching the world.

The informant said the warm interaction and mutual trust that the Sabbath school class can develop is such that members will not allow any of their closely-knit group to Miss Sabbath school without immediately reaching out to them with concern.<sup>40</sup>

Through the weekly sharing of witnessing experiences and prayer for specific individuals, a burden for reaching out to former members and the community quickly develops when even one active class member shares what God is doing, it is contagious soon all are involved in outreach mission.

By means of the sabbath school lesson study programme adult sabbath school members are united as one in love, they show unselfish, caring concern, and are able through the power of the Holy Spirit to provide an atmosphere where outreach can truly be effective and lasting. The church then becomes a safe place for the Lord to bring new believers. New converts, who in the past were often assimilated and bound into family are now provided with a warm climate where they can grow spiritually, be challenged and trained effectively, and become happily involved in church activities.

Through the mission stories, the sabbath school lesson study programme becomes an organisation where needs of those around the world can constantly be brought to the attention of the Lord's people, helping them to be sensitive and generous and aiding in the accomplishment of the great commission in all the world.

The informant said that if the work done through Sabbath school lesson study programme has been effectual on adults the results not only will be definitely seen, but also they will remain permanent. The adult, who has received a true experience in conversion through sabbath school lesson study programme will recognize that experience, not as something aside his daily living, but as an integral part of life.

It becomes so much a part of his life that it contributes definitely to reconstruction of his plans, to the revaluation of his acquired knowledge, with Christ and His ideals and teachings become the very center of his or her life and thought. <sup>41</sup>

The Sabbath school lesson study programme is an important vehicle of inculcating Christian values elaborated in the Bible. Such values include the practice of monogamy which is elaborated in 1 Timothy 3:2. "A Church leader must be without fault, he must have only one wife, be sober, self-controlled, and orderly, he must welcome strangers in his home, and be able to teach". During the field study it was found out that all Sabbath school leaders like superintendents, teachers and deacons have practised monogamous marriage. Monogamous marriage among the seventh-day Adventists is regarded as the highest form of unity between a man and a woman. It was also found out that even Adventist children becoming adults emulate their parents by marrying one wife. In the sabbath school moral values such as chastity, responsibility, obedience and temperance are taught and practised by adult Church members who are expected to set good example to the youth and children.

All the adults interviewed during the field study assented to the fact that sabbath school lesson study gives an opportunity for all adults to study and discuss the word of God. Most adults also said that the discussion during lesson study are healthy because they make learning effective by way of sharing ideas and making conclusions that all adults accept as binding, profitable, and in accordance to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

During the field study one informant said that through the sabbath school lesson study programme there has been an increase in baptism, personal Bible study, sabbath school attendance by adults. Former SDA Church members who backslide have returned to the church and evangelical outreach to the spiritually needy are also being achieved. On the lesson booklet the informant had the following to say, " The lesson booklet is quite edifying, profitable, useful, and comprehensive."<sup>42</sup>

The Sabbath school lesson study programme has made many Adventist adults buy Bibles, and lesson booklets.

A sabbath school lesson teacher interviewed at Homa-Bay central SDA Church stated that, "lesson study enables all adults of the SDA church to socialize, understand the scriptures, also teach non Adventists," it has made many to follow the scriptures and really enjoy in the discussions. As a teacher what he gets out of Sabbath school lesson study programme is spiritual upliftment.

According to some informants the encouragement, which the Sabbath school programme gives to the laity to participate in church affairs, has proved as a pulling factor from the initial stages of the SDA Church in Homa-Bay. Even the lowly educated are given morale to qualify as Sabbath schoolteachers, pastors and evangelists. This has generated yearnings for such positions by adults throughout Homa-bay with the result that many seventh - day Adventist came to the limelight of progress.

While in field I sat in many Sabbath school classes under instruction of different teachers, but I never enjoyed any other Sabbath school class so much as I did at Lala SDA, church. We had no new, up-to-date mission stories to stimulate our interest in missions. We had no much money to give as mission offerings. There was not enough activity of the school to make very interesting reports. There was little that we could have in the way of special music. But the spirit of lesson study was strong. The whole adult class of twenty-eight were all workers in the cause of God. The Sabbath school teacher was a gift of teaching. He knows how to "stir up discussion as no other that I ever sat under.

The very circumstances of our everyday life, of course, made us feel like one big family, and when we came to the Sabbath school no one was afraid to express an opinion or to ask a question.<sup>43</sup> We took a full forty to fifty minutes for the lesson study and no one went to sleep during the time, but we went away eager to study the next week's lesson. So keen was our interest in the study of Daniel and Revelation that we took notes at the close of the study. Sabbath-school lesson study programme therefore brings all SDA adults together as one family so as to express and share opinions on their very circumstances of everyday life.

In another church, a retired church elder and a missionary leader of the church started a branch Sabbath school at Rapedhi in Dhiwa constituency of Homa-bay District. Living near this place was a sister, semi-isolated who had married a non-Adventist.

When the branch Sabbath school started she and her children attended lesson study programme and took new courage and became as it were the nucleus of the group and of its activities. After two years two of the daughters of this family were baptized, and their mother also got baptized. The father also joined the family in the branch Sabbath school, and he too, accepted the faith.

Two other women from this branch Sabbath school were also baptized. One of these had a son who had been attending the university. He attended the branch Sabbath school occasionally. Other brethren encouraged him to go to one Seventh-day Adventist senior college, now he has been baptized, and plans to have a part in the Lord's work.

his article in a seventh-day Adventists Journal, Herald Vol. III August - October (1996) O.

Howayo reported another case.

Brother Rachuonyo whose father Harun Owour who in the early days of Seventh-day Adventist message in Kenya, took the gospel of Christ to Kuria land was born on December 7th 1925 and baptized in 1944.

He took his education at Kamagambo Adventist School, which after graduation sent him to Gebe technical and trade school for technical training for three years. He came back and worked with Kamagambo for nine years. He came back and worked with kamagambo for one year. He later joined the Government of Kenya, which also took him to Kenya polytechnic for further training in 1963. This is also the year he married his second wife.

Unfortunately his wife passed away on June 30th 1993. After this saddening incident he thought of getting consolation by joining Christ's band. This thought was acquired through regular Sabbath school lesson study programme attendance, where he got continuous appeal from the Holy Spirit gave birth to a joyous re-baptism at Dago SDA church in Ranen field. At present brother Joel is preparing to build a branch Sabbath school in his donated land.

In conclusion it can be said that the Seventh-day Adventist through its Sabbath school study programme has indeed had effect among the Luos of Homa-bay and many other Kenyans. In the words of one adherent: if I cannot be an Adventist I am afraid I will be a half-Christian and thus I cannot imagine not being an Adventist".

## NOTES

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## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

When the Seventh-day Adventist missionaries arrived at Gendia (Kendu-Bay) in 1906., the Luo people had already evolved their own system of education.<sup>1</sup> The missionaries taught people how to read and write and also emphasized that the Luo had to abandon some of their cultural practices in order to become Seventh-day Adventist Christians. The SDA Missionaries' wives with the help of a few educated adult converts started Sabbath school lesson study programme at Gendia mission station for all people. Children, young and adults from non-Adventist families were encouraged to attend Sabbath school. In the Sabbath school pupils were taught that they had to accept Jesus Christ in order to become children of God and enter into heaven after the end of the world, which would come soon.<sup>2</sup> On attaining adult status those in the young class moved to adult class and their class taken over by those from children class.

The study found that Sabbath school lesson study programme is a pillar of the SDA, Church, and indispensable in the area of study. It is one of the reliable sources from which children, youth and adults can get instructions. It is a source of education and advice to people of different ages. Some parents work in offices for long hours, others in farms and therefore they cannot have enough time to teach their children. The kind of Christian Religious Education taught in schools and colleges is not a faithful study it is done by most students for purposes of passing national examination and are taught teachers some of whom are not faithful and therefore fail to set good example for their children to emulate.

Sabbath school lesson study programme is best suited to provide children and youth with Christian moral values and other Christian teachings that can be of use to them in their spiritual growth.

Sabbath school lesson study programme creates unity among SDA Church adherents. Through the Sabbath school lesson study programme all members of the SDA church worldwide are brought together by use of same lessons, and by applying these lessons to their lives, they are influenced in similar ways.

As a result of the aforesaid, lesson study programme changes the lives of Adventists making them very investigative and thorough on the word of God. The lessons discussed regulate social and spiritual lives of the Adventists. It is worth noting that without the Sabbath school lesson study programme the SDA Church would not be what it is today.<sup>3</sup> Through the Sabbath school lesson study programme SDA church members socialize, pray together, share their problems and encourage one another to continue with life in spite of difficulties that there are.

In Homa-bay district and Kenya in general the Sabbath school lesson study programme is run by volunteers. Just like in other parts of the world like America, none of the Sabbath school lesson teachers and members of committee or council who run the programme are volunteers. Education department plays the role of giving advisory services to SDA churches on all matters of education of which the Sabbath school is apart. On the other hand, the church is expected to provide facilities, recruit lesson teachers and oversee Sabbath school lesson study programme.

The aforesaid implies that there may be a difference on how Sabbath school is conducted depending on the state of the church. In some well established churches such as Homa Bay central and Odiinya SDA Churches, there are enough trained Sabbath school teachers while in others such as Makongeni where there are only a few members Sabbath school teachers are untrained.

During lesson study programme, Adventist Christian are given an opportunity to study the word of God systematically, discuss, think for themselves, mediate, and interpret the Biblical message. This kind of participation in lesson discussion encourages members to come to church regularly because their presence can be felt. Participation by members makes the entire church active and therefore members are not bored down. Participation by members also reduces indoctrination in the church as members feel that they are part of the church and that they also have something to offer.

The Sabbath school lesson study programme keeps SDA Church adherents occupied such that they get very little time or no time at all to be involved in evil activities which can spoil their lives. When the young are idle for example, they become incited to engage in all sorts of vice<sup>4</sup>

Young people in both rural and urban areas can get involved in activities such as cigarette smoking, opium smoking, attending night dances and loitering in market places during the day or night. The study found that Sabbath school brings hidden youth and adults together for a solemn purpose.

It gives them Christian nurture; The Bible memory verse, stories, finger plays, and songs contribute to nurturing of children and the youth in the word of God. When children and youth attend Sabbath school their discerning, imaginative and creative powers are directed towards activities that in the end help in the moulding of their characters.

On recruitment of Sabbath school lessons teachers, General conference of SDA in a book Sabbath School manual writes:

*All teachers should be chosen by the Sabbath school council to serve for one year and should be members of the church in good and regular standing.<sup>5</sup>*

The church has a duty to ensure that those who are appointed as Sabbath school teachers are faithful and dedicated Christians. For Sabbath school to have desired impact Sabbath school teachers ought to be mature and well educated Christians selected from Christians in different occupations such as teaching, farming and doctors.

During the field study it was found out that the area of selection of Sabbath school superintendents has loopholes. In most of the Sabbath schools studied superintendents were found to be men over forty-five years of age. In only one Sabbath school was there a female superintendent. It was also established that young men and women have been ignored for selection to the post yet they have a lot of potential.

For Sabbath school lesson study programme to have a positive impact, Sabbath school superintendents ought to be both boys and girls. They (superintendents) should be Christians who attend Sabbath school regularly without being late.

Another aspect, which needs encouragement if Sabbath school lesson study programme is to have a positive impact, is giving of presents to outgoing teachers for their contribution to the Sabbath school. Though the presents given may not be commensurate to the work done by teachers, it is important in the sense that teachers take the presents as a token of appreciation for their good work done. This practice also encourages those teachers who take over to work with dedication, as their work is voluntary. Sabbath school members need not to labour to buy expensive gifts but they can go for things like teacups, plates, water glasses, thermos flask, sufurias and any other household goods as long as they do not burden Sabbath school members.

During the field study the informant suggested that Luo Sabbath lesson booklets should be designed like the English version so that it can be easier for them to understand. They confirmed to the researcher that it is easier to understand the English lesson version than Luo version. More guides to lesson discussion should be introduced to the Luo version of the Sabbath school lesson booklet. This will enhance better understanding of the Luo lesson.

This study established that most of the SDA Church adherents do not understand the importance of Sabbath school lesson study programme. They do not for example understand what the study does to children, youth and adults.

During the study some Adventist church members accused Sabbath school lesson study programme wrongly as being "Mechanical", speculative, and just a mere discussion about the word of God. This means that the church does not create awareness in members on the aims and objectives of lesson study programme. Some SDA Church members attend the programme as a routine without really knowing what the programme does to him or her. This study recommends that pastors, superintendents, church elders, teachers, deacons and deaconesses should make church members aware of the objectives and impact of Sabbath school lesson study programme. Since Sabbath school members viz children, young and adults come from families of different background, some are literate others are not, some committed Christians while others are not pastors should set a side certain Sabbaths when members can be enlightened on important aspects of Sabbath school lesson programme.

This study also recommends that the existing Sabbath school teachers training courses (already elaborated) should be changed so that it can be appropriate and relevant to modern time. Training courses should be such that they train teachers on how to teach effectively but not on how to use the Sabbath school lesson booklet. Sabbath school lesson booklets are printed in America reflecting a different cultural background from our own. Education standards in America are not same as our own and so the teachers should be given freedom to adopt the lessons to suit their environment and the level of understanding of their class. The teachers should be given freedom in the lesson books, so that they may be able to use their imagination, creativity and initiative in teaching lessons.

It was observed during the field study that the youth are not considered for such posts as superintendent, lesson teachers, and Sabbath school secretary as they are still young. This study recommends that youth division leader ought to see to it that young people have an opportunity to take part in the Sabbath school programme. In her book You and your Sabbath School Ogle notes that:

*"Fortunate indeed is that young person  
who has Christian parents who know  
how to guide, and yet know more and more  
to relinquish. Control and let the young  
person assume more and more responsibility...?"*

As a matter of fact young people themselves can conduct their own Sabbath school. Let one of the youth be chosen as assistant leader, another as secretary's and they be given opportunity to participate, offering prayer, telling mission story, giving review, and providing the special music. Not only is this good training for the young people, but also young people are well able to prepare and execute a good Sabbath programme.

During the field study it was observed that many juniors have never been taught to pray in public and they feel embarrassed if called upon unexpectedly to pray in Sabbath School.

Leaders and teachers ought to teach their juniors to pray, and when children feel that they know how to do it they are not embarrassed if called upon unexpectedly to pray in Sabbath school.



One method that has been found helpful in teaching children to pray in Sabbath school, in junior camp, and other places, is to give them written prayers to read. Before time for Sabbath school, select some child to offer prayer, and give him or her a slip of paper on which the prayer is written. Suggest to him or her that he reads the prayer so that he will become familiar with its words, and then suggest that he or she prays when the right time comes.

Another recommendation is that lesson discussions should not only be done in the church during Sabbath gathering but also at home by members of the same church who stay within the same geographical area like an estate. This can be done by forming Sabbath school action units so that everyday after work all members of a study group meet in the house of one of their group members. This is important because it enables church members who are lazy to study the lessons throughout the week. It also gives the members of the church an opportunity to socialize and know one another and in this way, outreach ministry of the Adventist church can be realized.

As already aforementioned, the Sabbath school lesson study programme has loopholes. The Sabbath school and education department are trying to solve some of the problems, in order to make Sabbath school lesson study programme effective, though a lot more needs to be done. The importance of the programme to people of Homa-bay and other Kenyans cannot be over emphasized. The Sabbath school lesson teachers and other key informants interviewed during this study affirmed that they went through Sabbath school lesson study programme. Church elders, superintendents and pastors said that the foundation of their Christian education was laid when they started attending Sabbath school.

For the efficiency of this programme each Sabbath school should try to improve its different aspects of the Sabbath school. For example, it should ensure that there are enough reading materials like Bibles, commentaries, dictionaries, and encyclopedia. It should also encourage all adults, youths and children to play their roles in the Sabbath school lesson study programme so that impact of the programme can be seen.

## NOTES

1. L.O Oudho "The impact of Christianity on Luo traditional marriage system" (M.A Thesis university of Nairobi 1985) P.35
2. J. Otii, interview, 12.1.99, Bonde
3. S, Owino, interview, 5.1.99, Rabour Masawa
4. J, Odhiambo Interview, 14.1.99, Nyalkinyi
5. General conference of SDA, The Sabbath School manual (Washington: Review and herald 1986) p. 115
6. J. Otii OP. Cit.
7. M.S Ogle, You and Your Sabbath School. (Washington D.C: Review and herald, 1949) p.28

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**APPENDIX 1****KEY INFORMANTS**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>DATE OF INTERVIEW</b>	<b>PLACE OF INTERVIEW</b>
<b>C.OYOO</b>	S. Teacher	20.11.98	<b>SOPIA</b>
<b>J. ODHIAMBO</b>	Pastor	14.1.99	<b>NYALKINYI</b>
<b>D. ONJIKO</b>	Pastor	3.1.99	<b>HOMA-BAY CENTRAL</b>
<b>S. MBAGO</b>	"	5.1.99	<b>ODIENYA</b>
<b>S. OMULO</b>	"	6.12.98	<b>OLALE</b>
<b>J. WINGA</b>	S. Superintendent	5.1.99	<b>KUOYO</b>
<b>K.ODONGO</b>	S. Teacher	7.1.99	<b>MAKONGENI</b>
<b>J.WANGA</b>	"	7.12.98	<b>NYAGIDHA</b>
<b>E. OWINO</b>	"	28.12.98	<b>SOPIA</b>
<b>H. NYAWINDA</b>	Colporteur	20.12.98	<b>ONGULU</b>
<b>D. CHUANYA</b>	Student	8.1.99	<b>LALA</b>
<b>J. ABILA</b>	S.teacher	10.1.99	<b>RURI</b>
<b>S. OTIENO</b>	"	14.1.99	<b>MISANI</b>
<b>S. OWINO</b>	"	13.1.99	<b>RABOUR MASAWA</b>
<b>E. AGOLA</b>	Superintendent	12.12.98	<b>BONDE SDA CHURCH</b>
<b>J. OTII</b>	Elder	26.11.98	<b>BONDE SDA CHURCH</b>
<b>J. ODEKO</b>	Superintendent	26.11.98.	<b>LALA</b>

<b>NAME</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>DATE OF INTERVIEW</b>	<b>PLACE OF INTERVIEW</b>
<b>R. OCHOM</b>	Pastor	21.11.98	<b>BONDE SDA CHURCH</b>
<b>C. WERE</b>	Elder	26.11.98	<b>LALA</b>
<b>S. ODHIAMBO</b>	S. Teacher	16.1.98	<b>KABOUCH</b>
<b>N. OWOUR</b>	"	6.1.99	<b>HOMA-BAY CENTRAL SDA</b>
<b>C. NYAMBURI</b>	Student	12.1.99	<b>LALA</b>
<b>R. ACHIENG</b>	"	7.1.99	<b>BONDE SDA CHURCH</b>
<b>H. MORAA</b>	"	7.7.99	<b>NYAMARE</b>
<b>A. OMONDI</b>	'	19.12.98	<b>KANYAMWA</b>
<b>E. AWUONDA</b>	"	12.12.98	<b>RABOUR MASAWA</b>
<b>J. OORO</b>	"	16.12.98	<b>SOFIA</b>
<b>SILA ONYANGO</b>	Student	19.12.98	<b>HOMA-BAY</b>



## APPENDIX 11

### QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire was filled by Sabbath school teachers and other Key informants who included Sabbath school superintendents, pastors and elders

Name .....

sex.....

Age .....

location .....

Education.....

Place and date of interview.....

Position in church or Sabbath School.....

1. When did you become a Christian? .....

2. Why did you become a Christian? .....

3. Were you brought up in an Adventist family .....

4. Did you attend Sabbath School when you were young.....

5. What benefits did you get from attending lesson study programme?  
.....  
.....

6. Are you a Sabbath School Lesson Teacher yes..... No.....

7. If yes, are you trained? Yes..... No.....

8. If trained, how long did the training take.....

9. Which division of the Sabbath School do you teach.....

10. What is the size of the class you teach? .....

11. Do you get assistance from any other teacher? .....

12. Who supervises your work.....

14. Are your lesson plans checked? .....

15. How do you find the lesson booklet you use.....

16. Do pupils follow the lessons? .....

17. What visual aids do you use? .....

18. Do you send your children to Sabbath school? .....

Give reasons.....

19. What do you consider to be the main objectives of Sabbath school programme?  
.....

20. What are the main achievements of Sabbath school lesson study programme in your church.....

21. What are the main weaknesses of Sabbath school lesson study programme?  
.....

22. How do you get materials for Sabbath school lesson study programme?  
.....  
.....

23. How do you get materials for Sabbath school lesson study programme?  
.....

24. What changes would you like to see carried out in your Sabbath school lesson study programme.....

25. What comments or recommendations would you like to make regarding Sabbath school study programme in general .....