

SYMBIOTIC PARTNERSHIP IN NATIVE MISSIONARY TRAINING MINISTRY BETWEEN THE PAUL MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL AND PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Seung Il Lee

INTRODUCTION

This study asserts that symbiotic partnership between foreign mission agencies and local churches determines the vision and capability of the missionaries they send. This assertion is based on the native missionary training program of The Paul Missions International (hereafter TPMI), which started in 2005 in the Philippines. It will be argued here that apportioning of integral values as well as mutual trust should be the major element behind this symbiotic partnership. This will be shown through the analysis on the partnership between TPMI and Filipino organizations.

FILIPINO MISSIONARY TRAINING

TPMI is a Korean mission agency established in 1986. Since 2004, TPMI has set mission planting as its core mission strategy, equipping indigenous Christians as cross-cultural missionaries through mobilizing, training, and sending them to mission fields. As of December 2021, TPMI has dispatched 490 missionaries to over ninety-two countries. Korean missionaries take up 83 percent (409 people) of commissioned missionaries, while native missionaries, sent to four continents – Asia, America, Europe, and Africa – comprise the remaining 17 percent (81 people).¹

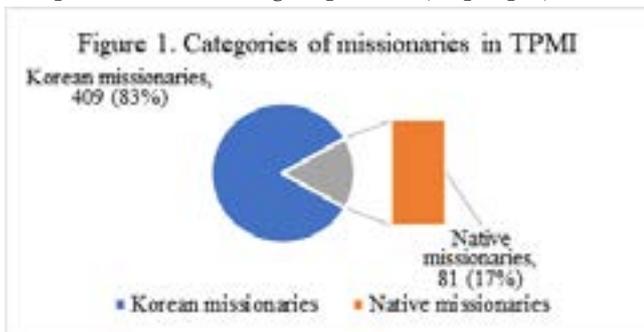
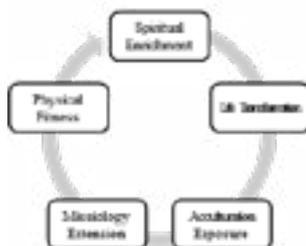


Figure 2. TPMI-FMHQ's training areas



Native missionary training within TPMI takes place

1. "Missionaries Sent," updated December 5, 2021, http://www.bauri.org/board_DsmJ92

in the Philippines and Brazil, and native missionaries work under Frontier Mission Headquarters (hereafter TPMI-FMHQ), a part of TPMI.² The training, is named 'Frontier Missionary Training (hereafter FMT)' program, a six-month stay in training in the Paul Mission center. FMT training states its mission statement as follows: 'we exist to train candidates to be Christ-like, balanced global missionaries in a multi-cultural context.' In order to fulfill this mission, FMT focuses on five training areas: 1) spiritual enrichment; 2) life transformation; 3) acculturation exposure; 4) missiology extension; 5) physical fitness, and these five training areas are well expressed in the training curriculum below.

Figure 3. TPMI-FMHQ's training curriculum

Area	Code	Module	Speakers(organization)
Spiritual Enrichment	SE01	Spiritual Formation of TPMI	Rev. Lee DW (TPMI Chairman)
	SE02	Turning Point Seminar	Turning Point International Ministry
	SE03	Discipleship Training Week	YWAM-Antipolo Training Center
	SE04	Faith Trip	TPMI-FMHQ
	SE05	Quiet Time	TPMI-FMHQ
	SE06	Dawn Prayer, Fasting	TPMI-FMHQ
Missiology Extension	ME01	Cultural Anthropology	Dr. George Yip
	ME02	World Evangelism	Dr. S. Lee (TPMI-FMHQ)
	ME03	Mission History	Dr. S. Lee (TPMI-FMHQ)
	ME04	Creative Evangelism	Ptr. Art Guzman(OM)
	ME05	Missionary Life & Ministry	Rev. Paller (New Tribe Mission Phils.)
	ME06	Teaching Child Effectively Seminar	CEF Philippines
	ME07	Evangelism Explosion	Evangelism Explosion Phils.
	ME08	Urban Mission & Community Development.	Rev. Formilleza
	ME09	Campus Ministry	Mr. & Mrs. Jordan (IMB)
	ME10	Intercultural Competence	Dr. Yip
	ME11	TESOL	ASDECS
	ME12	Story Telling	Mrs. Bagkus
	ME13	Youth Ministry	Guest speaker
	ME14	Information Technology	Ms. Kwak (TPMI)

2. TPMI-FMHQ is located in Antipolo, Philippines, while TPMI Headquarters is located in Jeonju, Korea. Since 2005, TPMI-FMHQ training stations, which are in Philippines and Brazil, trained and commissioned 159 native missionaries in total of forty-four countries through 20 batches of training in the two countries.

	ME15	Mission Planting Outreach	Dr. Lee (TPMI-FMHQ)
	ME16	First Aid	Ms. Park (Faith Academy)
	ME17	Cross-cultural Counseling	Guest speaker
	ME18	Ministry Internship	Filipino Ministry Bank
	ME19	Cross-cultural Discipleship	Rev. Badoy (PMA)
	ME20	Evangelical Doctrine Overview	TPMI-FMHQ
	ME21	TPMI History and its Strategy	TPMI
	ME22	World Religion and Worldview	Guest speaker
	ME23	Cross-cultural Training	Mr. & Mrs. Clark (IMB)
	ME24	Servant Leadership	Dr. Lee (DAI)
	ME25	Field Research Seminar	Dr. Lee
Life Transformation	LT01	People Puzzle Seminar	Dr. & Mrs. Jang (TPMI)
	LT02	Cross cultural self-leadership	Rev. Suh (TPMI)
	LT03	Sharpening Interpersonal Skills	Mrs. Lee (TPMI-FMHQ)
	LT04	Christian Family Living Seminar	Inst. of Biblical Family and Marriage
	LT05	My mission & vision statements	Dr. Lee (TPMI-FMHQ)
Physical Fitness			
Acculturation Exposure	AE01	Cross-cultural Exposure	TPMI-FMHQ
	AE02	National Acculturation: Aeta Tribe	New Tribes Mission Philippines
	AE03	Weekend Outreach Ministry	Filipino Ministry Bank(FMB)
	AE04	Mindanao Islam	TPMI-FMHQ

FMT training focuses on these three prongs: multiculturalism, leadership development, and practicum. First, **MULTI-CULTURALISM** - This refers to the community and the environment that the trainees are in whilst participating in FMT training. On average, the trainees come from 4 to 5 countries, and the lecturers from six countries from seven mission agencies. The multicultural environment helps candidates broaden their views of other cultures and behaviors.

Second, **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT** - A core element of FMT training, which is also stated in its vision, is to equip the candidates as global missionaries who could, in turn, train other indigenous missionaries in their respected mission fields or their home countries. The FMT's ultimate goal is to increase the mission planting movement by indigenous Christians beyond their borders, and expect FMT missionaries to play an igniting role in expanding this movement.

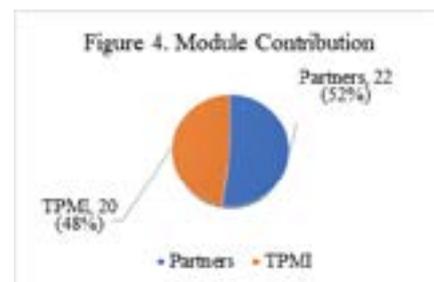
Third, **BALANCE BETWEEN LEARNING AND PRAXIS** - The training is balanced in both lecture and practicum, allowing trainees to apply what they have learned and experienced about the reality of cross-cultural ministries. It is a 'functional cooperation' centered in the task of evangelization. Lecturers also participate in evaluating candidates' activities as well as the improvement within the training modules.

As shown above, FMT training fosters a multi-cultural environment, produces global, functional leaders, and encourages cooperation and utilization of their lessons in the real world. Now, I would like to discuss how this partnership with other organizations are essential in this FMT training.

Nature of Partnership - Organic Kingdom Partnership

I believe that foreign missionaries and native church's interdependence is like bone and muscle, and their separation would lead to a mutual destruction. The core of symbiotic partnership can be divided into three categories: organic collaboration, core value sharing, and dual membership with partner organizations.

First, organic collaboration. TPMI-FMHQ seeks to strengthen mutual partnerships with local denominations, international mission agencies, and Korean missionaries. Firstly, TPMI-FMHQ partners with international mission agencies including Operation Mobilization, Youth With A Mission-Antipolo Training Center, Child Evangelism Fellowship Philippines, New Tribes Mission Philippines, and others, exchanging speakers and conducting missionary training programs.



Furthermore, TPMI-FMHQ also partners with The Korea Missions Association, Philippines (KMAP) in training and co-commissioning missionaries. Moreover, TPMI-FMHQ is a member of the Philippine Missions Association (PMA) and is accredited for missionary activities.

TPMI-FMHQ's organic partnership with the above three parties is prominent in the FMT program. According to "TPMI-FMHQ's training program (Figure 3)," twenty-two modules(52%) out of forty-two modules are facilitated by mission partners, while twenty modules (48%) are conducted by TPMI-FMHQ. TPMI focuses on the areas of spiritual enrichment, life-transformation, and physical fitness, while partners tend to facilitate missiological extension and acculturation program. FMT program is strategically

intended so that trainees have a broad and creative mindset and grow into global leaders by exposing themselves to diverse views and perspectives through collaboration with other organizations.

Additionally, TPMI-FMHQ has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (hereafter MOU) with Filipino denominations, including Philippine Evangelical Friends Church (hereafter PEFC). PEFC sends potential missionary candidates to be trained in TPMI-FMHQ, and after completion, are co-commissioned to a mission field chosen by PEFC.

Here is a sample MOU between TPMI and PEFC:

Therefore, it is hereby agreed by and between TPMI and PEFC as follows:

1. That, TPMI and PEFC shall acknowledge Ms. Onde as 'three (3)-year short-term missionary to Vietnam.'
2. That, TPMI and PEFC will develop a functional working relationship wherein each organization shall share information related to this project, and each organization shall exchange their respective expertise to consult, care, and reinforce Ms. Onde.
3. That, TPMI and PEFC shall both engage in assisting Ms. Onde in their raising of mission funds (monthly support committed by TPMI and mission offerings by PEFC) and PEFC will be the lead party in sending mission funds to Ms. Onde. PEFC shall also update TPMI of Ms. Onde's financial status on a regular basis.
4. That, TPMI and PEFC shall both develop and foster harmonious relationship through open consultation and dialogues mutually beneficial to the ministry of Ms. Onde.³

The MOU builds up systematic alliance, but also encourages the two parties to be mutually accountable and transparent in administration, finance, and ministry. Through partnership with various mission agencies and denominations in the Philippines, TPMI-FMHQ synergizes with mobilizing, training, commissioning, mentoring, and supporting native missionaries.

Second, core value sharing. TPMI-FMHQ shares its spiritual, life, and strategic values with its mission partners.

First of all, "Faith mission" is shared as a spiritual value. The Paul Mission defines "Faith Mission" as a "missionary ethos convicting us that God is the source of everything for mission; it is a missionary principle activating God's sovereignty, Jesus' authority and power, and the Holy spirit's creativity where we are."⁴ This is demonstrated through "Faith Trip," a training program where missionary candidates can experience God's provision and protection. The candidates,

3. See Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between The Paul Mission International and The Philippine Evangelical Friends Church, on March 18, 2021 at The Paul Mission Center, Cainta Rizal Philippines.

4. Seung-Il Lee, 바울선교회 미래준비위원회 기획보고서 [Baul-sungyohoi mirae-junbi-wiwonhoi kichoik-bogosuh, Report on the future of The Paul Mission International] (Jeonju: Paul Mission Press, 2013), 46.

without money or food, are dropped off at Baguio city, located seven hours away from TPMI-FMHQ, and are asked to return in six days, ministering along the way. This allows trainees to experience God who perfectly provides food, transportation, lodging, and ministry opportunities in His timing. The faith trip experience is widely shared in the candidates' churches, and the "Faith Mission" provides the Filipino churches with a confidence in missions accomplished by faith, not money.

Furthermore, "The sevenfold spirit" serves as a life value of missionary: absolute assurance of salvation (the foundation of mission), absolute divine calling (motivation of mission), absolute prayer (power station of missionary), absolute thanksgiving (attitude of missionary), absolute obedience (virtue of missionary), absolute commitment (lifestyle of missionary), and absolute love (essence of mission).⁵

This sevenfold spirit is started by Rev. Dong-whee Lee, the founder of TPMI. Lee says that the gospel is realized through the one who spreads it.⁶ According to Lee, the sevenfold spirit codifies the wholistic missionary life a missionary should assume.

Moreover, "Indigenous missionary church planting" acts as a strategic value. This strategy focuses on equipping indigenous Christians as missionaries through continuous emphasis on the Great Commission in Christian churches.⁷ While teaching Acts 1:8 as the biblical reference to "the missionarization of all believers," the understanding of the eight categories of missionaries is used as a practical reference by TPMI-FMHQ missionaries in their mission fields.

They are (1) commissioned missionaries who are sent abroad, (2) parent missionaries who dedicate their children to become missionaries, (3) prayer missionaries who pray for a revival in mission fields and its missionaries, (4) financial missionaries who dedicate their finances and belongings to world missions, (5) vocational missionaries who show a Christian lifestyle in their workplace, (6) family missionaries who focus on ministering to their unsaved family members, (7) cultural missionaries who share Christian ideals through their artistic talent, and (8) lifestyle missionaries who clearly live out their identity as his people in all areas of life, having a significant, positive affect on others through his/her character.⁸ The concept of the "missionarization" of all believers lays the foundation for an active and

5. Dong-Whee Lee, "바울선교회 7대정신" [Baul-sungyohoi chil-dae-jeongshin, The Paul Mission's sevenfold spirit], Baul Sungyo (July/August 2002): 1.

6. Dong-Whee Lee, "바울선교의 성서적 조명" [Baulsungyo-ui sungsojuk jomyung, Biblical foundation of apostle Paul's Mission], Baul Sungyo (May 1986): 1.

7. Seung-Il Lee, "바울선교회 정신의 선교학적 패러다임" [Baul-sungyohoi jeong-shin-ui sunkyo-hak-jeok paradigm, Missiological paradigm of the spirits of the Paul Missions International], in 바울선교회 미래준비위원회 연구보고서 [Baul-sungyohoi mirae-junbi-wiwonhoi bo-go-suh, ed. Paul Mission International (Jeonju: Paul Mission Press, 2017), 199-240.

8. Dong-Whee Lee, "선교사가 되는 8가지" [Sungyosagadoinun yeodul-gaji, Eight categories of missionaries], Baul Sungyo (March/April 1998): 1.

dynamic missionary lifestyle in locations where TPMI missionaries operate.⁹ TPMI-FMHQ rejects the dualistic view that differentiates between “missionary sending countries” and “missionary receiving countries”; rather, it views natives as potential missionaries who migrate across their cultural borders to spread the gospel.¹⁰

Third, dual membership with local agencies. Both TPMI and their mission partners established systemic cooperation, in which the former is responsible for fundraising, disciplining, and ministry, while the latter provides missionary training, field entry and settlement, language learning, cultural adaptation, and mentoring. Commissioned missionaries under dual supervision are required to send a bimonthly newsletter and financial statement to both TPMI and their denomination. Mission funding is provided through a matching fund, with the sending denomination providing 50 percent. The denomination first receives funds from TPMI and sends it along with their own to the missionaries. This allows the native church to be accountable in supporting their missionaries. After a three-year term, missionaries return to the Philippines for a six-month debriefing period with the two organizations. The denomination and the missionary determine whether he/she will be re-commissioned or will undergo a career change. After the debriefing period, a re-commissioned missionary becomes a member of the local denomination and an associate member of TPMI. Even though TPMI discontinues the financial contributions to missionaries, TPMI continues to provide ethical and spiritual support through mentoring.

Figure 5. Missionary training and commissioning process



As shown above, cooperation based on “mutual responsibility” is present at every step, leading to the nourishment of indigenous missionaries who will serve their own institution and commission their own native missionaries.

OUTCOME OF SYMBIOTIC PARTNERSHIP

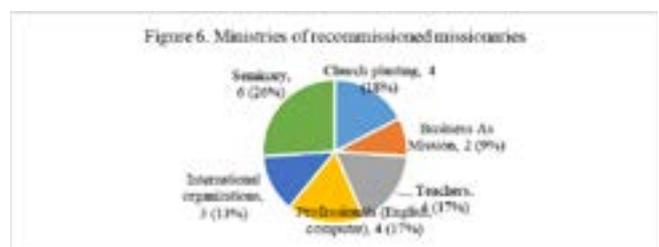
First, consistent partnership in strategy. Since 2011, TPMI-FMHQ has signed MOUs with eight organizations including One Sending Body (OSB), Philippine World Team (PWT), Agape Christian International Ministries INC. (ACIMI), Immanuel

9. See Seung-II Lee, “Mission Planting Beyond Church Planting,” in *Globalization and Mission*, ed. Timothy K. Park and Steve K. Eom (Seoul: EWCMRD, 2017), 575-584.

10. Dong-Whee Lee, “식민주의적 선교를 중단하라” [Shikmin-juijeog sungyorul jungdanhara, Stop Christendom mission], *Baul Sungyo* (May 1996): 37.

Theological Seminary (ITS), Mission Complex In Cambodia (MCIC), SIM-West Africa, World Mission Complex (WMC), and Philippine Evangelical Friends Church (PEFC), and signed multiple MOUs with three more organizations. For example, Agape Christian International Ministry Incorporated (hereafter ACIMI), an affiliated association of theological seminary, churches, and pastoral training institutes in Iloilo city, Philippines, sent their missionary candidates to TPMI-FMHQ for training and sent them out as dual members of TPMI. Based on MOU, ACIMI commissioned one of the missionaries to Tanzania as an educator for three years, followed by another missionary in 2015 and another in 2018. Meanwhile, ACIMI strategically allies with TPMI with a vision for educating children in Tanzania and this strategy seems to be effective and successful. TPMI too appears to have achieved its vision, assisting Filipino churches to taking the initiative in doing missions from their own strategic perspectives.

Second, increase of (long-term) self-supporting missionaries. In the case of Filipino missionaries, there has been an increase in long-term missionaries who returned to their mission fields. Among the fifty-one Filipino missionaries commissioned by FMHQ from 2006 to 2018 (batches 1-9), 45 percent (23 people) were re-commissioned, 27 percent (14 people) shifted their ministries from overseas to domestic ministries in the Philippines, and 20 percent (10 people) switched career to secular vocations, such as teachers, social workers, or health workers. Although, TPMI stops supporting financially, the Filipino missionaries are willing to continue their missions. It is also noteworthy to see the diversity of ministries among re-commissioned missionaries. Contrary to the popular belief that Filipino missionaries minister only as English teachers, their professions have broadened, working as pastors, BAM (Business as Mission) practitioners, teachers, ministers within international organizations, and seminary professors.



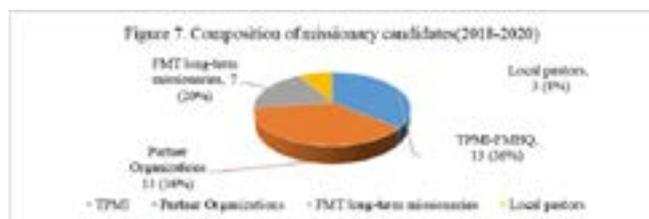
The variety of ministry categories of long term missionaries can be attributed to two factors. One is the practice of “faith mission” in the lives of Filipino missionaries. The concept of faith mission has become part of the daily lives of TPMI and FMT missionaries, who experience spiritual and physical miracles through continued acknowledgment of the Triune God. The other is the influence of Filipino lecturers and facilitators in the FMT program. As mentioned above, the guest speakers rate for FMT training is

52%, and most Filipino instructors are self-supporting missionaries. This environment provides the FMT missionaries with a real-life example of helping candidates to prepare for their self-supporting mission after completing their three-year short-term mission.

Thirdly, dynamic reproduction of mission movement. The most encouraging aspect is that these Filipino missionaries are teaching native Christians to participate in world missions, and are training their disciples to be missionaries whether they are re-sent missionaries. Those who are re-sent start sending their own native disciples to TPMI-FMHQ as missionary candidates whilst encouraging their church congregations and friends in the Philippines to participate in world mission by joining FMT program. Those serving as local pastors, despite not being a long-term missionary, still actively engage in mission-oriented ministries. Having a close relationship with TPMI, they send their disciples as missionary candidates and support the Filipino missionaries financially.

While teaching Acts 1:8 as the biblical reference to “the missionarization of all believers,” the understanding of the eight categories of missionaries is used as a practical reference by TPMI-FMHQ missionaries in their mission fields.

This mission movement has had a profound impact on the influx of missionary candidates to join the FMT program. For example, from 2005 to 2009, all 33 FMT candidates (batches 1-4) were recommended by TPMI missionaries. In contrast, among the thirty-six FMT candidates from 2018 to 2020 (batches 8-11), 36 percent (13 people) were recommended by TPMI, 36 percent (13 people) by partner organizations, 20 percent (7 people) by FMT long-term missionaries, and 8 percent (3 people) by local pastors.



This shift can be seen as a result of TPMI’s philosophy to continue its symbiotic partnership with co-workers in the Kingdom of God. This shift can also be assessed positively in that TPMI DNA has been passed on through generations, and the symbiotic partnership has brought up a virtuous cycle of missionary recruitment, which is generated by Filipinos themselves.

In turn, TPMI’s shared vision and ethos allowed FMT missionaries to remain in the mission field, even when their financial support was cut off after three years. Ultimately, the missionary ethos vitalizes and activates the ministry, leading to reproductivity and fruitfulness. This system allows one to anticipate more dynamic mission movements through Filipino missionaries.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the symbiotic partnership between foreign mission agency and native agency determines the dynamism, vitality, and reproductivity of missionary work. This study also asserts that the organic partnership in two parties is based on mutual accountability, transparency, and trust. Through this genuine partnership, the two parties overcome the dualism between missionary sending and receiving countries, leading to a sense of God’s Kingdom community. TPMI-FMHQ and mission partners have presented mission planting where native Christians recognize their identity as missionaries and live as local missionaries as well as cross-cultural missionaries. To this end, TPMI-FMHQ shares its core values with partner organizations, and this enables TPMI to participate in ministries with the local churches to which TPMI is affiliated to draw out an equal policy. TPMI’s native missionary training ministry not only effectively realizes the “missionarization of all believers,” but also provides a model for establishing the Kingdom of God on earth through cooperation with native churches.



Seung-Il Lee
Seungil70@yahoo.com

Dr. Seung-Il Lee is the Director of Human Resource Development Center in The Paul Mission International, is a missionary trainer. Lee received his theological training at Hapdong Theological Seminary, Asian Center for Theological Studies and Missions, Wales Evangelical School of Theology, and earned his Ph.D. degree at the University of Wales, UK. In 2005, Lee and his wife, Sharon Haewon, joined The Paul Mission International and they are involved in mission planting, pastoral training, theological education, and missionary training for missionary candidates who came from Korea, Philippines, Nigeria, Cote d’Ivoire, Vietnam, Bangladesh, and USA. He and his wife are blessed with three kids, Donghyuk, Suhyuk, and Jiyun.