

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 AUTONOMY OF THE IPM – DREAM OR REALITY?

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to listen to Co-researchers in relation to the IPM Autonomy. It will be interesting to discover how Co-researchers understand Autonomy and how they interpret the related complex phenomena. This exercise will be done through the use of case studies and questionnaires. Three groups were selected for this study, in order to deepen the author's understanding of the Autonomy of the IPM.

The first group was initially composed of three ministers who were selected for case studies, because of their long experience of Autonomy. All of them indicated that they were willing to participate, and appointments for the interviews were set up. However, despite the effort made, one minister proved to be unavailable, and as a result only two case studies will be presented.

The second group was composed of two ministers, two former Swiss missionaries, two scholars, one evangelist and one lay people. This group was selected to complete the questionnaire that the author had designed. They were also selected because of the way in which they are involved with the IPM, namely the responsibilities they carry and the length of time they had been involved with the IPM. Scholars were selected from those who had investigated the IPM and continued to be close to it. The two ministers received the questionnaire by e-mail, but only one responded. Similarly only one former Swiss missionary responded to the questionnaire that was sent out. In total, six Co-researchers responded to the questionnaire. The majority of them were available for direct contact with the author. The age range for these participants was between fourth six and eighty.

The third group was invited to attend workshops in Maputo and Gaza provinces. In total, nineteen workers attended. Of these sixteen were ministers and three were evangelists.

The Maputo workshop was attended by eight ministers and two evangelists, while eight ministers and one evangelist attended the workshop in Gaza. One of the ministers who did not respond to the questionnaire was present in one of the workshops. The participants in this group were aged between 35 and 72. In this group, the author did not pose specific questions, but she divided the issues to be discussed into the four aims that the research study focuses on.

Before any discussion took place, the author shared her field of research with the participants and asked the Co-researchers to share their knowledge, their observations, as well as the issues they believed created or constituted barriers for the development of the IPM, and their ideas regarding how the IPM can challenge these barriers and ultimately improve her Autonomy.

The methodology used dealt with each aim separately, with the author drawing the aims together at the end, in order to comment on the whole process.

The discussions were very interesting and all the co-researchers participated in the process. Some had to be interrupted, because the discussions surpassed the time limit previously decided upon.

It is important to mention that when the author needed to clarify issues, she was able to go to her co-researchers to gain clarity on these points. This was particularly the case with those co-researchers who offered to join the author's journey.

4.1.2 Presenting the data through Case Studies

Case Study 1

The case study one was shared by Mazenzule, who is a retired minister aged 75. When the IPM launched Autonomy in 1948, he was still a young boy of 11. He entered the ministry in 1968, after qualifying as a teacher.

The author asked Mazenzule to share his relationship with the IPM, including difficulties he had encountered, his hopes, and his understanding concerning the future of the church. He said:

When the Autonomy of the church was launched I was very young. My parents told me what the event was because they were present. They wanted me to serve in the church, but this was far from my intentions. When I concluded secondary school, I applied for a job at the Ministry of Education. However, when my parent was sick he told me that he was not happy because he wanted to see me serving in the church. After his death I considered his request and I asked the minister of my parish to introduce me as a candidate for theological studies.

According to the information received from my father, the '*Lumuku*' or Autonomy of the IPM started in 1948 but, in reality, it started later. Until 1948, the Swiss Mission (SM) had in its charge three areas on which it developed its activities. These three areas were schools, hospitals, and the church. When the SM was preparing the church for autonomy, it asked members to choose one among the three areas of its activities. Members chose to remain with the church. The SM agreed with them but in turn, it told them that the payment of stipends to ministers and evangelists was, from this moment of the entire responsibility of the church. For me, this means that the IPM was told that she was autonomous! How can she enjoy autonomy that she had not conquered?

From this time, ministers and evangelists were to be paid by contributions of members of the church who did not know how to give. This kind of autonomy is an imposition; people were not prepared;

A Pastoral Fund was created to deal with expenses linked to the ministerial work of the black ministry. This is discrimination.

The church never succeeded in paying well her workers. The situation continued to be difficult to date. In 1962 Zedequias Manganhela was elected as Synod Council president. For the first time members of the IPM felt that their church was autonomous but the political situation was very difficult for the IPM and the Roman Catholic Church added more pain by its hatred of protestant churches.

Unfortunately, the election of an African leader itself was not a guarantee that the church was able to take care of her workers. The situation continued to be difficult although some members were becoming conscientious about their responsibility, others opposed them.

Divergence of opinion led to a tentative plan of dividing the IPM. This danger is still there.

For me, Autonomy is independence, work, and responsibility. I can assure you that we worked hard

and we assumed our responsibilities but, in relation to salary, the IPM is not paying, she gives mphamu. This is a humiliation but some of us are responsible for it. This affected our life and especially my children who never understood the reasons that made me to opt for the church. They are angry with the church. To survive, we had to do agriculture and poultry.

To make things, worse members believe that a church worker has to be poor. They believe that a poor worker will be close to God. This theology is false. If not, Jesus would not have said that 'He came so that all may have abundant life'. I understand the term abundant as meaning that we have right to live, to be healthy, to profess a religion in this case, a Christian faith, to obey God and to have access to economic benefits. Members hardly understand that 'we are human beings with needs'.

Members need us for multiple functions, but the idea that was inculcated on them that 'getting low stipends is half way to heaven' and that 'we are nothing more than missionaries' helpers prevents them from challenging the tradition of paying low stipends. There is also the problem of vassalage that prevents young ministers to oppose odd ideas.

The other problem that affected the work of the Swiss Mission and continued to affect the IPM is the application of ecclesial discipline. It was done in a dehumanized way. Many abandoned the church, because they felt terribly punished and humiliated. There was no space for love and forgiveness.

The assassination of Manganhela in 1972 was a terrible knockdown. It was not easy to find his successor, because no one was prepared for that responsibility. We ignore the contents of the Conventions. To make things worse in a short period of time, they abandoned the IPM when she most needed them. Their attitude shadowed all the work they did for years and it forced us to question the meaning of Communion in Jesus.

The IPM must do efforts in order of bringing workers together by multiplying workshops to deal with sensitive ministerial and theological issues that can revitalize calling and the will of serving the church. She must also begin to offer high training in theology, ethics, and other disciplines; she must improve personnel and financial management. This will make members to be committed and to be willing to contribute for the welfare of the IPM.

We need to forgive Swiss missionaries and to invite them to work with the IPM on an equal basis. Retired ministers can be invited to work for short periods according to their health and availability (Mazenzule 04/02/2010).

Case Study 2

Edgar is a minister who had worked for the IPM since 1970. He is aged 62, and is married with five children. He has worked in the three regions of the country, that is, in the north where he began his ministry, following by a period working in the center, before he moved to work in the south. He shared his opinion regarding his relationship with the IPM and his experience of Autonomy in the following way:

Miracles are happening within the IPM. The first miracle is the raising of people with vocation to serve the church, although widely known that a church worker lives miserably, especially within the IPM!

When members chose to remain with the church in 1948 they did not know that were choosing the hell. The neglect, in which church workers were subjected, made members to conclude that the profession of a minister is for poor and abject people. Many church workers were rejected by women whom they wanted to marry because of their poverty. A woman told me, *'I don't want to lose my nails by washing your clothes; I know that you don't have money to buy soap'*. This woman was telling me that everybody knew that a minister's salary is insignificant. Therefore she did not want to be prevented from living in dignity and from accessing social privileges.

The second miracle is a paradox because the same poor ministers have prestige and are seen as people of God. They do not have economic power, but they have spiritual power. I think that this is what makes the minister to accept to be humiliated.

The mentality inculcated on members that a church worker has to be poor is still very strong even among ministers themselves. Many of us survive because we are very dedicated to agriculture.

While preparing the church for Autonomy, the Swiss Mission forgot to teach members how to give generously. The situation did not improve after the declaration of Autonomy. For many years, we were walking in a small tunnel which handicapped our spine. Now we need to do physiotherapy in order to begin walking well.

One of the biggest problems that the IPM has to resolve is linked to ecclesial discipline. It was transformed in an activity of hunting witches.

Swiss missionaries started to fight with each other. Maybe some were attached to colonialism and passed their ideas and problems to Africans. We still have to ask them money in order to survive. How did they leave us such a legacy?

We discovered that Swiss missionaries were not holy people. This helps us to love them. We need them to teach us better ways of organizing the church, theology and other practical issues. We need them to work with us in equal basis (Edgar 22/04/2010)

4. 1 3 Selecting key issues revealed by case studies

The author chose to select relevant issues that had been revealed by the two case studies in parallel. She did so by addressing the four aims that the research study had indicated in chapter one. She selected the issues by clearly indicating which Co-researcher had provided each insight.

About Autonomy	Mazenzule: Independence, work, and responsibility. Members not prepared; an imposition difficult to enjoy. The term 'Swiss Mission' affects identity of the IPM and favor dependency. Edgar: Hard legacy. IPM sent to hell; Financially dependent
About the payment of low stipends	Mazenzule: No salary within the IPM. Stipends humiliation. Survival based on agriculture and poultry. Children hate the church. Belief on theology of self denial. Vassalage and the culture of god father/ god sons Edgar: Mentality that church workers have to be poor. Workers gave up fighting for their rights. Handicapped spine. Survival based on agriculture. Search for better employment in prejudice of the IPM
About empowerment	Mazenzule: Workshops; high levels of training in theology and administration Edgar: Workshops; diversified fields of training
About Pastoral Care	Mazenzule: Discriminatory; Forgiveness and reconciliation; short contracts for retired ministers Edgar: Reconciliation and forgiveness

4.1.4 Commenting on issues revealed by the Case Studies

The case studies show that Autonomy is perceived in very differently the two ministers. While Mazenzule perceived it as involving responsibility and hard work, whilst being an imposition, he recognizes that members had not been well-prepared, which might have minimized the burden felt. Edgar, however, perceives it as being a hard legacy that

members of the IPM never enjoyed. The two interpretations show how contentious the issue is, through the very tension that is provoked by the way Autonomy is perceived. For the author, this reveals the possibility of approaching the two groups and working with them to heal the wounds that are obvious.

The two ministers confirm that IPM workers receive low stipends, and that this practice is harmful. They also recognize the need for empowerment and reconciliation. This will be explored further in the following chapter.

4.1.5 Presenting data revealed by the questionnaire

Which are the reasons that caused the IPM to pay low stipends to her workers?	<p>Otoniel: Members are not financially contributing. They hold a belief that a church worker has to be poor</p> <p>Telma: Why are ministers not teaching members to love the church?</p>
How do you feel about this practice?	<p>Veronica: Abused and powerless. I also feel angry because the IPM is silent</p> <p>Antonio: Workers are not respected or loved.</p> <p>Valter: Our rights violated and abused; this is crime</p>
How is the IPM addressing the problem of low stipends?	<p>Telma: The IPM is accommodated, waiting for a miracle</p> <p>Valter: Almost nothing. The opponents are very strong</p>
Why the IPM did encounter barriers?	<p>Telma: Leadership not prepared to face obstacles</p> <p>Otoniel: Fighting along different generations of the Swiss and IPM leadership; Colonialism</p>
Why are church workers serving in other institutions?	<p>Otoniel: Lack of regulations</p> <p>Veronica: The situation drove them out</p>



<p>How is the IPM and members interpreting this practice?</p>	<p>Otoniel: As very bad and prejudicial to both the worker and to the church</p> <p>Valter: Prejudicial; no Bible studies; ascent of the number of unpaid ministers; chaos to the financial administration of the church.</p> <p>Telma: The church has to create clear policies in order to prevent frictions and to reduce bad impact created by the absence of the minister in the parish</p>
<p>What needs to be done so that workers felt valued and important?</p>	<p>Telma: Talk openly with them, have a word of appreciation or acknowledgment and to introduce honorable mentions</p> <p>Antonio: There is a need to value individual and collective efforts. Pay good stipends; Pay subsidies for each particular responsibility in the church</p> <p>Veronica: They have to be given salary according to their qualifications and time involved with the church</p> <p>Otoniel: Issues that threaten life have to be discussed openly; The Synod Council has to present changes through concrete proposals based on evidence</p>
<p>What is Autonomy?</p>	<p>Otoniel: Autonomy is independence; liberty to chose our leaders</p> <p>Albino: Autonomy means maturity, hard work, transparency, responsibility and liberty to make own decisions</p>
<p>What is Autonomy of the IPM for you?</p>	<p>Antonio: Autonomy is for some people.</p> <p>Valter: Is the process that sends church workers to darkness. Ministers and evangelists lost all former privileges</p>



	<p>Veronica: It is the liberty of choosing our own leaders; it is breastfeeding stop</p>
How is the IPM experiencing / living her autonomy?	<p>Antonio: How can you say that the IPM is autonomous? Where is the liberty of choosing our own future? The IPM is experiencing Autonomy as bad; people are not happy</p> <p>Veronica: The IPM is learning to swim by swimming; the experience is difficult, but it dignifies the IPM</p> <p>Telma: Why did the IPM not want to be autonomous?</p>
Why do you say that the IPM is not enjoying her Autonomy?	<p>Valter: Autonomy highlighted discrimination prevailing in the church. People are fighting, instead of building the church;</p> <p>Otoniel: The IPM became autonomous while still at an infant age</p> <p>Telma: The IPM leadership was not properly prepared to take the lead</p> <p>Veronica: The IPM believed that Swiss missionaries would continue working with them side-by-side. Their withdrawal affected the church</p>
How did the SM prepare Africans for Autonomy?	<p>Otoniel: Theological training of ministers intensified since the last period of the 1950's. Attention was also given to the training of youth leaders. Women were also involved in the trainings at Ricatla United Seminary where their husbands were studying. Lay people were trained at Antioca</p> <p>Telma: Why did Swiss missionaries chose some workers, in detriment of others, in their preparation for Autonomy?</p>



	<p>Antonio: Different kinds of training and education were offered; The IPM was involved with ecumenism; A Presbyterian system was structured, but members were not taught how to financially contribute to the mission of the church. The preparation was not adequate</p> <p>Veronica: There was no preparation; they did not teach how to give money to the church</p> <p>Valter: We were trained in theology and in agriculture. I do not know if before 1948 other kind of trainings were available.</p> <p>Todd: Did the training of clergy and laity not remain a priority for the IPM, in partnership with the Swiss Churches (DM)?</p>
How were members of the IPM involved in this preparation?	<p>Otoniel: Discussions were done in privacy</p> <p>Humberto: SM asked leaders of the IPM to choose among hospitals, schools and the church; the IPM chose to lead the church. This choice led the church to the unknown.</p> <p>Valter: Only a minority were involved in the discussions</p> <p>Telma: The IPM never succeeded in paying her workers, because the involvement was weak</p>
Did the IPM encounter obstacles in her way toward Autonomy? Which?	<p>Telma: Swiss missionaries were fighting. Africans were affected. Colonialism added pain</p> <p>Valter: The political environment in which the Autonomy of the IPM was developed was not favorable</p> <p>Otoniel: Church members were imprisoned and assassinated by the colonial regime. Church goods (immovable) were nationalised after the independence of the country.</p>



<p>Is the Autonomy of the IPM dream or reality?</p>	<p>Otoniel: It is a reality but still walking toward it</p> <p>Valter: The handing over did not take place. For many members, the church still belongs to the Swiss Mission</p> <p>Humberto: IPM is self-governing, self-propagating, but she is not yet self-financing. Autonomy is still a dream that has to be conquered</p>
<p>How is the IPM handling / caring for her Autonomy?</p>	<p>Otoniel: The contents of the 1962 and 1970 Conventions were accessible to selected people. Ministers do not know then what makes it difficult to know how to lead the IPM.</p> <p>Humberto: The Portuguese colonial system did not allow the IPM to develop. After independence of the country in 1975, the Marxist regime discriminated against the church</p> <p>Antonio: We promote speeches that reinforce our responsibilities. Tithes were introduced and some parishes are doing well. This reinforces self-esteem</p> <p>Veronica: The IPM is handing her Autonomy in the midst of tremendous difficulties and dissatisfaction of members. Members are not happy with the way ministers administrate the church, namely personnel, money, and infra structures</p> <p>Otoniel: The IPM hardly assumes that the future of the church is in her hands.</p>
<p>What means leadership empowerment for you?</p>	<p>Valter: Specialisation in key areas of leadership and theology;</p> <p>Veronica: Better and diversified kind of training; thematic workshops</p> <p>Otoniel: Accompaniment of ministers in their journey of pasturing the flock</p>

How can it be introduced within the IPM	Telma: Discussing openly the needs of the IPM in this regard. Show trust
What is Pastoral Care Ministry for you?	<p>Otoniel: Sensitivity to workers problems and accompaniment in their struggles</p> <p>Veronica: Forgiveness and reconciliation</p> <p>Valter: Is the way those in leadership respond to the problems and difficulties faced by workers and members</p>
Does it exists or works within the IPM?	<p>Telma: It is done in discriminatory bases</p> <p>Otoniel: The IPM cares for her members, but this care is not efficient</p>
How can it be improved or introduced?	<p>Otoniel: IPM has to engage in contextual theology;</p> <p>Telma: Encourage those who speak out to continue denouncing injustices</p> <p>Antonio: Ministers and evangelists councils have to discuss issues denying their rights openly</p> <p>Valter: Teach members to know who is a minister and his duties and rights Are</p>
How to care for retired ministers?	<p>Otoniel: The IPM has to offer new opportunities to retired ministers; Has to show care, respect, and consideration</p> <p>Telma: Retired ministers are our libraries and the IPM must care for and use them well</p>

4.1.6 Selecting key issues revealed by Co-researches through the questionnaire

About Autonomy	<p>Independence; liberty; maturity; hard work; transparency;</p> <p>Autonomy caused regress</p> <p>Experienced as bad; tremendous difficulties</p> <p>IPM did not want Autonomy</p> <p>The preparation was discriminatory and weak; actors fighting; immature members</p>
About the payment of low stipends	<p>Theology and belief, neglect in teaching; weak financial contributions.</p> <p>Abuse; powerlessness; anger; shame.</p> <p>Lack of regulations; Prejudices for the IPM</p> <p>Good stipends and subsidies; respect and love</p>
About empowerment	<p>Specialized training; thematic workshops; ministerial accompaniment; Sensitivity; open discussions; contextual theology; encouragement, respect of personal gifts</p>
About Pastoral Care	<p>Forgiveness and reconciliation; consideration and new opportunities; solidarity</p>

4.1.6 Commenting on issues revealed by the questionnaire

Responses to the questionnaire show that there is other ways to interpret Autonomy. Some affirmed that it caused regression within the system; others felt that members were still immature, while other mentioned their belief that Africans did not want Autonomy. The last affirmation calls the author's attention, as it may reveal the existence of phenomena that need further investigation.

It relation to the practice of paying low stipends, all co-researchers confirmed its existence. They differ, however, in their understanding as to the reasons behind

the practice.

Empowerment and Pastoral Care were viewed as being both necessary and urgent.

4.1.7 Presenting data collected in workshops

About Autonomy	Independence; responsibility; hard work; liberty; breastfeeding stop Incomplete; not functional; history of the IPM unknown; need for clear criteria for a minister's replacement; need for an agenda for a minister's training post
About the payment of low stipends	Very bad practice; abuse of power; workers responsible for its maintenance; fear of changes; dependency; ministers' negligence
About empowerment	More than a decade without any workshop being held; Thematic workshops; Invitation of guest speakers; short period courses; individual and collective ministry accompaniment; creation of guest houses; creation of libraries
About Pastoral Care	Need for specialized people and committees; create means to support workers after their retirement; offer short-term but renewable contracts; forgiveness and reconciliation; stop blaming the Swiss Mission; guidelines on pastoral conduct; social security

4.1.8 Selecting key issues revealed in workshops

About Autonomy	Incomplete; not functional; history of the IPM unknown; clear set of criteria for minister's replacement; need for an agenda for a minister's training post
About the payment of low stipends	Abuse of power; workers are responsible; fear of changes; dependency

About empowerment	Invitation of outsiders; short-term courses; individual and collective ministry accompaniment
About Pastoral Care	Specialized people and committees; support of workers after their retirement; stop blaming Swiss Mission

4.1.9 Commenting on issues revealed in workshops

Workshops accomplished a great deal in terms of divulging some of the reasons that make Autonomy of the IPM a point of concern. They mentioned ignorance of history, in other words, ministers who hold different positions of leadership seem to be rowing while being partially or completely oblivious to the behaviour of the river. This leads to the second interpretation of Autonomy, which concerns the absence of a clearly defined set of criteria for ministers' replacements, the absence of an agenda or program for ministers' training post, and the existence of godfathers and godsons.

The above revelations favour the abuse of power that impedes workers to stand up for their rights and for justice; and hence learn to be submissive and accept low stipends. The workers essentially are disempowered through this process.

It was interesting to note that the co-researchers mentioned that workers are guilty, because they are simultaneously silent and rebellious. Their attitude thus both provokes and maintains dependency.

Workshops also reinforced the critical need for empowerment and Pastoral Care Ministry.

4.2 Selecting key issues that affect the Autonomy of the IPM

Generally mentioned	Less mentioned	Exclusive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not favorable environment • Private discussions • Perceived as bad • Discrimination • Fighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of teaching about tithes • Dependency • Imprisonment and assassination of members and leaders • Nationalization of infrastructures • Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The term Swiss Mission • Members did not want Autonomy • Withdrawal of the Swiss Mission • History not known • No ceremony of handing over • No criterions for ministers' replacement • Absence of agenda for ministers' training post

4.2.1 Selecting key issues that maintain the practice of paying low stipends

Generally mentioned	Less mentioned	Exclusive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theology • Belief • Abuse • Powerlessness • Strong opposition • Weak training • Anger • Fear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Godfathers and godsons • No ownership • Absence of policy on salary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The culture of vassalage • Colonialism • Negligence

4.2.2 Selecting key issues that can empower the IPM

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic workshops • Training in theology, leadership and administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialization in theology • Ministers' accompaniment • Contextual theology • Encouragement • Sensitivity • Experience sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest houses • Honourable mentions • Libraries • Open discussions
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4.2.3 Selecting key issues that can promote Pastoral Care Ministry

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forgiveness and reconciliation • Short-term contracts for retired ministers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop blames against Swiss' people • Invite Swiss' people to work in Mozambique as equal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solidarity • Specialized people and committees
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4.2.4 Commentary on Key Issues Revealed by the Data

The data collection provided insight into how members of the IPM interpret and perceive the Autonomy of their church. It also showed that the practice of paying low stipends is a reality; one that the members believe has to be challenged and transformed.

The issues listed above are all important for the IPM and her members. However, in order to be able to address matters in order of priority, the author decided to divide these issues in three categories. These categories are:

- Issues generally mentioned
- Issues less mentioned and
- Exclusive issues

The author believes that by dividing the issues into these categories, it will avoid generalization and allow the discussion to be more practical and resource-based (Mason 2006). She also believes that the three categories will help her make convincing arguments, as Mason affirms that:

Making an argument is the construction of a perspective, an interpretation, or a line of reasoning or analyses and, significantly, it requires this to be a relational process, in which the researcher is continually thinking about and engaging with those to whom the argument is being made as well as the grounds on which they think the argument stands (Mason 2006: 173).

The author understands the above as meaning that her arguments have to show the relationship between what is said, what is written and what is happening (as the reality experienced by real people). Then, she had to show how she articulated her understanding of this relationship in order to bring about new understanding of the reality that promotes liberty.

4.3 Conclusion

Chapter four was dedicated to the process of data collection. This process is considered to be qualitative in nature, because it enables the author “to explore the social world in an attempt of accessing and understanding the unique ways that individuals and communities inhabit it” (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 29).

The author explored the social world in which the IPM lived and experienced her Autonomy during fifty year. The author did so by asking the question:

Is the IPM’s Autonomy a dream or reality?

The readers can easily understand that the answer to this question could, in any way, be given promptly, which could feasibly only provide a very superficial understanding of the situation. In order to combat this, the author implemented case studies, questionnaires, and responses from workshops, in order to arrive at a multilayered understanding that would allow her to present a reasonable, insightful response.

Chapter five will open up a new way of carrying responsibility among the IPM members. This section will deal with theology of liberation which needs to be applied in pastoral care in order to change the current mindset of dependency