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THE SIGNIFICANT ROLE OF THE ASIA PACIFIC THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AND MISSIONARY TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR EQUIPPING THE ASIAN CHURCH FOR MISSIONS

By Julie Ma

Introduction

The seminary was established in 1964 by the Division of Foreign Missions of the (US) Assemblies of God under the name of Far East Advanced School of Theology (FEAST). The founding president was Harold Kohl. In 1989 the name was changed to Asia Pacific Theological Seminary (APTS) to better demonstrate the nature of the institution. This school has had a clear regional intent as its mission: "The goal of APTS is to provide advanced leadership training and equip Pentecostal and Charismatic ministers for the Asia Pacific region. APTS offers academically sound educational programs that are sensitive to the cultural issues and needs of the Asia Pacific region while providing opportunities for students to learn through hands-on ministry experiences."[1] Specifically, the school provides training and learning opportunities to produce missionaries, theologians, educators and pastoral leaders. The students come from a variety of Asian countries and beyond. Often the student body is represented by North America (often missionaries working in Asia), European countries and also African nations.

In 1996, the school set up an M.A. program in missions, and it was gradually developed into a missions concentration in the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) and the Master of Theology (M.Th.) programs. It became a wonderful place for those who were interested in missions and preparing for missionary work. As I was the first faculty member with a missiology degree, I remember many who took the missions

[1] http://www.apts.edu/#, accessed 2007.

program in order to go to the mission field. They are still working faithfully in different Asian countries.

Also an intensive 12-week missionary training program was launched. The Missionary Training Institute (MTI) became a regular summer program on the APTS campus for Asians with a missionary calling. MTI plays an important role in heightening missionary awareness and for equipping candidates for missionary work. I recall a summer when I took MTI participants to nearby mountain areas for actual encounters with different cultures through language learning, cultural adaptation and cross-cultural communication of the gospel. Such hands-on experiences further encouraged them to explore various aspects of cross-cultural living and ministry.

In this study, I will sample those graduates who received training at APTS and have actively been working in mission fields. This will illustrate the impact of the school through its missions programs. Also, I will present the significant role of MTI for training missions leaders, lay workers and church leaders in the Philippines and throughout Asia. Lastly, a modest assessment will be made of the role and influences of both formal and informal missions programs.

Where do I fit in this study? My husband, Wonsuk, and I, were Korean Assemblies of God missionaries to the Philippines. Initially we studied at FEAST in the early 1980s. When we returned from our Ph.D. studies at Fuller University in 1996, I joined the faculty of APTS. Until I left for Oxford in 2006, I led the Missions Department of the seminary.

Missions Programs at APTS

Major missions courses offered since the inception of the missions degree programs at the seminary are Biblical Theology of Missions, Perspectives in World Missions, Applied Missionary Cultural Anthropology, Cross-Cultural Communication, Seminar in Asian Mission, Contextualization, Folk Religion, Signs and Wonders in Mission, History in Mission and others. Although it was a new undertaking, enrolment in the program steadily increased over the years. Most of these courses have effectively incorporated both theoretical and experiential aspects. The missions faculty, which also increased over the years, came with academic credentials and practical missionary experiences. For example, my teaching, as a rule, brings my own experience as a Korean missionary, and also my own mission engagement among tribal groups in the northern Philippines. I also took

my students to mountain tribal churches for Sunday ministries. In this way, the students had an opportunity to experience various issues in cross-cultural ministry. I also provided the students with opportunities to be involved in particular ministries, such as evangelism and medicine distribution over the weekend. I believe these experiences helped them to process their readings and class learning in a real life setting.

As a member institution of the Asia Graduate School of Theology, an evangelical post-graduate consortium in the Philippines, APTS has also been involved in the doctoral level of work in missions studies. According to the alumni list of missions studies, diversity is evident in national and cultural orientation. It includes many Asians, some North Americans, a few Brits and Australians, and a few Africans.

Missions Work of Selected People

It may be helpful to share some graduates' missionary work to illustrate the impact of the programs. Due to limited space, I have selected only five who have been actively working in cross-cultural mission settings.

Dave Johnson

Dave Johnson has been an American Assemblies of God missionary the Philippines for many years. He presently serves on the faculty of APTS. In 1995, after he had been a missionary to the Philippines for about a year, he took a course, Pentecostalism in an Animistic Context taught by Kevin Hovey, an Australian missionary. In this course, Johnson learned that spiritual power was the focus of animistic practices, and that Pentecostalism, with its focus on signs and wonders, was effective in delivering and demonstrating the good news of Jesus Christ in such contexts.

About a year later, Johnson signed up to write a master's thesis in preparation for eventual doctoral studies. This required him to take Theological Research Methods II, for which he needed to be on campus part-time. Dr. John Carter was his professor, and he was Carter's only student. While the course was excellent, the best thing that ever happened to him at APTS occurred during this time when he met and fell in love with Debbie Langley, the English teacher, and

married her the following year! Missions studies can bring surprises into our lives!

I supervised his thesis. My own Ph.D. research was the encounter of a tribal culture with Pentecostal Christianity in the northern Philippines. Johnson's research was on the witchcraft practices of the Waray people in the Leyte/Samar region of the Philippines. He was challenged to look at the phenomenon from various perspectives. Due to space limitation of the thesis, his research had to limit itself to a preliminary study of the practices, leaving implications for the contextualization of the gospel to his future research. Soon after his study at APTS, he enrolled in the Doctor of Missiology (D.Miss.) program of Asia Graduate School of Theology. I again served as his dissertation supervisor. My expectation for his research was quite high. I demanded him to apply various disciplines in the analysis of the witchcraft practices and deep theological reflection on Pentecostal beliefs. Due to my own vested interest in the topic, I demanded rigor and thoroughness in treating field data, resulting in a very high standard of research.

The benefit of this research for his ministry has been immeasurable. First, he became much more effective in his preaching and helping Filipinos to understand and experience the total transformation that only Jesus can offer, setting them free from the bondage of idolatry, witchcraft and divination practices. In short, Johnson became a better missionary. Second, several years ago he published *Truth or Tradition* as a cell group/Bible study resource on the biblical response to these issues, and this has been well received. More recently, he published his dissertation under the title *Theology in Context: A Case Study in the Philippines* (APTS Press, 2013, www.apts.edu), which will make the material available to a wider audience.

All of these educational advances contributed to his receiving an invitation from the APTS leadership to join its faculty and also to serve as the managing editor of the *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* and the director of APTS Press. This opens doors for him to expand the sphere of his influence to the wider Pentecostal movement throughout the Asia and Pacific region. Johnson gives his gratitude to God for the opportunity to obtain missiological knowledge through APTS.[2]

[2] Dave Johnson, email to the author, 21 February 2013.

Jonathan Libag

Jonathan Libag, a Filipino minister, studied for his M.A. in Missions at APTS from June 2000 to March 2001. Through the course of his study, he was challenged to seriously consider a missionary career. He initially started his international missions work in October 2001 when he went to Nepal for the first time. This opportunity came about by surprise when four mission organizations in the Philippines, Youth With A Mission (YWAM), Asia Missions Network (AMNET), Asia Centre for Missions (ACM), and China Missions (CM) partnered together and formed a specialized group called Hindu Working Group (HWG). The new initiative was looking for an agriculture technician or trainer to set up an agriculture project in Nepal and to provide training among local pastors and church leaders.

When Libag responded to the call for missions, he had the desire that God would use his profession as an agriculturist in missions. Immediately upon hearing about HWG, he contacted its chairman, joined one of their meetings in Makati and told them about his interest in partnership with them. His first journey to Nepal was made possible when Wonsuk Ma, Academic Dean of APTS, helped him to raise sufficient funds for an eight-month stay in Nepal.

In Nepal, his initial mission work was setting up a training center in a children's home called Hope Nepal. He assisted Hope Nepal to secure their daily food requirements while training local trainers. Soon, United Vision Nepal embraced the program and began to train church leaders in Nepal. The project at the children's home has been visited by other mission organizations. Doors were also opened for them to train hundreds of church leaders in India, Thailand, Indonesia, Myanmar, China and Cambodia and pastors from Vietnam, Bhutan and Laos.

Libag further developed his mission work in teaching and training local pastors, church leaders and farmers, especially in rural communities, with basic farming techniques. It is called FAITH Gardening. FAITH stands for "food always in the home." It is to maximize a small piece of land to supply vegetables and other produce to augment the food requirements of the family.

He soon began to teach a more advanced technology called Natural Farming – also called Korean Natural Farming System (KNFS). Through this program, farmers learn the importance of beneficial or useful microorganisms for farming. This technique has been used and proven for a large scale or big farm by making their own

liquid solutions to spray as fertilizers and pest control agents. Since it is a homemade solution from biodegradable materials and is available in most places locally, farmers have fewer expenses for farm supplies, thus more profit.

It is very common for some non-believers to participate in the farming training. As training involves teaching and demonstrating to the participants how to communicate the gospel through farming, at the end the trainer asks if anyone wants to accept Christ as their Savoir. Usually several people respond positively to this invitation. Libag recalls one of his trips to India, where at the end of the training, two ladies among the participants accepted Jesus Christ and were baptized in the evening. Libag makes follow-up visitations among the participants. During such visits, he hears many testimonies of how the garden or farm is used in bringing people to Christ. He continually travels through different Asian countries to continue this mission work.[3] Out of his agricultural experiences, Libag is now doing a Ph.D. study at Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, UK.

Denise Ross

Irish by birth, Denise came to APTS as part of her missionary career. Her study at APTS provided a unique exposure to diverse cultures. Class discussions were lively with various cultural backgrounds and experiences interacting with one another over contemporary missiological concerns. Ross started her MA in Missions in September 2003 and completed it in 2005. In conjunction with learning missions strategy at APTS, students, including herself, participated in regular missions endeavors in a variety of contexts outside the classroom.

As a nurse, Ross also joined a team of monthly medical outreaches in the areas surrounding Baguio. Typically an evangelistic message was presented, followed by prayerful counselling, a medical check-up and a prescription for free medicine from a mobile pharmacy. Students volunteered in several capacities: some entertained the children, others prayed, and those with medical expertise ministered using their professional qualifications.

[3] Jonathan Libag, email to the author, 20 March 2013.

As part of her required fieldwork, she joined a church planting team in Gumatdang[4] a sizeable tribal mining village near Baguio City. She participated in teaching, preaching and house visitations. She recounts her participation in a village festival to build a positive relationship with the local community. She was invited to perform an Irish dance, and they in turn taught her their traditional dances, much to the amusement of onlookers! Even though translation was required for effective communication, leadership training was one of the most rewarding experiences as new believers' eyes lit up as they began to grasp simple biblical truths in their development as future leaders. They received teaching on the Holy Spirit, and she had the honor of praying with them to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Ross and her team regularly visited unbelievers' homes to discuss biblical topics. New believers were proud to disclose that they relayed to others the same Bible study lessons they learned the previous night. It seemed like the whole community was growing in their knowledge of Christ.

Since graduation from APTS, Ross has returned to Ireland and taught missions courses in a Bible college. She was part of a church planting team that planted an Assemblies of God church in the local vicinity. She also had the privilege of returning to lecture at APTS and in a Bible college in the Shan state in Myanmar. She is presently undertaking Ph.D. studies at Birmingham University, UK, but she has never forgotten the contribution that APTS programs made to her missionary formation. She is part of a prayer ministry and a missions committee in a local church, and she has joined a weekly outreach to international students hosted by Friends International. Last summer Ross participated in an outreach to Muslims in Oxford and is planning a similar missions outreach this year.[5]

Wonsik and Inkyung Woo

Wonsik Woo and his wife Inkyung, Korean Pentecostals, completed their MA in Missions at APTS in 2005. Upon the completion of their studies, the Woos were immediately appointed by his home church, Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, Korea, as missionaries to the Philippines. He strongly felt during his prayer time that God was leading him and his family to Mindanao, Philippines.

[4] Gumatdang is a village of the Ibaloi tribe. A large-scale gold mine was in operation for years, and this changed the demography of the community significantly. The mine is now closed.

[5] The information was provided by Denise Ross through her email, 6 March 2013.

Following the assurance he received in his prayer time, he and his family landed in Mindanao, the southern major island of the country, in September 2006. After they settled in, he contemplated on the specific geographical area of his future ministry. This thought led him to establish Mindanao Full Gospel Church (MFGC) near the dump site in the district of Calmen, Zayas in Cagayan de Oro. The majority of his church members were in dire poverty, struggling for daily survival. Most of them had never received formal education, which in turn afforded them much less opportunity for any decent job.

Woo felt it very important to preach the message of hope that his senior pastor, Yonggi Cho, frequently preached. He was amazed at the effect of the power of the gospel as the members were challenged to put their hope in Christ. Many experienced improvement in their finances. The church grew in number, and within six years, its membership reached 200. However, many members in his church were single mothers, widows and from broken families. Through the transforming power of the gospel, they not only experienced financial improvement but also the healing grace of God in their wounded hearts and bodies. As their faith grew, Woo challenged them to consider engaging in missions to the world with a message of God's hope and salvation.

Out of necessity, he started a missionary training center called Mount Moriah, which functions as a Bible school where the trainees learn Bible subjects. There are thirteen students at present, and the school has been recognized as the district Bible school of the General Council of the Philippines Assemblies of God. He often praises God for his senior pastor, David Yonggi Cho, who has been his mentor. He not only preached on missions, but also sent out many missionaries to different parts of the world.

During the time of Woo's study at APTS, he had wide missions experiences, out of which he became deeply convinced of God's special love for the Filipinos. The Woos adopted Filipino culture and its practices with a great deal of openness. They also refer to several missionaries as their models for a deep interaction and partnership with the local people. Woo expressed that if God gave him another life, he would be willing to be a missionary in Mindanao. He and his wife have indeed committed to God's mission through serving the people in Mindanao.[6]

[6] Wonsik Woo, email to the author, 8 March 2013.

Noriyuki Miyake

Noriyuki Miyake, a Japanese Pentecostal minister, completed his Th.M. in Missiology in 2006 at APTS. While Miyake was studying at APTS, he was involved in missions work, such as speaking at various local churches and other works in Baguio city. He met Japanese-Filipino couples in the city and learned that unbelieving Japanese husbands sometimes caused conflicts in their marriage relationships. Miyake prayed for husbands to come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

One of the most valuable lessons that he learned and experienced at APTS was through its international community. He loved the chapel services where students from over twenty different countries worshipped God together. He felt it a foretaste of what Revelation 7:9 speaks about: "After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb." The students from different nations worshipping together in unity could be a partial reflection of what the above scripture noted.

After completing his M.Div. study at APTS in 2004, he returned to Japan and became involved in pastoral work. During this period, both he and his wife, Chikako, had a passion for reaching out to internationals in Japan and soon started an international service in his church. This congregation consists of diverse ethnic groups, such as Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese, Filipino, American and Nepali. There are several inter-married couples, such as Japanese-Korean and Japanese-Filipino. Every Sunday, the Miyakes have been running the Japanese service in the morning and the international (English) service in the afternoon. The English service also opens the door so any Japanese can join the international congregation. Their chapel experience at APTS of worshipping together with many different ethnic groups inspired and enabled them to launch this international ministry. It has made their church more intentionally missional to reach out to various ethnic groups. Families of inter-marriages are always seeking an English speaking service for the sake of their children, who often do not speak or understand their parental languages. At present, quite a number of Japanese husbands do not attend the church service, thus the Miyakes have a great burden for them.

Although they are not formally recognized or commissioned as cross-cultural missionaries, the Miyakes believe what they have been doing is an important part of God's mission. Currently Noriyuki is

engaged in a Ph.D. study at Oxford Centre for Mission Studies in Oxford, UK.[7]

One can conclude that setting up the missions program at APTS was a marvellous idea in terms of providing an opportunity for local and diverse ethnic people to study missions, and further to commit to the mission of God. The graduates have been involved in significant and fruitful missions work in various places. It has been observed that other seminaries in the Philippines followed the example of APTS in setting up missions programs at various levels. My desire is that the missions program at APTS continues to make an impact on the students and to empower them to commit to God's mission work.

Missionary Training Institute

The mission statement of Asia Pacific Center for the Advancement of Leadership and Missions (APCALM) includes an intention of partnership with Asia Pacific churches, mission agencies and international ministries to train, develop and empower missionaries and church leaders for effective twenty-first century ministry. The objectives of APCALM clearly indicate an intentional training of missionary candidates for missions: 1) "to develop and implement training programs for the preparation of missionaries to minister among under-evangelized religious and people groups;" 2) "to develop and implement in-service programs of leadership and missions education for those already in ministry;" and 3) "to advance the development of missiological and leadership strategies and approaches based on Pentecostal theology and practice with emphasis on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit."[8] Missionary Training Institute (MTI) is one of several programs of APCALM to fulfill its mission statement.

Data Analysis for Six Years (2007-2012)

Due to the limited space of this paper, I have chosen only the last six years (2007-2012) of the MTI sessions. A typical MTI program lasts for six weeks, although it was originally eight weeks when it started in 1997. The reason for this reduction is uncertain. I suspect that the organizers concluded that a six-week training program was sufficient to gain basic mission knowledge and exposure. A financial concern may have played a role in this decision as the program had to

[7] Noriyuki Miyake, email to the author, 3 April 2013.
[8] Barbara dela Cruz, email to the author, 24 April 2013.

be substantially subsidized for Asian mission organizations and their mission candidates, in addition to the high administrative costs. Upon request, trainees from Assemblies of God churches are given a seventy-five percent subsidy, and for non-AG participants a fifty subsidy is given for the entire expense. It is stated that during the six-week period, two missions courses are offered each day for two hours for each course. Therefore, it is a total of ten hours per week for each course. There is an additional two hours of Personal Development Workshops per week.[9]

Analyses of the participants of MTI in the previous six years include gender, nationalities, denominational affiliations, and others. They are presented by year.[10] A brief observation is offered after each table/year.

Year 2007

Gender		Countries		Church Affiliations		Works/Ministries	
Male	14	Philippines	5	Assemblies of God	20	Pastor	6
Female	14	Korea	11	Methodist	2	Student	5
		American Samoa	3	Presbyterian	1	Teacher	4
		USA	1	Baptist	1	Missionary	4
		Thailand	1	Guiding Light	1	The Rest	9
		Australia	1	No Denomination	3		
		Mongolia	2				
		Pakistan	1				
		Indonesia	2				
		India (Nagaland)	1				

[9] Barbara dela Cruz, email to the author, 26 February 2013.
[10] dela Cruz, 26 February 2013.

The category of gender shows that both males and females are equal in number. The table displays that many trainees are from diverse Asian countries. The highest number of the trainees come from Korea, and the second highest is from the Philippines, followed by American Samoa and Mongolia. It is encouraging that various church groups joined in this year. It implies that the MTI program has been broadly recognized across Asian countries and beyond and throughout church bodies.

Year 2008

Gender		Countries		Church Affiliations		Works/Ministries	
Male	16	Philippines	12	Assemblies of God	19	Pastor	2
Female	10	Korea	3	Living Way Gospel Ministries	2	Teacher	4
		Japan	2	Methodist	1	Missionary	5
		USA	4	Chinese House Church	1	Student	1
		Australia	3	Bread of Life	1	APTS Graduate	3
		Malaysia	1				

The figures in 2008 show that the number of trainees increased slightly from the previous year. This year, Filipino trainees are more than Korean trainees. There were two Japanese trainees in 2008, which is considered an encouraging sign, indicating the growing interest in missions in general and in MTI specifically. Also trainees from China and Malaysia joined in this year's training program. Also observed is the dominance of the AG with relatively fewer non-AG participants, and diversity in work background.

Year 2009

Gender		Countries		Church Affiliations		Works/Ministries	
Male	12	Philippines	7	Assemblies of God	12	Teacher	2
Female	5	Korea	4	ECCP Bethel Church	1	Pastor	4
		Thailand	2	Baptist	1	Student	3
		Taiwan	1	Bible Truth Ministries	1	The Rest	8
		Nigeria	1	Union Church	1		
		Australia	1	No Denomination	1		
		Mongolia	1				

It is evident that the number of trainees this year is much lower than the previous years, and the number of female trainees is much smaller than that of male. Filipino participants are still leading the pack as in the previous year. This year, Taiwan and Nigeria newly joined. It is always reassuring to see new nations join in the program. This year, the AG participants far outnumbered the rest. Certainly, it is natural to have a high number of AG trainees since the MTI program, as well as the seminary, were established by the Assemblies of God. At the same time, the presence of substantial non-AG churches is also noted.

Year 2010

Gender		Countries		Church Affiliations		Works/Ministries	
Male	15	Philippines	7	Assemblies of God	15	Teacher	3
Female	9	Korea	9	Baptist	3	Pastor	4
		Singapore	3	Presbyterian	2	Student	4
		Taiwan	1	Methodist	1	Missionary	3
		Myanmar	1	No Denomination	3	The Rest	10
		Samoa	1				
		Mongolia	1				

The participants this year increased by seven from the previous year. This year, Korean trainees are more than Filipinos as in 2007. This may suggest that the program has been positively received by Korean churches and mission organizations for missionary training. The number of nationalities present in the program this year remains as widespread as the previous years.

Year 2011

Gender		Countries		Church Affiliations		Works/Ministries	
Male	12	Philippines	3	Assemblies of God	14	Student	4
Female	12	Korea	5	Presbyterian	2	Pastor	3
		Taiwan	2	Taiwan Pentecostal Church	1	Missionary	2
		Japan	1	China House Church	1	Teacher	2
		Hong Kong	1	Zai Dao Church	2	The Rest	13
		China	4	The Church of Hope	1		
		Myanmar	4	Hope Church	2		
		Australia	2	Apostolic Church Cesky Tesin-Agape	1		
		USA	1				
		Czech Republic	1				

This table reveals that the number of trainees remains constant from the previous year. For the second year in a row, Korean participants led the group, slightly higher than the Filipino participants. For the first time, quite a few Myanmar participants joined the program. This is considered a strong positive sign because churches in this Buddhist country need a good missionary training program. Two new countries were added this year: Hong Kong and the Czech Republic. There was only one Chinese trainee in 2008, but for this year, four Chinese trainees participated. Equally noteworthy are two new church bodies added to the already very diverse list of churches represented in the program throughout the years.

Year 2012

Gender		Countries		Church Affiliations		Works/Ministries	
Male	13	Philippines	4	Assemblies of God	14	Pastor	2
Female	5	Korea	1	Methodist	1	Teacher	4
		USA	2	Life Giving Word Mission	1	Student	3
		Indonesia	2	Applegate Christian Fellowship	1	Missionary	1
		Pakistan	2	Chinese Family Church	1	The Rest	8
		Hong Kong	1				
		Myanmar	1				
		China	1				
		Japan	2				
		New Zealand	1				
		Samoa	1				

The number of trainees in 2012 is lower compared to that of 2011. It is also noted that the proportion of female participants is much lower than that of males. The statistics show that there is the largest number of countries present in this year's program than in any other previous year. There was one trainee from Pakistan in 2007, and there are two from the country for this year. The presence of Pakistani trainees was well noticed in the program. Similarly, there was one from New Zealand in 2010 and another this year. This year, out of five church groups, three are new and have never been present on the previous lists. On the other hand, the list of works/ministries throughout the years remains rather constant.

Assessment

In this section, I attempt to make several analytical observations for the missions programs at APTS, including MTI. According to the discussions above, one can note that both have been making valuable contributions to and impact on churches, both the Assemblies of God and other denominations, in Asia and beyond. Both the missions degree programs at APTS and the MTI courses have

provided strategic places for the preparation of missionary candidates and for advancement of missionary engagements.

Missions Degree Programs at APTS

The purpose of the missions degree programs is to train academicians who will teach at Bible colleges and theological seminaries. In fact, training teaching personnel is critical for the future of Christian missions, and this is one major purpose of APTS as the regional seminary. I trust that the growing number of graduates from the missions degree programs will serve as teachers in formal educational settings.

However, to my surprise, quite a number of the graduates, after completing the missions programs, have been serving in mission fields. Obviously, the missions programs have provided an opportunity to increase missions awareness, eventually leading into career missionary service. Often, sharing of the missions professors' missions experiences in the class might have challenged the students to engage in missions. Exposing the students to various cross-cultural missions environments proves to be effective. I took students to nearby communities over the weekends and provided them with opportunities to share the gospel. Such value-added components of a formal course led many to a missionary career.

Therefore, it would be good for APTS to give more attention to the following areas in operating the missions programs: 1) recruiting qualified missions faculty members, both academically and ministerially is vital; 2) offering courses that are relevant to social-cultural changes, and; 3) drawing more students from different parts of the world. Often theological institutions tend to put their priority more on theology programs, and there is undoubtedly a great need for proper theological training. However, an ideal model of theological education is a balanced combination between theological and missional components. In this way, theology leads to the sharing of the gospel, while missions is well informed theologically. Ultimately, theological education is to serve the church in its call to expand God's kingdom on earth.

Missionary Training Institute

I have done a modest analysis by year, and in this section, similar observations will be offered but on a macro level. Out of six years of the training program surveyed, the annual enrolment fluctuated between the highest of twenty eight (in 2007) and the lowest of seventeen (2009). The second lowest was eighteen (in 2012). Most years, the program had more than twenty five enrolees. MTI started with a good number of participants, and there was general anticipation that the number would increase over the years.

The participants came from more countries in the year 2012 than any other year, although the number of attendees in that year was lower than the average. The years 2008 and 2009 display the lowest number from the representative countries. When it comes to church affiliations, most all the years maintained a similar number of church groups. However, the years 2010 and 2012 have the lowest number. Perhaps the 2011 MTI had the most number of church groups represented in the participants. Another notable observation is the increasing presence of Chinese groups: Taiwan Pentecostal Church, China House Church and Zai Dao Church, which never appeared in the tables of the earlier years. It is a positive sign that some non-traditional denominations have learned of the value of MTI, while their missions awareness has increased.

Establishing MTI was the right decision as it has provided a huge opportunity of learning about missions and offering training for those, both Asian and non-Asian, and AG and non-AG, who are serious about God's mission. The program also supplements the degree program in several important ways. Many MTI participants later enrolled in the missions degree programs of APTS. As the tables show, the training programs become international in terms of drawing a variety of countries among participants as well as instructors. It also has an ecumenical composition among the participants as various church groups are represented. This program has strong potential to continue its growth in number and influence, as long as it is open to various church traditions.

Conclusion

This study highlights the significant role of the missions degree programs at APTS for the last seventeen years in preparing many graduates to be teachers in missions and career missionaries. The contribution of MTI, the short-term missionary training program, was also explored for the past six years. In specific, both of them have been playing an important role in terms of advocacy in missions and in equipping for life-long missionary work. Some students have now risen into missions leadership based on their successful missionary career. I believe there are many other graduates not mentioned in this paper who are undertaking important missions work on various mission fields. Of course, numerous graduates are deeply involved in teaching missions courses in Bible colleges and seminaries. As a graduate and former faculty member of the seminary, I maintain a strong desire that the missions programs at APTS become more widely known, first of all, to Asian countries and then beyond Asia. Likewise, the excellent courses of MTI should be widely recognized among mission organizations and churches as an effective missionary training program. Also the programs should be regularly reviewed.