

AN EVALUATION OF THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE PAKISTANI  
CHURCHES IN MISSION:

A Comparative Study on Church of Pakistan (Lahore and  
Hyderabad Dioceses) and Full Gospel Assemblies of Pakistan

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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# **Abstract**

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There are strong traditions supporting the belief that Christianity had come to Indo-Pak with the Apostle Thomas in the first century. However, since its origin, the Pakistani Church has been chronically less engaged in intentional mission.

This comparative study explores the phenomena of mission engagement of the Church of Pakistan (Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses) and of the Full Gospel Assemblies of Pakistan. It brings out their similarities and differences, as well as issues of growth and decline, specifically as they affect their mission engagement and therefore their success and failure in that arena. Both quantitative and qualitative methods have been used to evaluate the mission engagement of these churches in three main areas namely: mission theology, mission practice and perceived restrictions.

It has been discovered that due to its fragmented understanding of the biblical story, anthropocentric focus, neglect of the cosmic redemption and the exclusion of the Abrahamic responsibility of being a blessing to the nations, the mission theology of Pakistani churches is inadequate and inconsistent. The Pakistani churches are engaged in mission, but their engagement is not complete because of their withering evangelistic dimensions, passive presence, intentional alienation from their context and compartmentalized identifications. It is evident that most of the restrictions these churches are facing in terms of mission engagement are internal rather than external.

Based on the above findings the research concludes that the Pakistani Church is engaged in inadequate mission due to inconsistent theological reflection, incomplete mission practice and overwhelming internal restrictions. Therefore, for effective engagement the Pakistani Church needs to revise its mission theology and practice and deal with its internal restrictions.

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know in Jesus Christ. I have learned so much from this research about God's purposes for his dear Church in Pakistan that words cannot express. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen!

## List of Abbreviations

AJPS	Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies
AGG	Assemblies of God
AVC	Audio Visual Program
BFBR	Bulletin for Biblical Research
CMS	Church Mission Society
CoP	Church of Pakistan
CSC	Christian Study Centre
DMTEF	Dictionary of Mission Theology Evangelical Foundations
DOH	Diocese of Hyderabad
DOL	Diocese of Lahore
EDWM	Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions
FCC	Forman Christian College
FGA	Full Gospel Assemblies of Pakistan
IJFM	International Journal of Frontier Missiology
IRM	International Review of Missions
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
JPT	Journal of Pentecostal Theology
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
OTS	Open Theological Seminary
PEP	Primary Education Project
PWCM	Perspectives on the World Christian Movement
TMSJ	The Master's Seminary Journal
VoP	Village Outreach Program

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# 1. Introduction to the Dissertation

## 1.1. Introduction

This thesis aims to assess the mission engagement of Pakistani churches with a view to identifying ways in which this mission engagement can be improved and made more effective. It compares the mission theologies and mission methods of the Church of Pakistan (hereafter CoP) and of the Full Gospel Assemblies (a Pentecostal group, hereafter FGA). It aims to bring out the similarities and differences, as well as issues of growth and decline, specifically as they affect their mission engagement and therefore their success and failure in that area. The context for the mission of these churches within Pakistan is one of significant restriction and this research will review the different ways in which practitioners cope with perceived restrictions on their work. It will briefly explore the historical context but also seek to identify contemporary issues, which are emerging for mission workers.

This research seeks to evaluate the mission engagement of Pakistani churches from three different perspectives, namely theory, practice and the perceived restrictions on the churches. Firstly, the theology of mission of the churches will be assessed on theological and Biblical bases that are informed by evangelical foundations. For this purpose, a biblical theology developed by Christopher Wright will be used. Wright divides the whole biblical story in four major sections i.e. creation, fall, redemption in history and new creation.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, this research will use the mission grid given by Michael Nazir-Ali. He argues that the Church exercises her missionary vocation in a number of different ways - through presence, identification, dialogue, service, and evangelism.<sup>2</sup> These grids will be used as a framework to limit the scope of evaluation and as a combination of criteria to assess the mission engagement of Pakistani churches. Thirdly, based on field research, a list of perceived restrictions will be evaluated. This list was first drawn from the qualitative research; it was later used in surveys to identify the four highly significant restrictions from a sample of

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<sup>1</sup> C. Wright, *Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*, Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2006, 30-69; 265-323; 393-501 & C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of Church's Mission*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010, 17-80; 96-111

<sup>2</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique and Universal Christ: Jesus in Plural World*, Bucks: Paternoster, 2008, 104-125; M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere to Everywhere*, London: W. Collins Sons & Co, 1991, 139-193



518 cases. A critical analysis of each restriction will be used to suggest a way forward and to strengthen reflection on the mission engagement of the Pakistani Church.

### *1.1. Thesis Statement*

The intentions of the Pakistani Church towards mission are inadequate due to the lack of a sound theology of mission and incomplete mission practice, and overwhelming internal restrictions.

### *1.2. Objectives of the Study*

- a) To understand and accurately describe the mission engagement of the Pakistani churches in terms of the factors which have shaped it namely theology, practice and perceived restrictions both in the past and in the present.
- b) As a pioneering study, it is hoped that it will stimulate discussion and reflection leading to actions that will enhance the Pakistani Church's effective engagement in mission. It is hoped, that it will be a timely resource to improve Pakistani-led mission by Pakistanis to Pakistanis and beyond.
- c) To highlight the contribution and potential of the Pakistani Church in and for mission engagement in the scholarly world, as currently the voice of the Pakistani Church in the global arena is very small if not entirely absent.

## **1.2. Some Definitions**

The following section contains definitions to clarify some of the key terms used.

- i. An Unreached People Group: It means 'a people group within which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians able to evangelize this people group.'<sup>3</sup>
- ii. Church: the whole body of Christians, it can have local, denominational, national or universal form.
- iii. Congregation: An assembly of persons that meets for worship and Christian instruction.

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<sup>3</sup> R. Winter and B. Koch, 'Finishing the Task: The Unreached Peoples Challenge' *IJFM*, Vol 16:2, Summer 1999, 67- 76, citing 69

- iv. Denomination: A religious organization whose congregations are united in their adherence to its beliefs and practices.
- v. Diocese: The territorial jurisdiction of a bishop.
- vi. Ecumenical: Ecumenical refers to a group of Christians who believe in interdenominational initiatives aimed at greater cooperation among Christian churches. They extend the Church and its work beyond the requirement of biblical teaching. Mankind's physical and social needs became a 'prime responsibility' for the Christian church. 'Humanization' became the goal of mission, and 'salvation' was regarded as 'any liberating experience'. Therefore, the ecumenical have more emphasis on 'justice' or 'liberation'.
- vii. Evangelicals: Evangelicals, in contrast to the ecumenical leanings toward social activism focus upon soul-saving, and are particularly interested in reaching out to the 'unsaved' or unreached peoples of this world. Evangelicals are Christians who while not ignoring social needs believe in the centrality of the conversion or 'born again' experience in receiving salvation, believe in the authority of the Bible as God's revelation to humanity and have a strong commitment to evangelism or sharing the Christian message and to discipling.
- viii. Missionary: Referring to people who engage in mission, usually in a culture other than their own.
- ix. Missions: The ways and means of accomplishing 'the mission', which have been divinely entrusted by the Triune God to the Church and Christians.
- x. Parish: In a denomination structured on an area basis the ecclesiastical unit of area that has its own local church or congregation, presbyter, priest or minister.
- xi. Pentecostals: A working definition for Pentecostalism can be, 'segments of Christianity which believe in and experience the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit including supernatural demonstration of God's power, with consequent dynamic and participatory worship and zeal for evangelism.'<sup>4</sup> Thus, the emphasis of Pentecostals is on receiving the Spirit and practicing spiritual gifts such as prophecy, healing and speaking in tongues.
- xii. People Group: Refers to 'a significantly large grouping of individuals who perceive themselves to have a common affinity with one another because of their

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<sup>4</sup> W. Ma, 'Asian Pentecostalism: A Religion Whose Only Limit is the Sky' *Journal of Beliefs and Values: Studies in Religion and Education*, 2004, 25:2, 191-204, citing 192

shared language, religion, ethnicity, residence, occupation, class or caste, situation, etc., or combinations of these.’ For evangelistic purposes, it is ‘the largest group within which the gospel can be spread by a church planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance.’<sup>5</sup>

### **1.3. A Discussion of a Few Key Terms: Mission, Mission Engagement and Evangelism**

Mission, evangelism and engagement are three closely connected key terms that will be used frequently in this thesis but are a matter of debate and discussion. This section seeks to address them at some length to clarify their meaning for the current research.

Globally, there is a widespread confusion in the Christian communities surrounding the meaning of the term mission. Several questions can be raised on the subject of mission. What should be included in mission? What should be excluded from mission? What are the important features, characteristics or marks of mission engagement? Is mission just the proclamation of the Gospel or is mission about ‘presence’ and ‘silent witness’ or all three? And therefore what part does social action play in mission? Is mission God’s intention in the whole world or is it the missionary task of the church? Is it possible to determine what should be the focus, aim or goal of mission? What about reaching out to the unreached people groups of the world? There is little consensus on these and many other issues and the questions related to mission. The dilemma of ambiguity in the meaning of mission ‘may arise partly because the noun, mission, is not a biblical one, which makes it difficult to define on exegetical grounds’.<sup>6</sup> However, it is difficult to assess the church’s engagement in mission when what the outcome of that engagement should be remains elusive.

According to A. Moreau, ‘the contemporary secular definition of mission is simply sending someone forth with a specific purpose.’<sup>7</sup> That purpose may be defined

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<sup>5</sup> R. Winter and B. Koch, ‘Finishing the Task’, citing 69

<sup>6</sup> K. Ferdinando, ‘Mission: A Problem of Definition’, *Themelios* 33.1, 2008, 46-59, citing 47

<sup>7</sup> A. Moreau, ‘Mission and Missions’, A. Moreau et al (eds.), *EDWM*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000, 636-638 citing 636

broadly as representing the interests of the sender, or narrowly as delivering a message or performing an action specified by the sender. David Bosch, after an extensive examination of two thousand years of Christian mission and an enquiry into the historical paradigms of mission, has also pointed out the difficulty of defining mission. He asserts that 'ultimately, mission remains undefinable . . . The most we can hope for is to formulate some *approximations* to what mission is all about.'<sup>8</sup> Having said that he has given a comprehensive survey of a few advances over earlier definitions of mission. He notes that the Jerusalem Conference (1928) of the International Missionary Council (IMC) recognized that a more comprehensive approach is needed for the definition of mission. The Whitby Meeting of the IMC (1947) used the terms *kerygma* (proclamation) and *koinonia* (fellowship) to summarize its understanding of mission. Hoekendijk added a third element, *diakonia* (service) to the definition of mission. Willingen Conference (1952) added the notion of, *martyria* (testimony or witness) to the concept of mission. Later *leitourgia* (liturgy) was added as another element of mission.<sup>9</sup> These different understandings of mission, highlighted by Bosch, underpin the fact that the concept of mission has become increasingly complicated over the years. Mission can mean everything rather than something specific. Such broad definitions prompted Stephen Neill to say that 'if everything is mission, nothing is mission.'<sup>10</sup>

Yet, traditionally mission engagement has been conceived as crossing geographical, cultural and linguistic barriers, with the purpose of taking the gospel from the Christian East or West to the mission fields of the non-Christian world. The purpose was to make converts and to plant churches by means of the preaching of the gospel. The agents of mission were principally missionaries sent by mission societies or churches. For the last 500 years the traditional mission has often been associated with the colonial expansion of the Western world, even though missionaries were sometimes opposed to the colonial or imperial authorities. However, today there is immense diversity and innovation in the mission engagement of the world-wide Church, which makes it a lot more complicated to define and limit. Mission is taking into consideration new realities, including the HIV pandemic, terrorism, the global

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<sup>8</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, New York: Orbis Books, 1998, 8

<sup>9</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 511-512

<sup>10</sup> S. Neill, *Creative Tension*, London: Edinburgh House Press, 1959, 81

role of media, poverty, persecution of Christians, fragmented families, unjust structures of society, integrity of creation, political and religious nationalism, the post-modern mind set, oppression of children, neglect of the disabled, healing, reconciliation and others.<sup>11</sup> Articulating a shift from the traditional to the current mission engagement, Andrew Kirk has pointed out that mission 'is no longer thought of as the Church's activity overseas or in another culture. The mission frontier is not primarily a geographical one, but one of belief, conviction and commitment.'<sup>12</sup>

In this context, in this century, several developments could be mentioned which originally took birth in the ecumenical movement but were also brought into evangelical circles for discussion and therefore added fresh dimensions and ambiguity to their understanding of the meaning of mission. Keith Ferdinando summaries the controversy in this way;

First, there has been the recognition that communicating the gospel is not the only thing Christians are sent into the world to do. Among evangelicals there is renewed recognition of the implications of the doctrine of creation, including the cultural mandate, coupled with revived awareness of the significance of social and economic issues for Christian discipleship. Second, increasingly widespread pluralist and inclusivist approaches to non-Christian religions imply that evangelism is not a necessary, perhaps not even a desirable, function of the church.<sup>13</sup>

The broadest approach to understand mission can be identified as *Missio Dei*, a term coined by Karl Hertenstein in 1934 in a shift towards understanding mission as God's mission.<sup>14</sup> According to Bosch, 'Karl Barth . . . became one of the first theologians to articulate mission as an activity of God himself.'<sup>15</sup> Bosch identifies the difference between *mission* (singular) and *missions* (plural). According to him, mission is the activity of God, *Missio Dei*, where God reveals himself to the world through the church. Those who are engaged in mission are only privileged to participate in God's mission. Missions (the *missiones ecclesiae*) on the other hand, refers to the missionary ventures of the church.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> The Lausanne 2004 Forum Summary Affirmations, Pattaya, Thailand from September 29 to October 5, 2004; D. Balia & K. Kim (eds.) *Edinburgh 2010: Volume 2 Witnessing to Christ Today*, Oxford: Regnum Books, 2010, 116; D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 512

<sup>12</sup>J. Kirk, *What is Mission: Theological Explorations*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd, 1999,24

<sup>13</sup>K. Ferdinando, 'Mission', citing 47

<sup>14</sup>A. Moreau, 'Mission', citing 637

<sup>15</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 389

<sup>16</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 10

This broader approach seeing mission as God's mission rather than the activities of his Church was consistently evident in ecumenical circles. One of the most significant discussion of this matter occurred at Uppsala (World Council of Churches) in 1968, where the theme 'the world sets the agenda' emerged. The ecumenical and evangelical divide between evangelism and social action reached its climax in the battles between liberals and evangelicals over the emerging social Gospel movement. Liberal churches virtually abandoned evangelism in favor of relief and development services. Conservative Evangelical churches increasingly focused their attention on evangelism and church planting. Christopher Little identifies 'Evangelicals committed to the primacy of proclamation in Christian mission have been accused of 'reductionism' by their counterparts, whereas the latter have been charged with 'expansionism' by the former.'<sup>17</sup>

The Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization (1974) a major meeting of Evangelicals, took a significant step towards resolving the tension between these issues by affirming that both evangelism and social action are essential and authentic expressions of mission. *The Lausanne Covenant*, drafted by an international committee chaired by John Stott, argued the necessity for and defined the goals of evangelism. The Lausanne Covenant affirms 'reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both parts of our Christian duty.'<sup>18</sup>

Even among Evangelicals there are different approaches to mission. Moreau has highlighted three streams within evangelicalism since Lausanne.<sup>19</sup> According to him the first stream has a focus on the development of thriving church movements among people groups around the world was strongly argued for in meetings such as the Global Consultations on World Evangelization organized in 1989,1995 and 1997. A second stream focuses on a holistic approach to mission, integrating evangelism and issues of social justice and reconciliation. Consultations such as Wheaton in 1983, gave voice to this group also arguing for laying a sound theological

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<sup>17</sup>C. Little, 'Christian Mission Today: Are We on a Slippery Slope? What Makes Mission Christian?' *IJFM* 25:2 Summer 2008, 65-73 citing 66

<sup>18</sup> R. Hedlund, *Roots of the Great Debate in Mission*, Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 1981, 306

<sup>19</sup>A. Moreau, 'Mission' citing 637-638

basis for the mission of the church. The third stream, referred to as the radical discipleship group, considers social justice to be mission just as evangelism is and does not give priority to either. Moreau claims that the issue will continue to be debated and that ‘consensus over this complex issue will remain a goal to be reached in the future rather than a present reality.’<sup>20</sup> He further argues that as the term ‘mission’ is so broad, any church’s understanding of the ‘mission of the church’ will be likely to depend on their theological orientation rather than an etymological analysis.

### 1.3.1. *Evangelism*

The above discussion on the meaning and scope of mission with respect to social action leads to reflections on the nature of evangelism. Evangelism sits in the very heart of mission and there is a vast amount of literature on the topic of evangelism.<sup>21</sup> John Stott asserts that ‘evangelism may and must be defined only in terms of message.’<sup>22</sup> Kirk argues that the core thought of this verb is proclaim or share the good news. In the orthodox tradition of evangelism the words ‘witnessing to’ and ‘testifying’ are often used to point out the actions which God has achieved through Jesus Christ for the benefit of all human beings.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, R. Peace contends that ‘to evangelize is to preach, bring, tell, proclaim, announce, declare the good news’.<sup>24</sup> The Lausanne Covenant states, ‘to evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and liberating gift of the Spirit to all who repent and believe.’<sup>25</sup> This definition is very comprehensive as its language emphasises the fulfilment of the Scriptures in the redemptive work of Christ through his death and resurrection. It includes a call from the reigning Lord

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<sup>20</sup> A. Moreau, ‘Mission’ citing 638

<sup>21</sup> M. Dever, *The Gospel & Personal Evangelism*, Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007; M. Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003; W. Metzger, *Tell the Truth*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1984; D. Barret, *Evangelize! A Historical Survey of the Concept*, Birmingham: New Hope, 1987; W. Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1989; O. Costas, *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelism*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989; D. Barret et al, *Seven Hundred plans Evangelize the World: The Rise of Global Evangelization Movement*, Birmingham: New Hope, 1988; H. Margull, *Hope in Action: The Church’s Task in the World*, Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962

<sup>22</sup> J. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, Downers Grove: IVP Books, 1975, 40

<sup>23</sup> J. Kirk, *What is Mission*, 60-61

<sup>24</sup> R. Peace, ‘Evangelism’, in J. Corrie et al (eds.) *DMTEF*, Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2007 115-118, citing 116

<sup>25</sup> R. Hedlund, *Roots*, 305

to sinners to repent and believe and receive forgiveness all of which is accompanied by the gift of the Holy Spirit to have an ongoing role in the life of the believer. This definition is a reliable guide for evaluating the mission engagement of Pakistani churches.

### 1.3.2. *Mission*

To solve the problem of definition of mission, this study prefers to use Christopher Wright's definition of mission. He says, mission means,

... our committed participation as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's own mission, within the history of God's world for the redemption of God's creation... there is room for subordinate missions, in the sense of specific tasks assigned to a person or group that are to be accomplished as steps toward the wider mission.<sup>26</sup>

This definition is holistic because it sees the Church 'as a co-worker with God' (1 Corinthians 3:9). God is the initiator of his mission of redemption and invites His people - the Church - to participate in his mission. The great theme of Scripture is God's redemptive mission. Wright has pointed out that that cannot be accomplished without evangelism or the proclamation of the gospel. God has called the Church as the primary agent to serve his missionary purpose. Jesus, himself is the builder of the Church (Matthew 16:18). Jesus sent his disciples into the world, as he was sent by God (John 20:21), as continuation of his mission.

The 'committed participation' in Wright's definition, refers to the ownership, responsibility and intentional engagement of the people of God in mission. Intentionality is a key characteristic for mission engagement. A. Bauer has cautioned that 'mission must be intentionally undertaken, otherwise experience clearly indicates that we are overcome by a survival mentality as a maintenance program; we do not reach out beyond ourselves.'<sup>27</sup> Wright further maintains that there is room for 'subordinate missions, in the sense of specific tasks.'<sup>28</sup> This may refer to engagement through social action but these tasks are only seen as steps towards a wider redemptive mission of God and not the goal of mission.

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<sup>26</sup> C. Wright, *Mission of God*, 23

<sup>27</sup> A. Bauer, *Being in Mission: A Resource for the Local Church and Community*, New York: Friendship Press, 1987, 5

<sup>28</sup> C. Wright, *Mission of God*, 23



### 1.3.3. Engagement

This thesis evaluates the mission engagement of the Pakistani churches both in theology and practice. Indeed, a disconnection between mission theology and practice means that there will not be an authentic and effective mission engagement. Christopher Wright warns that if theology and mission practice are seen as two separate entities ‘the dangerous result is that theology proceeds without missional input or output, while mission proceeds without theological guidance or evaluation.’<sup>29</sup> Theological engagement is not only a foundational step towards engaging in mission but consistent theological reflection is a necessary guide for effective mission practice. Bosch strongly suggests the significance of the relationship between mission theology and practice in these words,

... the practice of mission, cannot be ignored in our reflections. Theology and practice ought to stand in a relationship of dynamic, creative tension. The practice of mission constantly needs the critical guidance of the theology of mission, whereas the latter, in its turn, has to take the practice of mission seriously into account, naturally without, in this process, elevating mere efficiency to the highest norm. In this way we have to continue trying to narrow the gap between missionary theology and practice.<sup>30</sup>

In mission, the Church seeks to engage with the world. Inevitably then ‘how to engage with the world without being compromised, corrupted and tamed by it is an issue which besets mission at every step. Theology is not to be used merely to affirm mission as practised; it tests mission’s faithfulness to the gospel.’<sup>31</sup> Therefore, theology not only sets the direction of mission but also evaluates its faithfulness to the gospel.

To sum up, for the purpose of the current research, the mission engagement of the Church can be defined as its intentional commitment and participation in God’s own redemptive mission at God’s invitation and command. It means communicating the gospel through presence, identification, social action, dialogue and verbal proclamation based on consistent reflection and guidance drawn from the theology of mission. So, at one end mission is connected with the world and on the other end with God through the Scriptures.

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<sup>29</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God’s People*, 19

<sup>30</sup> D. Bosch, *Witness to the World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective*, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1980, 22

<sup>31</sup> H. Willmer, ‘The Triangle: Theology, Mission and Child’ in B. Prevette et al (eds.) *Theology, Mission and Child: Global Perspectives*, Oxford: Regnum Books, 2014, 10-22, citing 15

## 1.4. Problem Statement

There are strong traditions, which support the belief that Christianity had come to India with the Apostle Thomas in the first century about 58 AD.<sup>32</sup> Christians in South India of the Mar Thoma church, the ancient church, steadfastly maintain that the apostle ministered there and was martyred in South India. On other hand, there are some indications that Thomas first visited the Indo-Parthian kingdom of King Gondophoros, whose capital was at Taxila in present-day Pakistan, prior to his going to South India.<sup>33</sup> Ancient Christianity did not survive in this land with the invasion of Islam. The present Christianity in Pakistan is a product of the modern Missionary movement, 'which began in the west in the sixteenth century, gained momentum in the eighteenth and reached its zenith in the nineteenth century.'<sup>34</sup> Since then the Church in Pakistan has maintained its ecclesiastical links and reliance in some areas with the churches in the West.

The Pakistani Church takes pride in having its roots in the first century; however, Christianity in Pakistan is still a small minority. The last census in Pakistan was conducted in 1998,<sup>35</sup> according to which, Christians made up approximately 1.59 per cent of Pakistan's total population of 130,857,717.<sup>36</sup> Current estimates of Pakistan's population are between 190,000,000 and 210,000,000.<sup>37</sup> However, even an approximation to the size of the Christian community is a highly problematic issue for, mainly, two reason. First, although the constitution stipulates a census

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<sup>32</sup> A detailed account of Pakistan mission history will be addressed in chapter 3.

<sup>33</sup> S. Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia. Volume 1: Beginnings to 1500*, San Francisco: Harper Collins 1992 24-32; J. Rooney, *Shadows in the Dark: A History of Christianity in Pakistan up to the Tenth Century*, Rawalpindi: Christian Study Centre, 1984, 29-51; S. Neill, *A History of Christianity In India: The Beginnings to AD 1707* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, 26-30, J. Rooney, *St. Thomas and Taxila*, Rawalpindi: CSC, 1988, 16-31. The detailed account of Pakistan mission history will be addressed in chapter 3.

<sup>34</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *Islam: A Christian Perspective*, Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1983, 143

<sup>35</sup> M. Haider '17 Years And No Census In Pakistan — A Country Running On Guesswork'— September 07, 2015 (<http://www.dawn.com/news/1204917>, accessed 12 October, 2016)

<sup>36</sup> 'Population by Religion'

(<http://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files//tables/POPULATION%20BY%20RELIGION.pdf> accessed 15 October 2016)

<sup>37</sup> Worldometers, 'Pakistan Population', available (<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/pakistan-population/> accessed 15 October 2016); 'Pakistan Demographic Profile' ([http://www.indexmundi.com/pakistan/demographics\\_profile.html](http://www.indexmundi.com/pakistan/demographics_profile.html); accessed 15 October 2016) 'The World Factbook: South Asia: Paksiatn' (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html> accessed 15 October 2016); 'Pakistan' (<https://joshuaproject.net/countries/PK> accessed 15 October 2016)

every 10 years, the national census has been overdue since 2008,<sup>38</sup> therefore, there are no official figures available of the current size of the Christian community in Pakistan. Second, there is a strong feeling among Christians that there has been a consistent under-enumeration of the Christian community in official census taking<sup>39</sup> in order to rob them of their due share in state resources.<sup>40</sup>

Furthermore, reputable sources show the religious breakdown differently both in terms of numbers and percentages involved. Some do not even give a statistical breakdown of the minority populations. For example, the American Central Intelligence Agency, World Fact book estimates Pakistan's total population as 201,995,540 (July 2016) Muslim (official) 96.4% (Sunni 85-90%, Shia 10-15%), other (includes Christian and Hindu) 3.6% (2010 estimate).<sup>41</sup> There are a few estimates that the current strength of the Christian community in Pakistan is around 2 to 5 percent of the total,<sup>42</sup> According to these unofficial figures the Christian population is projected to be between 3 and 5 million. However, even if the Christians are considered to be 5 million, Pakistani Christians are still a very small minority.

The religious formation of the Christian community in Pakistan has a number of ecclesiological structures. This includes episcopal, non-episcopal and independent house-church structures. There are a wide variety of denominations such as Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterians, Brethren, Lutheran, Methodist, Pentecostal,

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<sup>38</sup> 'Article 51 National Assembly' (<https://pakistanconstitutionlaw.com/article-51-national-assembly/> accessed 15 October 2016)

<sup>39</sup> P. Lall, 'Pakistani Christians: Population, Employment and Occupation,' *Focus* (Multan) 13: (1993) 141; M. Rumalshah, *Being a Christian in Pakistan*, Peshawar: Peshawar Diocese, 1998, 30, 'Protect Minorities in Pakistan' (<http://eopm.org/>, accessed 14 October 2016) I. Malik, Religious Minorities in Pakistan, Minority Rights Group International, September 2002; McClintock, 'A Sociological Profile of the Christian Minority in Pakistan,' 344

<sup>40</sup> 'Pakistan Christian Post' (<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/vieweditorial.php?editorialid=18> accessed 15 October 2016)

<sup>41</sup> The World Factbook: South Asia: Pakistan' ( (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2122.html?countryName=Pakistan&countryCode=pk&regionCode=sas&#pk>, 16 October 2016)

<sup>42</sup> 'Pakistan Demographic Profile' ([http://www.indexmundi.com/pakistan/demographics\\_profile.html](http://www.indexmundi.com/pakistan/demographics_profile.html) accessed 16 October 2016),

P. Sultan, *Small But Significant: Pakistan Praxis of Modern Mission*, Karachi: FACT Publication, 2010, 'Jinnah Institute: Minority Report 2016' (<http://jinnah-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Minority-Report-2016> accessed 20 October, 2016)

Charismatics, Seventh-day Adventist, Salvation Army, Church unions and many more mostly reflecting the original mission agencies from the west.

Even with this variety of ecclesiological governmental structures, theological orientations and convictions, since its origin the Pakistani Church has been chronically poorly engaged in intentional mission. In 1976 the Bishop of Sialkot, William Young, pointed out that 'it cannot be denied that most of the time and energy and personnel of the Church is spent on building up and maintaining Church structures rather than on outreach.'<sup>43</sup> Even after nearly 40 years, the situation has not improved much. Freda Carey, a British missionary in Pakistan over three decades, has stated that 'With a few exceptions, the Pakistani Church is still not self-propagating with growth almost entirely biological . . . The main reason for the lack of growth is not the small number of Christians, however, but the nominalism that is so prevalent.'<sup>44</sup> Carey traces back the roots of this nominalism to mass movements between 1880 and 1930, when thousands of low caste, poorly educated or illiterate people became Christians with little formal instruction and, because of insufficient mission personnel, many of the newly converted remained in that situation, resulting in nominalism. She further argues that where discipleship took place, it was sometimes superficial, not getting to the roots of cultural attitudes and worldview, so that shrine worship, magic, superstition and the veneration of *pirs* (holy men) still exist side by side with Christianity in Pakistan.<sup>45</sup> This phenomenon of nominal Christianity, a Christian allegiance in name but not in heart, is to be found among all forms of Christianity in Pakistan.

Similarly, a pastor of a prominent church looks at the present situation of the Pakistani Church in this way,

. . . it is very evident that we have not grown much in terms of maturity and responsibility; especially in reaching out to the nations around us with the life-saving and life-changing message of the gospel. Therefore, a change is overdue and until the indigenous church takes the initiative, the things are going to be pretty much the same as they have been over the last 100 years . . . We leaders of Pakistani churches, (including past and present) by and large have been guilty of feeding the church of God with the ideas of men and the philosophies and fads of the world rather than feeding them with the Word of God. It does not surprise me to

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<sup>43</sup> W. Young 'Selfhood and Mission' in A. Barkat (ed.) *Struggle for Selfhood: A Consultation Between The Church of Pakistan and Her Partners from Abroad*, Lahore: The Institute of Political and Social Studies, FCC, 1976, 34-53 citing 37

<sup>44</sup> F. Carey, 'Edinburgh 1910 and Pakistan' *Al-Mushir*, Vol.52, 2010/04, 137-168, citing 139

<sup>45</sup> F. Carey, 'Edinburgh' citing 139-141

see minimal growth in quality and quantity over the years. The growth is consistent with the diet that we have given her.<sup>46</sup>

Abera Ayele, one of the Ethiopian mission mobilizers on a visit to the largest theological seminary in Pakistan, laments the situation of the Pakistani Church concerning mission engagement in the following words:

Pakistan is one of the most unreached nations of the world. Why there is no passion, no zeal, no tears and more sadly no vision for missions work? There are many possible reasons but what I found out is that there is a deep rooted misconception of the ownership of missions work. According to their perception; missions work is white men's work. If theologians in a well-recognized seminary have such perception, where is the hope for this nation?<sup>47</sup>

The Principal of an evangelical Bible college in Pakistan feels the same disappointment and frustration, he writes,

One has to put this in a proper perspective that the idea of national missions efforts is not a church based vision and also not a conscious effort on the part of main mission groups. The mission efforts seen among nationals in recent years are examples of those with the vision to reach out to Muslims. These people were part of churches but it was mainly their own vision as commitment rather than a mission movement in the church or denomination or overseas missions effort.<sup>48</sup>

The above statements by Pakistani seminary and church leaders signify a lack of responsibility and vision for mission engagement in the churches in Pakistan.

David Bosch contended that 'the Christian faith . . . is intrinsically missionary.'<sup>49</sup> In a similar manner, Mark Laing points out 'Christianity in its essence is missionary. It stands unique from other world faiths as a faith which must continually be translated into new cultures as it spreads.'<sup>50</sup> According to the Joshua project there are currently 393 unreached people groups in Pakistan,<sup>51</sup> but the Pakistani Church is predominantly a Punjabi church. Approximately 80% of the Christian community is clustered in the province of the Punjab.<sup>52</sup> The opportunity this presents is not only restricted to people groups but to the vast number of people presently around the

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<sup>46</sup> A. Calib 'Senior Pastor's Annual Report and Direction of Church Ministry, January – December 2013' in *International Christian Fellowship Annual Reports*, 2013, 3-8 citing 3 & 6

<sup>47</sup> A. Ayele, 'You want to cry with me' as cited by F. Carey, 'Edinburgh 1910 and Pakistan', citing 142

<sup>48</sup> A. Khan, as cited by F. Carey, 'Edinburgh 1910 and Pakistan', citing 143

<sup>49</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 8

<sup>50</sup> M. Laing 'The Changing Face of Mission: Implications for the Southern Shift in Christianity', *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol. XXXIV no. 2, April 2006, 165- 177, citing 166

<sup>51</sup> 'Pakistan' (<http://joshuaproject.net/countries/PKP> ; accessed 7 July 2015)

<sup>52</sup> P. Sookhdeo, *A People Betrayed: The Impact of Islamization on the Christian Community in Pakistan*, Christian Focus Publications and ISAAC Publications, 2002, 68-69.

Pakistani Church who have never heard the Gospel. There are only a few honorable exceptions to this in most areas of Pakistan: reaching out in Sindh among Hindu groups or work in the Northern areas. However, nationally, there are huge possible avenues for the Pakistani Church to embark on mission engagement that are not a reality yet. Therefore as Christianity has been proved able to translate itself significantly into other cultures and people down through the ages, the current situation asks some hard questions about the nature of Pakistani Christianity.

On a regional level as well, the mission engagement of the Pakistani churches needs to be questioned. Geographically the Pakistani Church is placed in a strategic location as it lies in the center of the 10/40 Window, which could make it a center of renewed mission focus.<sup>53</sup> The 10/40 Window, a term coined by Luis Bush, a Christian missionary strategist in 1990, refers to the area located between 10 and 40 degrees latitude above the equator. This area includes most of the Arab world and the other major Muslim nations. An estimated 2.97 billion individuals, in approximately 5,539 unreached people groups, are living in the 10/40 Window.<sup>54</sup> Although the Pakistani Church is culturally, geographically and linguistically close to many of the people groups residing in the 10/40 window, there is very little evidence that Pakistani churches have sent their missionaries intentionally to reach out to other people groups residing in this area or beyond. This lack of evidence speaks of inadequate mission engagement by the Pakistani churches and raises further questions about the health of Pakistani churches.

The Pakistani Church has a complex context of poverty, discrimination, illiteracy, persecution, religious extremism, corruption, instability, terrorism and lives in an energy crisis. In the case of poverty, for example, according to a reputable national newspaper, currently half of the country's population is in the clutches of multi-dimensional poverty.<sup>55</sup> Another source claims that more than 40% of the people

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<sup>53</sup> L. Bush, 'The 10/40 Window, Getting to the Core of the Core'1990, (<http://web.archive.org/web/20051118223835/http://www.ad2000.org/1040broc.htm> ; accessed 09 July 2015)

<sup>54</sup> '10/40 Window'([https://joshuaproject.net/resources/articles/10\\_40\\_window](https://joshuaproject.net/resources/articles/10_40_window); accessed 09 July 2015)

<sup>55</sup> M. Haider, 'Half of Pakistan lives in Poverty' 20<sup>th</sup> September 2014, (<http://www.thenews.com.pk/todays-news-2-273911-half-of-pakistan-population-lives-in-poverty-un-report>; accessed 08 July 2015)

within the country are living their lives below the poverty line.<sup>56</sup> Where does the Pakistani Church stand in all this? Pervaiz Sultan, a Pakistani missiologist writes, 'Christians are among the poorest of the poor . . . therefore, a ghetto mentality has emerged among them . . . the search for ways to play a significant role in witnessing contextually to the gospel values . . . is challenging for Christianity in Pakistan.'<sup>57</sup>

'Today Pakistan has become a cockpit for radical Islamism and its terror offshoots.'<sup>58</sup> Therefore, another considerable challenge that is facing Pakistan is the menace of terrorism, which is eroding the country's social structure, economic development and political system. A new global study conducted in 2014 by the London-based Institute for Economics and Peace has ranked Pakistan third on the Global Terrorism Index.<sup>59</sup> From 2001 to 2013, the total number of terrorist incidents has risen to 13,198. Similarly, the number of suicide bombings between 2001 and 2007 stood at only 15, but from 2007 to November 2014, the number of suicide attacks jumped to 358 – the highest anywhere in the world.<sup>60</sup> Fatalities due to terrorist violence have gone from 189 in 2003 to 2239 in 2015.<sup>61</sup> The direct and indirect cost incurred for Pakistan by the war on terror and the losses due to terrorist attacks has increased. The loss incurred due to terrorism to Pakistan in 14 years is estimated at US\$107 billion or Rupees 8.7 trillion according to Ishaq Dar, the current Finance Minister, in June 2015.<sup>62</sup> In this milieu of terrorism in the name of religion, Pakistani Christians are persecuted, with a string of terrorist attacks on churches, a Christian hospital and a school for children of Christian missionaries.<sup>63</sup> The Pakistani

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<sup>56</sup> 'Poverty in Pakistan- 40% People Living Below Poverty Line' (<http://www.geotauaisay.com/poverty-in-pakistan-40-people-living-below-poverty-line.html>; accessed 08 July 2015)

<sup>57</sup> P. Sultan, *Small*, 19

<sup>58</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *Triple Jeopardy for the West: Aggressive Secularism, Radical Islamism and Multiculturalism*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2012, 96

<sup>59</sup> 'Cooperative Insurance Suitable for Muslims' (<http://www.dawn.com/news/1145300> accessed 08 July 2015)

<sup>60</sup> I. Khan, 'Pakistan Most Terror Hit Nation' Updated Feb 23, 2014; (<http://www.dawn.com/news/1088864> ; accessed 08 July 2015)

<sup>61</sup> 'Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2016' (<http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/casualties.htm> ; accessed 08 July 2015)

<sup>62</sup> 'Billion Economy Losses Due to Terrorism' (<http://www.asiadespatch.org/2015/06/05/107-billion-economic-losses-due-to-terrorism-ishaq-dar/>; accessed 08 July 2015)

<sup>63</sup> H. Nasir, 'Country Focus', *Al-Mushir*, Vol.44, no.3, 2002, 118-123

churches are burdened with the loss of precious lives along with the loss of infrastructure and valuables.

In such a situation, even the very presence of the Pakistani Church is a dazzling miracle of God in itself but is this presence in the form of a shell: isolated, ghettoized and secure in its own comfort-zone, or is the Church reaching out to identify and be engaged with its context? Some deep, searching, hard and bold questions need to be asked about the nature and purpose of the Pakistani Church for a time such as this. These questions need to be asked in a way that will yield answers unique to the dynamics of local churches. To develop an adequate mission theology and practice for the church in the midst of this restricted context is no longer optional. For the challenging issues and problems in Pakistani society make the Church's missionary role even more significant. It needs to respond to it in a biblically appropriate manner.

The above setting justifies conducting this study to evaluate the mission engagement of Pakistani churches, particularly looking at their theology, practice and perceived restrictions. What challenges and responsibilities face the people of God in Pakistan in their mission in the light of this present milieu? Pakistani churches have the option either to limp along struggling to maintain what they have in their survival mode, or to rise to new life and vitality as they understand the missionary purpose for which they exist.

The unique and challenging situation in Pakistan places new burdens on the Pakistani Church to understand and engage in the context of the surrounding society through daily living and engagement to transform that society. The presence of the Pakistani Church offers a number of opportunities for mission in terms of social action, dialogue, proclamation and identification.

## **1.5. Research Methodology**

### *1.5.1. Quantitative and Qualitative Methods*

This inquiry involves both quantitative and qualitative methods. The case study method of qualitative research has been used for the current research because it is an inter-disciplinary and interactive approach applicable to a single unit or a



bounded system. Which.<sup>64</sup> Researcher Robert K. Yin defines the case study research method 'as an empirical inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.'<sup>65</sup>

For this research, multiple methods of data collection were used which included six sources of evidence for data collection in the case study protocol: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts. This study also collected data using focus groups. Forty interviews of leaders were conducted and sixty-four respondents were interacted within seven focus groups in the Punjab and Sindh drawn from both denominations. These groups were not mixed but were drawn separately from each denomination.

Based on key informants the qualitative research gathered data of about 150 hours and included 50 site-visits for direct and participant observation. Archival research included both electronic (i.e., Internet-based) and hard-copy issues of booklets in addition to minutes and reports of meetings, letters, and similar documents.

To substantiate the qualitative research and for the purpose of validating the findings, quantitative surveys were conducted, using questions which facilitated answers that could be readily compiled and quantified. This approach helped to formulate an overview of how Pakistani churches are engaged in mission. About 1050 forms were sent out to the churches (CoP and FGA) all over Pakistan. Out of which some 610 forms were returned, leaving out late responses and cases with missing data 518 cases have been used in the final evaluation.

### *1.5.2. Research Ethics*

The London School of Theology Research Ethics code of practice for involving human participants was followed strictly during this research.<sup>66</sup> Before approaching

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<sup>64</sup> S. Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education, Revised and Expanded*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998, 12

<sup>65</sup> R. Yin. *Case study Research: Design and Methods*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage 1984, 23

<sup>66</sup> London School of Theology in Partnership with Middlesex University, *Research Student Handbook*, 2014-2015, 32-35

the participants, written ethical approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of London School of Theology.<sup>67</sup> The research involved no vulnerable or unreliable participants such as children under age 18 or dementia patients. The research was guided by the three fundamental ethical principles that ensure the protection of human participants: causing no harm, doing good and respect for participants' choice; by ensuring informed consent, the use of information sheets and promising and maintaining confidentiality.

Permission to conduct this research was obtained from the key leadership of the churches involved in the study. In the case of CoP permission was obtained from the appropriate diocesan bishop for field research. Both the current bishops took Episcopal charge of their diocese in 2012. At first they were not ready to accept the challenges of this study, probably due to their new administrative and spiritual responsibilities. Despite several attempts in person and writing the Lahore Diocese maintained high secrecy and provided very limited resources to assess its mission engagement.<sup>68</sup> Only once permission was granted were the potential informants approached to conduct focus groups or interviews. The survey forms were sent to the district superintendents, or directly to the parish priests, with the knowledge and permission of the respective bishop and his administration office.

Similarly, in the case of FGA, permission from its key leadership was obtained before approaching the participants for interviews. For surveys, the forms were sent directly to the church pastors with the knowledge and permission of FGA headquarters and board. With the approval of Rev. Dr. Liqueat Qasir, the principle of FGA Bible College, a small sample of FGA Bible students and members of women ministry groups were targeted at the college to get diverse data for FGA. The students and women represented churches from all over Pakistan and are mostly serving in key positions.

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<sup>67</sup> Meeting held at LST on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2014. William Atkinson (chair and note taker), Tony Lane, second supervisor and Irene Davies, acting head, Theology and Counselling were part of the committee.

<sup>68</sup> The request was made for archives, ecclesiastical records, reports, Diocesan council minutes, and total strength of the membership but that was not provided. This is probably because the diocesan leadership lacks self-reflection and is not confident about the growth and development of mission engagement.

From both denominations, most of the responses were mailed directly back to me. The data gathered is considered privileged information, therefore it is kept securely and is not disclosed publically. Furthermore, the data is coded with numbers instead of names to protect the identity of the participants.

### *1.5.3 The Sample Composition*

In the final sample of 518, there were equal numbers of participants included from both denominations. As Pakistan is a male dominated society, the final sample of the respondents is comprised of 60.4% males and 39.6% females. Regarding the position of the respondents in their churches 24.7% said that they were Pastors or Elders in their churches; 25.1% identified themselves as committee members; 50.2% identified themselves as congregational members in their churches. Regarding age demographics: 44.2% identified themselves as in the age group of 15 – 30 years, 42.3% between 30 – 50 years of age and 13.5% above 50 years old.

### *1.5.4. Data Analysis*

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the analysis of the data from the quantitative research. Graphical techniques were used for individual results to establish relationships and identify trends in a comparative way. A specific framework for analyzing qualitative data was used for both deductive and inductive approaches. For data analysis of the evaluation of the mission theology and practices of the Pakistani churches, a deductive approach was applied which is based on the grids already in existence developed by Christopher Wright and Michael Nazir-Ali. Wright divides the whole biblical story in four major sections i.e. creation, fall, redemption in history and new creation. Nazir-Ali argues that the Church exercises her missionary vocation in a number of different ways - through presence, identification, dialogue, service, and evangelism.<sup>69</sup> On the other hand, an inductive approach was adopted for the data generated by the evaluation of perceived restrictions, in order to identify the emergence of a number of patterns, themes and categories.

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<sup>69</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 104-125; M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 139-193

The results were thoroughly examined to identify the shortcomings or competence of these denominational churches in the whole process of rediscovering the role of Pakistani churches in mission. As a result of the process of evaluation some recommendations are made.

## **1.6. Research Limitations**

With all of its theological diversity, the Pakistani Church has not produced much literature and debate on mission theology and practice as yet. This constituted an immense challenge right from the beginning of this research but it was overcome by collecting primary data through both the qualitative and quantitative research. Attending to my own chief concern collecting sufficient quantitative data (a survey form consisted of 103 questions) proved to be more than enough to deal with it. Consequently, all the data could not be used directly. However, that unused data has contributed significantly to my ability to analyze the information and better understand the current state of mission engagement of the Pakistani Church.

Overall, the quantitative research substantiates the qualitative results. However, another significant problem was that at some points the congregants of both denominations rated themselves as highly or significantly engaged in mission, clearly contradicting the findings of the qualitative ground research. This was probably because people were reluctant to reveal their weaknesses in a culture of shame and honor. At such points, the research has inclined to rely more on the qualitative results.

With my Western mission training, Pentecostal background, and current evangelical convictions primarily rooted in Lausanne theology, I began this research with a position of thinking that the Pakistani church is generally not engaged in mission at all. During this research I realized that I was pre-judging the engagement of the churches in terms of crossing cultural, geographical and linguistic barriers and that this was a rather rigid and harsh way to look at the Pakistani Church in all of its complexity and with its restricted context and socio-economic status as a minority community. Now, after years of study, I understand that it is definitely not right to categorize and evaluate Pakistani mission engagement merely in terms of historical and current western theological and strategic standards and frameworks. Pakistan has a unique context, restricted in many ways but certainly with unique

opportunities to engage with the larger society that no other church in the world has.

## **1.7. Structure of Dissertation**

The body of this dissertation is divided into seven chapters. It begins with this introduction as chapter 1. Chapter 2 will give a review of a select literature of mission studies and then it will establish a combination of criteria drawn from the works of Christopher Wright and Michael Nazir-Ali. These criteria will be used in chapters 4 and 5 to evaluate the mission theology and practice of Pakistani churches.

Chapter 3, will trace the mission history of the Pakistani Church to explore origins of Pakistani Christianity. It will also give a brief history of the churches under study in particular to elucidate how its mission engagement has been shaped in the long run, and how the historical consciousness of these churches might have contributed to the formation of their current mission theology and practice.

In Chapter 4, the beliefs and attitudes of Pakistani churches towards mission will be assessed based on Christopher Wright's work, the resources published by the denominations and the field research.

Chapter 5 will employ Nazir-Ali's grid defined in chapter 2, as an analytical tool in order to evaluate the mission practice of the churches.

Chapter 6 will examine the perceived and actual restrictions of the mission engagement of churches in Pakistan. It will also present a few recommendations for effective mission engagement of Pakistani churches in the future. Finally, chapter 7 will conclude the dissertation, ending with a summarized final conclusion.

## **2. A Literature Review of Mission Studies**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This thesis proceeds from a conviction that theology and mission practice, often considered as distinct concepts and disciplines, are in fact integral to each other. The main purpose of the thesis is to evaluate the mission engagement of the Pakistani churches in both the areas of mission theology and practice. A number of questions are dealt with in this research, for instance, how are Pakistani churches involved in Christian mission? What is their theological understanding of mission? What do their theological frames of reference or understandings convey about the theological assumptions that have shaped and are shaping the mission practice of these churches.

Before attempting to answer these questions in the following chapters, an essential prerequisite is to establish a criteria for evaluation that is biblically faithful and fits the ecclesiological context. Thus, this chapter has a twofold purpose, first, it will review a select literature of mission studies and then it will establish a combination of criteria drawn from the works of two distinguished scholars. To evaluate the mission theology of Pakistani churches, Christopher Wright's work on the biblical theology of mission will be used as a first analytical tool to assess mission theology of Pakistani churches. Wright has developed a biblical theology of mission in four major sections of biblical story, i.e. creation, fall, redemption in history and new creation. Michael Nazir-Ali's work on Church's mission practice will be used as a second analytical tool to evaluate mission practice of Pakistani Church. Nazir-Ali argues that the Church practices her missionary vocation in a number of different ways. Thus, he identifies them as presence, identification, dialogue, action and evangelism.

In order to address the problem of lack of mission engagement of Pakistani churches, this chapter will discuss some select literature on mission studies in areas directly relevant to this research. The chapter is divided into the five main following sections.

- Literature reporting research on mission studies in Pakistan
- Literature primarily relevant to the biblical theology of mission
- Literature focused on mission ecclesiology
- Christopher Wright on missional hermeneutic and biblical theology of mission
- Nazir-Ali on essential characteristics of missionary church

## **2.2. A Review of Pakistan Mission Literature**

The study of the mission engagement of the Pakistani churches is a pioneering study- a reflection that is long over-due. Insofar self-reflection is measured in terms of research and publication, there is currently very little reflection on mission theology in Pakistan. However, some Pakistani scholars and church leaders have applied themselves to different aspect of mission and have done some valuable work about mission in Pakistan. In this section, I will analyze the strengths and weaknesses of their approaches.

As a result of three international mission consultations held in 2000, 2002 and 2010 the Lahore diocese with its long history of 138 years has produced two books on mission.<sup>70</sup> That work is based on the records of a compendium of the papers presented at the consultations: *Mission and Evangelism (2000 & 2002)*. It is a significant work and presents some foundations for mission in biblical and contextual perspectives. It covers some relevant theological issues such as mission and evangelism, an exposition of the book of Acts, contextualization and holistic mission. However, a drawback of this work is that the topics covered are the views of the speakers (national and international) at the consultation and do not necessarily deal with mission practice at the grass roots level and the restrictions upon it in particular context of Pakistan. This thesis sets out on the needed task of re-examining mission from the viewpoint of the local parishes and congregations. Moreover, it seeks to deal with people's beliefs and attitudes regarding mission and

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<sup>70</sup> *Church of Pakistan: Mission and Evangelism, International Conference 2000, Pakistan, Lahore: CoP, Lahore Diocese, 2001 & Church of Pakistan: Lahore Diocese 125 Anniversary, Consultation on Mission and Evangelism: Keeping our Faith Alive in this Millennium 2002, Lahore: CoP, Lahore Diocese, 2003*

the perceived restrictions upon them, which limit mission engagement in the local context.

Aslam Barkat's, a Pakistani historian from Lahore diocese in his book, *Mirror, Church of Pakistan: Lahore Diocese* (2002) clearly describes the diocese's historical context, its various developments and mission engagement in various ministries in the Pakistani society. However, Barkat's work is more one of self-congratulation rather than a critical historical analysis of diocesan mission engagement. This limitation aside, his work has been helpful for providing some useful information for this research.

Pervaiz Sultan's *Church and Development* (2001) provides some relevant theological and practical reflection on the issues related to the social action of two key dioceses of the CoP: Hyderabad and Multan. He discusses the development priorities in the dioceses in the contexts of a feudal and religiously biased national and international development debate. By limiting his work to development, it is very clear that it does not cover proclamation, dialogue and identification aspects of the dioceses that he studied. So this work lacks comprehensive implications for these other aspects of mission. Also as his work is limited to episcopal structures it fails to offer implications for congregational structures engaged in mission.

Shafiq Kanwal's book entitled *Khutbath-e-Lahore* (Lectures at Lahore 2012) primarily designed as a mission course for seminary students, vividly describes the mission from biblical, historical, cultural and strategic perspectives. However, it does not speak out the missiological implications for the Pakistani local churches in their unique social and cultural contexts concerning mission engagement.

Ishaq Gill's district superintendent of Hyderabad diocese, M. Div. research published under the title *A Survey of Problems and Possibilities for Mission and Evangelism in Sindh* (1995) contributes a reflection on the traditions, experiences and concepts of the tribal Christians in South Pakistan. The most significant elements of his research are the geographical and historical background of the Sindhi people groups and opportunities for mission in Sindh. However, his work does not deal with mission from a theological perspectives in depth.

A substantial book on the history of the Hyderabad diocese is the work of Steward Entwistle published under the title *From Every Tribe: NZCMS Missionaries and the*



*Tribal Church in Lower Sindh Pakistan 1927 to 1997* (2012). This book is written from the point of view of the New Zealand Church Missionary Society and its missionaries who played important roles in the development of the tribal church in Lower Sindh. Although it highlights the contribution of local workers but lacks indigenous approach to describe history as it is mainly for the audience of New Zealand.

No Pakistani has explored FGA's mission work as yet. To date only two detailed works on the local FGA have appeared, first is a book by Barbro Anderson, *Swedish Pentecostal Movement in Pakistan 1943-1995*. Anderson's work primarily covers evaluation, documentation and education within the Swedish Pentecostal Mission. The second work is a Master's dissertation produced by Michael Boot (a British Assemblies of God missionary) as part of his degree requirement for the University of Wales at Bangor. Boot's work mainly deals with the overall contribution of Pentecostal founders and pioneers in Pakistan. Produced with different priorities and for Western audiences, both these works lack empathy for the local culture. Therefore, they do not present an indigenous perspective of FGA's mission history, theology and practice.

In recent years 2013-2015, *Satoon-e-Haq*, a magazine produced by FGA on a monthly basis has published different articles on mission theology. These articles are produced to enhance awareness among FGA congregations and do not necessarily deal with practices and restrictions related to the mission engagement as such. Moreover, the magazine is not peer reviewed and therefore cannot be considered as scholarly research.

## **2.3. A Select Literature Primarily Relevant to the Biblical Theology of Mission**

### *2.3.1. David Bosch on Paradigm Shift in Mission*

In *Transforming Mission* (1991) David Bosch addresses a theology of mission from an ecumenical perspective in three aspects i.e. Scriptural, historical, and ecclesiological approach. These major fields of Bosch's work are very significant for developing a conversation in mission engagement of the Pakistani Church. Bosch's

main argument is that mission is *missio Dei*, it is not the church which undertakes mission but *missio Dei* which constitutes the mission.<sup>71</sup> Bosch goes on to say that 'There is church because there is mission, not vice versa. To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people, since God is a fountain of sending love.'<sup>72</sup> Thus, for Bosch in the emerging ecclesiology the role of the church is to participate in the mission of God<sup>73</sup> and the church's mission is only a subset of a larger mission.

In his Scriptural reflections, Bosch argues convincingly that the New Testament (NT) is a missionary document.<sup>74</sup> Beginning with this significant starting point, Bosch argues that the Bible itself does not offer a single mission theology but several, and he distinguishes the missionary approaches of Jesus, Matthew, Luke-Acts, and Paul.<sup>75</sup> He characterizes Jesus' ministry as 'an inclusive mission', embracing all and breaking down barriers between peoples.<sup>76</sup> Seeing the gospel of Matthew as a distinct sub-paradigm of the early church's mission, he argues that Matthew envisions a mission to both Jews and Gentiles, which is characterized by discipleship and a call to challenge social injustice.<sup>77</sup> Bosch's mission model of Luke-Acts can be summarized by Luke 4:18-19 quoting Isaiah 61: 1-2, focusing on forgiveness and solidarity.<sup>78</sup> He has further identified that in Luke's missionary paradigm the Spirit becomes the catalyst, the guiding and driving force of mission. While telling of the Jewish and Gentile missions in Acts he makes it clear that the church may not turn its back on the people of the old covenant. For Bosch witness is an appropriate term to define Luke's missionary paradigm - in economic, social, political, physical, psychological and spiritual dimensions. Paul's missionary paradigm while every bit as powerful focuses on God's invitation to join the eschatological community.<sup>79</sup>

Bosch's NT models of mission are important for this research as they present strong evidence of the mission engagement of both Jesus and the early church. With this

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<sup>71</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 519

<sup>72</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 389-390

<sup>73</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 372

<sup>74</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 15

<sup>75</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 15-178

<sup>76</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 28-29

<sup>77</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 56-83

<sup>78</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 100-101

<sup>79</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 123-178

perspective the mission practice of Pakistani church would be validated and strengthened. On the other hand, unlike Wright, Bosch in his scriptural reflection fails to deal with the OT in detail. This is problematic for this thesis, which has a clear focus to look at mission through the whole of Scriptures. So, the danger of looking only on the NT and overlooking the OT presents a risk of undermining the central tenets of a biblical theology of mission

Bosch then proceeds to present a critical analysis of the history of mission through the Primitive, Hellenistic and Medieval eras, the Protestant Reformation, and the Enlightenment, revealing the deviations in mission theology and practice by using the paradigms of Thomas Kuhn and Hans Küng to highlight the change in the theoretical structures.<sup>80</sup> These historical differences in mission theology and practice are a helpful resource. However, Bosch's work is basically from a Western perspective, therefore he does not take into account South Asian sub-continent Christianity with its ancient roots in the first century and more recent history. In addition, while reviewing major ecclesiological traditions he completely ignores the Pentecostal movement, which is an important component of the current research.

Finally, Bosch concludes his work by offering insights to what he calls the 'Emerging Ecumenical Missionary Paradigm' and focuses on topics such as the *missio Dei*, justice, evangelism, contextualization, liberation theology, and Christianity's response to other religions. Bosch lists thirteen components in all. All these aspects contribute to a description of a very broad spectrum of mission activity, underpinning its all-inclusive nature.

I find that considering a variety of paradigms has helped this research to be more deliberate in viewing different forms of mission engagements. On the other hand Bosch fails to address contemporary issues like ecology, religious extremism and the life of the church in a minority context. Even with the above gaps identified in Bosch's work, it has given impetus to the research of this thesis.

### 2.3.2. *George Peters on Evangelical Biblical Theology of Mission*

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<sup>80</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 181-348

In his book *A Biblical Theology of Missions* (1972), George Peters begins where Christopher Wright in *The Mission of God* also begins: 'the Bible is not a book about theology as such, but rather, a record of theology in mission.'<sup>81</sup> Peters with his evangelical stance builds a strong case against philosophical, liberal and ecumenical approaches to the Bible. In the preface to the book, he states, '*I make no apology for accepting the Bible uncritically and authoritatively.*'<sup>82</sup> In his work, Peters has structured his work in three sections, the biblical foundations of missions, biblical delineation of missions and the dynamics of missions.

One of his convictions is that 'the Bible must be interpreted Christo-centrally, as Christ Himself interpreted the Scriptures to His disciples (Luke 24: 25-27, 44-47).'<sup>83</sup> His chapter one begins with Jesus Christ and not with the OT. Then he builds his theological argument on the nature of God and concludes that the 'triune God in His very being as Spirit, light and love is an outgoing God, a missionary God . . . Father, Son and Holy Spirit are cooperating and coordinating to bring man back from his sinful wandering . . . to his pristine state, purpose, destiny and glory.'<sup>84</sup>

He dedicates a very significant amount of work towards the OT and establishes the universality of salvation and ethical monotheism throughout the OT. In his work on the NT, he states that 'the book of Acts is the authentic missionary record of the apostles and the early church and that all the epistles were written to churches established through missionary endeavors . . . with the exception of Matthew, even the gospels were written to missionary churches.'<sup>85</sup> So, Peters believes that the missionary theology of the NT is not difficult to establish. Next, he has focused on the Great Commission as found in all four gospels, and mission ecclesiology. He argues that mission is 'not an imposition upon the church for it belongs to her nature . . . . Mission flows from the inner constitution, character, calling and design of the church.'<sup>86</sup> In the later part of his work Peters has included a discussion on the ways of going about missions and the dynamics of missions.

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<sup>81</sup> G. Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Missions*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1972, 9

<sup>82</sup> G. Peters, *A Biblical*, 9

<sup>83</sup> G. Peters, *A Biblical*, 9

<sup>84</sup> G. Peters, *A Biblical*, 81

<sup>85</sup> G. Peters, *A Biblical*, 131

<sup>86</sup> G. Peters, *A Biblical*, 200

A problem with the work of Peters is that despite his scripturally well-informed argument about the triune God, he gives very little space to the person of the Holy Spirit. Similarly he chooses not to add reference to or discuss satanic worship, spiritual warfare, idolatry and demon-possession. This thesis is addressing the issue of nominal Christianity in Pakistan that is often linked with shrine worship, folk Islam and demon possession. On the other hand, in Pakistan, especially for Pentecostal churches, exorcism is an effective mission method for reaching out to Muslims. Apart from this, the comprehensive biblical theology of Peters has been a very useful resource in the initial phase of this research.

### 2.3.3. *A. Scott Moreau, Gary R. Corwin, and Gary B. McGee on Contemporary Missions*

Designed as an introductory textbook on the topic of contemporary missions, *Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey* (2004) by A. Scott Moreau, Gary R. Corwin and Gary B. McGee offers readers a broad overview of the subject from an evangelical point of view. They have divided their work into five sections: biblical, historical, two sections on pragmatic information for preparation for mission, and an exploration of some contemporary challenges to missions.

In their biblical and theological foundations for mission, the authors argue vigorously that any theology of mission must have an evangelistic mandate at its center. Mission in the OT is explored as a divine drama sub-divided into four acts i.e. creation and the fall, God's calling and setting apart a people for himself, God's work in rescuing his people and God's work in sending his people into exile. They argue that the missionary call of Israel had not only centripetal impetus but also centrifugal.<sup>87</sup> In their work on the NT in all four Gospels, the themes of the sending of Jesus and his subsequent sending of his Christian Apostles are highlighted. Jesus' mission in Luke 4:18-19 is described as primarily spiritual. The discussion on the mission engagement of the NT church is built on Acts 1:8; beginning in Jerusalem, then to all Judea and Samaria, and finally to the ends of the earth.<sup>88</sup> For comparison with the views of Bowers, Kane, and Greenway alternative views are presented in the discussion of the characteristics of Paul's missionary methods. Their discussion

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<sup>87</sup>, A. Scott Moreau et al, *Introducing World Missions: A Biblical Historical and Practical Survey*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004, 36

<sup>88</sup> A. Scott Moreau et al, *Introducing*, 52-54

of mission theology clearly places the Bible at the foundation of mission theology. In addition, evangelism, discipleship and church planting are seen as the core of mission, while allowing room for broader elements. A quick tour of missionary work throughout the last two thousand years, mainly with a Western perspective, is presented in three eras: Pre-modern (30-1500), the era of discovery and colonialism (1500-1900), and expansion to and from every continent (1900-2000).<sup>89</sup> The ecumenical inclusion of Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, and Evangelical histories has helped demonstrate that, despite troublesome theological differences, most Christian groups are engaged in mission locally and globally.

The authors have also included significant information on practical issues such as the missionary call, preparation and training, family issues, short-term mission trips, and relations with home churches and mission agencies. Although the work is decidedly produced for North American evangelical missionaries it has some relevance for the Pakistani Church. For instance, a plethora of challenges in mission practice, which include themes of spiritual warfare, folk religions, persecution and conversion, are covered in a series of small essays and concluded soundly within the mainstream of evangelical missiology.

#### 2.3.4. *Craig Ott, Stephen Strauss, and Timothy Tennent on Recent Developments in Mission*

Relying on David's Bosch analysis Craig Ott, Stephen Strauss and Timothy Tennent in their book *Encountering Theology of Mission* (2010) believe that that theology of mission has undergone paradigmatic shifts. Identifying a greater need for biblical clarity and global awareness regarding the mission of the Church for present times, their stated aim is to deliver a fresh overview and biblical reframing of the recent developments in 'understandings of truth, biblical authority, the nature of non-Christian religions, the role of the local church, the place of social justice, spiritual dynamics and the growth of the majority world church.'<sup>90</sup> The authors unabashedly state their commitment to the authority of Scripture and evangelical theology. They

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<sup>89</sup> A. Scott Moreau et al, *Introducing*, 93-158

<sup>90</sup> C. Ott et al , *Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments and Contemporary Issues*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010, vii

warn, 'If our mission practice and passion are based solely on catchy slogans, trendy strategies, or contemporary social scientific discoveries, and not on sound biblical foundations, mission practice will be reduced to pragmatism, enthusiasm, or even political correctness.<sup>91</sup>

The authors approve Wright's argument on the missional hermeneutic of the Bible, whereby mission becomes the focus of hermeneutical coherence.<sup>92</sup> With this understanding, in the first section on 'Biblical Foundations', they address the mission of God in both OT and NT with a focus primarily on God's plan for the nations in terms of unfolding salvation history. A few biblical texts are treated. The theme of God's relationship with the nations is argued at length. Their treatment of centripetal and centrifugal mission is helpful. As God's mediator of blessing to the nations, Israel specific mission was centripetal, attempting to attract nations to Zion, which she failed to do. Consequently, God's vision of inclusion of nations in his kingdom has to wait for its inauguration in the NT with the ministry of Jesus.<sup>93</sup> Analyzing evenhandedly the present day Protestant-conciliar and evangelical theological differences on social and evangelistic dimensions of mission thinking, Ott, Strauss & Tennent conclude both social service and the proclamation of the Lordship of Christ encompasses true *Missio Dei*. On the nature and purpose of mission,<sup>94</sup> the authors lay out seven aspects of the nature of mission. These are:

- Doxology as the purpose of mission
- Redemption as the foundation of mission
- The Kingdom of God as the center of mission
- Eschatology as the hope of mission
- The nations as the scope of mission
- Reconciliation as the fruit of mission
- Incarnation as the character of mission

While exploring into the motives and means for mission, the authors carefully highlight both positive (love for God, love for neighbor, obedience to the Great

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<sup>91</sup> C. Ott et al , *Encountering*, xiii

<sup>92</sup> C. Ott et al , *Encountering*, xviii

<sup>93</sup> C. Ott et al , *Encountering*, 3-54

<sup>94</sup> C. Ott et al , *Encountering*,79-105

Commission, calling, doxology, eschatology) and negative (cultural superiority, ecclesial power, pity, asceticism, adventure, self-realization) historical motivations in missionary vocation. In this section, their exploration of ecclesiological approaches are valuable. They maintain that the church's mission is to be a kingdom-minded community that evidences worship in word and deed amidst a not-yet-redeemed people. Thus for them, the purpose for missions is to set up these kingdom-minded communities as a sub-category of the church. This concept of kingdom communities is not a biblical category of the church and creates confusion regarding nature and mission of the Church.

With regard to the role of the local church a strong case is built for cross-cultural ministry by highlighting training, sending, and mission endeavors. It is argued that missions are a biblical vocation for selected individuals as opposed to the contemporary assumption in the missional church that everyone must be a 'missionary'.<sup>95</sup> This is a helpful treatment of the missionary call.

Not all in the book, however, is equally compelling. A chapter on 'Spiritual Dynamics and Mission' considering the spiritual aspects in mission practice is included at the end of section 2.<sup>96</sup> Here the authors miss the mark by elaborating more on spirits, evil and Satan than positive spiritual influences. These are certainly very important in mission, but spiritual formation through prayer, meditation and other spiritual exercises are not strongly highlighted.

In section three 'Mission in Local and Global Context' the authors address with a Christological approach particular issues of contextualization, comparative religions, the exclusivity of the gospel against postmodernism, pluralism, and inclusivism and the necessity of mission in the light of Christian uniqueness. As Christians from various cultures interact, the authors explain the benefits of a globalized theology through the process of contextualization, in these words:

It is not 'dumbing down' theology to irreducible minimums shared by all Bible-believing Christians. Rather, it is sharing perspectives on theology, worship, and Christian living and learning so that we enhance one another's Christian experience. The result will be a more

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<sup>95</sup> C. Ott et al , *Encountering*, 165-237

<sup>96</sup> C. Ott et al , *Encountering*, 238-264



richly hued, deeply textured theology and practice that can be shared by the universal church around the world.<sup>97</sup>

Overall, Ott, Strauss and Tennent have given a rational and critical treatment of mission theology from an evangelical perspective. They have used sidebars, diagrams, tables and case studies for further theological reflection and provide a stimulating experience to test and apply the material being learned.

### 2.3.5. *Andreas Köstenberger and Peter O'Brien's Inductive Biblical Theological Methodology and Salvation-Historical Approach for Examining Scriptures*

*Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission* (2001) a significant work explores the entire biblical canon, roughly in chronological order from creation to the new creation from a salvation-historical viewpoint. Köstenberger and O'Brien have structured their book into 10 chapters comprising the OT, the second-temple period, gospels, Paul and his writings, and the general epistles and Revelation.

The authors begin their book with a brief but careful explanation of their biblical-theological methodology, in which three aspects take precedence i.e. history, literature and theology.<sup>98</sup> A threefold aim of the book is to help readers to a greater appreciation of God's saving plan that moves from creation to new creation, to promote a deeper understanding of the significance of Jesus Christ's mission and of the mission of his disciples, and to cultivate the commitment of Christians today to the gospel and to the task of mission.<sup>99</sup>

Köstenberger and O'Brien set up their biblical theology of mission with a thematic summary of the OT. Starting from creation, the mission of Israel is examined through different stages of fall, Abraham, Exodus, kingship and prophecy. The call of Abraham establish 'mission' as a fundamental category of God's dealings with the world whom he chooses to be the 'mediator of the blessings to all peoples.'<sup>100</sup> The specific task of Israel, 'was to be holy and to serve the world by being separate.'<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> C. Ott et al, *Encountering*, 287

<sup>98</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001, 19-23

<sup>99</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 23

<sup>100</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 30

<sup>101</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 34

Köstenberger and O'Brien maintains that Israel as a nation was not 'sent' in the sense that she did not have a missionary commission to go out into the nations, they argue. This understanding of Israel's mission is distinguished from the popular notion that Israel had a missionary obligation which they failed to obey. The authors conclude that God's plan is to gather not only Israel but 'all nations' to himself and the goal of mission is the glory of God, that he may be known and honored for who he really is.<sup>102</sup>

In their brief review of second-temple-period perspectives on mission, Köstenberger and O'Brien, harmonizing with the conclusions of M. Goodman and S. McKnight, argue that early Judaism 'was not a missionary religion.'<sup>103</sup> According to their analysis, Gentiles were attracted to Judaism, becoming either God-fearers or proselytes, but Jewish projection among the Gentiles 'was largely apologetic or nationalistic' since, in the end, 'the ingathering of the Gentiles was generally considered to be God's own eschatological prerogative.'<sup>104</sup> They conclude that there is no mission paradigm neither in Second temple Judaism nor in Greco-Roman world. Thus, the Great Commission marks a significant departure of Christianity from mainstream Judaism.<sup>105</sup>

In their NT survey, the authors have examined Mark, Matthew, Luke-Acts, Paul, John, the general epistles and Revelation. Here beginning from Mark (1-16) and Matthew (1-28) several insights are given material form missiologically.<sup>106</sup> Köstenberger and O'Brien recognize that the new shape of the faith community is dynamically related to the concept of mission. Studying Mark 3:31-35, they observe that early in his ministry, Jesus dissociated himself from family blood ties and affirmed new forms of kinship. He redefined who his true mother and brothers were. This paved the way for the future formation of a new faith community.<sup>107</sup> In Matthew, the opening genealogy is linked with the coming of Christ into the Abrahamic promises. The Great Commission is carefully discussed and it is not attributed to Matthew only but seen as representative of Jesus' vision and promise.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 52

<sup>103</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 65

<sup>104</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 67

<sup>105</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 68

<sup>106</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 73-109

<sup>107</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 75

<sup>108</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 104

From Luke's writings from Luke 1 to Acts 28, the authors have shown that Jesus limited his mission to the Jews; while Paul extended it to the ends of the earth.<sup>109</sup> In Acts, the authors understand the Apostle's long stay in Jerusalem not as reluctance or disobedience to the Great commission but as purposeful and strategic. They state that 'Fundamentally theirs was a stationary rather than a missionary role'.<sup>110</sup>

In turning to Paul's missionary work, the authors clearly understand Paul's sense of mission in a twofold way, i.e. preaching the Gospel and planting new churches.<sup>111</sup> A variety of themes are discussed such as Paul's unique role as a missionary, the significance of his conversion, his mission within the purposes of God, the gospel message that Paul preached, the goals of his apostolic ministry, Paul as apostle to the Gentiles and the place of Israel in God's plan, and the role of believers within the Pauline mission.<sup>112</sup> A missiological synthesis is given for the above instead of concentrating on relevant passages from his letters.

Again, in their survey of the gospel of John and the General Epistles and Revelation a thematic approach is adopted.<sup>113</sup> For John, the main focus is on Jesus' mission as the sent One from the Father who further entrusts his disciples by sending them in the same manner. Köstenberger and O'Brien recommend that the contemporary church be more conscious of its relation to Christ's mission.<sup>114</sup> The 'concluding synthesis' pulls all this material together in a challenging manner.<sup>115</sup> One of their main conclusions is 'the divine plan of extending salvation to the ends of the earth, which is the major thrust of the Scriptures from beginning to end.... The Lord of the Scriptures is a missionary God who reaches out to the lost, and sends his servants, and particularly his beloved Son, to achieve his gracious purposes of salvation'<sup>116</sup>

A major strength of Köstenberger and O'Brien's scholarly work is that it affirms the unity of the Scriptures without denying the diversity of individual canonical authors. It highlights how mission is a thread through the whole canon. However, a few

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<sup>109</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 111-59

<sup>110</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 139

<sup>111</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 168

<sup>112</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 161-201

<sup>113</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 203-250

<sup>114</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 224

<sup>115</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 251-270

<sup>116</sup> A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien, *Salvation*, 263

problems with this work can be identified. First, although the authors give precedence to history in their biblical theological approach, they do leave some significant historical gaps in their work. For example, apart from the brief introduction to Graeco-Roman religious and philosophical propaganda, they do not explore the milieu of the first-century in which the mission was carried out to reflect on how this environment shaped the communication of the gospel. Secondly, associated with this, is their 'stationary approach' for apostles in Jerusalem, which leaves a very limited space for the possibility of the global mission of Jesus's disciples. This shows that Köstenberger and O'Brien do not take into account the early traditions in apocryphal and patristic writings that describe the departure of the apostles into world mission. The current research argues that Thomas the apostle brought the gospel to Pakistan and India. If Köstenberger and O'Brien's stationary approach had been accepted uncritically that would have meant that instead of coming to the Indian-subcontinent Thomas would have stayed back in Jerusalem. In other words the Pakistani church would be simply deprived of its ancient origins in Christianity.

Absent also is any theological reflection in their work on how the mission of God can be extended in relation to his promise to restore and renew all creation. Moreover, by limiting themselves to proclamation of the gospel with the goal of making disciples as the central aspect of the church's mission, they undermine the other aspects of mission such as presence, social action, identification and dialogue.

Limitations aside, this study with its application of biblical theological methodology is a unique one in the area of the biblical theology of mission. Careful attention is given to the whole canon and the major themes of the Scriptures. Their work has played a significant role in strengthening the theological framework of the current research.

### *2.3.6. Eckhard Schnabel's Historical, Geographical, Exegetical and Theological Analysis on Early Christian Mission*

In his encyclopedic work *Early Christian Mission* (2004) Eckhard Schnabel a NT professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School has examined the early Christian mission in order to provide a comprehensive synthesis of all the relevant historical

developments, geographical data, exegetical treatment and theological analysis of the early Christian movement.<sup>117</sup>

Examining most NT texts as dating from prior to 70 CE, <sup>118</sup> beginning his first volume with an overview of past writings on what he describes as a 'comprehensive description of the missionary movement of the first Christians' <sup>119</sup> he rightly claims that his is the first project with this degree of breadth and magnitude since Adolf von Harnack wrote classic work *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries* (1904) over a hundred years ago.

Schnabel has examined biblical texts from the OT and selected Jewish texts from Palestinian and Diaspora Judaism. With his extensive research he argues that a missionary practice in terms of active attempts to convert individuals to the worship of Yahweh is altogether nonexistent in the OT and in inter-testamental Jewish literature.<sup>120</sup>

In his analyses on the mission of Jesus himself treating relevant texts from the four canonical gospels he has focused on the mission of the twelve and the seventy two, Jesus' attitude to the Gentiles, and the missionary commissions. With his thorough study Schnabel insists that Jesus neither explicitly sought nor avoided contact with non-Jews. At the same time, Jesus' contact with non-Jews was not a major part of his mission, thus he anticipates the post-Pentecost Gentile mission of the early church.<sup>121</sup>

The activity of the early church, Schnabel claims, is rooted in the historical ministry of Jesus. With a high view of the historical value of Acts, he has examined the mission of the early church and its apostles in Jerusalem and beyond. His major argument at this point is to establish that the apostles were active in worldwide mission before Paul.

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<sup>117</sup> E. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission, Volume One: Jesus and the Twelve*, Leicester & Downers Grove, IL: Apollos and IVP Press, 2004, xxiv, 6, 8, 18

<sup>118</sup> E. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission* 21

<sup>119</sup> E. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, xxiv

<sup>120</sup> E. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 92-172

<sup>121</sup> E. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission* 272-79,290,383-84

This has specific relevance for the Pakistani context, as Schnabel argues convincingly that the apostles were aware that their goal was to be to reach beyond the borders of the Roman Empire and beyond the scope of the Jewish Diaspora. His extensive knowledge about ancient India and active land and sea trade routes, and mention of Taxila (present day Pakistan) in the chart of churches in the first and second centuries contribute historical credibility to traditions about a mission to Pakistan by the apostle Thomas.<sup>122</sup>

Schnabel commences Volume 2 with an extensive treatment of the mission of the Paul. A great deal of space is devoted to discussing the character of the various regions and cities Paul visited on his missionary journeys. Schnabel discusses extensively the communication aspects of Paul's missionary work, and he analyses the content of Paul's missionary preaching and classifies it in six major categories:<sup>123</sup>

- a) Christological Communication (pioneer preaching to Jewish audiences)
- b) Theological Communication ( pioneer preaching to the Gentiles)
- c) Dialogical Concentration (the explanation of the gospel)
- d) Ideological Confrontation (the proclamation of Jesus as Messiah)
- e) Apologetic Confrontation (the defense do the gospel)
- f) Pastoral Concretization (encouragement of the Christian Communities)

In his discussion on the mission theologies of Matthew, Mark, Luke-Acts, John, and Peter<sup>124</sup> Schnabel argues that the authors wrote 'gospels' for the consolidation of the early Christians 'who were actively involved in missionary work among Jews and Gentiles.'<sup>125</sup>

Schnabel draws the findings of his study together in the final part, which includes several chapters on the self-understanding of the early missionaries, missionary practice, and the message proclaimed. A final chapter looks at some implications of the biblical record for modern missions, and interacts critically with relatively

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<sup>122</sup> E. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 880-895, 1529-1531, 1607-1608

<sup>123</sup> E. Schnabel, *Early Christian*, 1379-1419

<sup>124</sup> E. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 1493-1525

<sup>125</sup> E. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 1493

recent missiological approaches. He dismisses many of the theologies driven by a variety of broader political and social agendas (liberation theology, church growth, house church). However, Schnabel acknowledges the strengths of each approach he criticizes, but firmly calls for a mission understanding not based on empirical evidence or current sociological models of cultural norms, but ones 'based on competent, hermeneutical reflection, supported by theological competence, and generally informed by solid exegetical evidence.'<sup>126</sup>

Schnabel's work is phenomenal and his knowledge is encyclopedic, an extraordinary scholarly research of early Christian mission. Regarding the limitations of his work, my only concern with Schnabel's work is that he deals with the theology of mission only from Genesis to Paul and he does not cover the whole canon. He chooses to be silent on the eschatological dimension in mission. For example there is no theological reflection regarding the proclamation of coming divine judgment and destruction of the world as an integral component of the missionary message of Jesus and the apostolic church (Matthew 12:36,37; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Romans 2:16; 1 Corinthians 3:13-15; 2 Peter 2:9; 1 John 4:17). Connected to that is the new creation and restoration of the whole creation, which Schnabel ignores altogether in his momentous two volume work.

#### **2.4. A Select Literature on Mission Ecclesiology**

Two sets of discussions have played key roles in the development of mission ecclesiology. First were the missionary conferences of the International Missionary Conference (IMC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC). In 1938 at an IMC meeting in Madras, ecclesiological missiology was given its first great thrust forward. The relationship between Church and mission was re-emphasized at Willingen (1952), Evanston (1954) and Ghana (1957).<sup>127</sup> Newbigin claimed that the Willingen missionary conference was 'one of the most significant in the series of world missionary conferences.'<sup>128</sup> The final statement adopted by the Willingen

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<sup>126</sup> E. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 1573

<sup>127</sup> C. Van Engen, *God's Missionary*, 37

<sup>128</sup> L. Newbigin, 'Mission to Six Continents,' in, H. Fey (ed.) *The Ecumenical Advance: A History of the Ecumenical Movement, Volume 2, 1948-1968*; London: SPCK, 1970, 171- 197 citing 178

assembly was primarily the work of Newbigin, <sup>129</sup> in which was developed a new theological framework for the mission of the Church by affirming an explicitly Trinitarian basis for mission. This provided a context for gathering and relating many theological and missiological insights that had developed over the first half of the 20th century into a consistent missionary ecclesiology up till to date.

From the successor within the WCC to the IMC, which was set up as the continuation committee of Edinburgh 1910, the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) material covers one hundred years of mission study and reflection. Giving a synopsis of almost a century's theological reflection, Kirsteen Kim, the former vice-moderator of CWME of the WCC comments,

The mission thinking brought together in the CWME papers is broadly in the trinitarian paradigm of mission referred to as *missio Dei*. The shift from a Christo-centric interpretation of mission to a trinitarian one owes a great deal to re-reading of the Eastern church fathers and to the encounter of Western with contemporary Orthodox theology *Missio Dei* emphasizes the priority of God's sending activity in the world, by the Son and the Spirit, and the contingency of the church and its mission activities on that.<sup>130</sup>

She goes on to expound the Trinitarian mission paradigm in the relationships of the church: as a foretaste of the kingdom of God; as the body of Christ; and as a movement of the Spirit. She agrees that they are not intended to be an exhaustive mission theology for church but they reflect the historical development of mission theology from Edinburgh 1910.

Second, studies in missional ecclesiology have emerged as one of the significant developments in the last number of years. The discussion of something missionary now re-termed 'missional' is becoming increasingly common. The word 'missional' to describe 'church' got prominence in the book *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (1998),<sup>131</sup> co-authored by a group of six leaders within the Gospel and Our Culture Network (GOCN).<sup>132</sup> It was produced with

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<sup>129</sup> R. Bassham, 'Seeking a Deeper Theological Basis for Mission' *International Review of Mission*, 1978 no. 67, 329- 337 citing 331

<sup>130</sup> K. Kim, 'Mission Theology of Church' *IRM, Volume 99, Number 1, April 2010* 39-55, citing 40

<sup>131</sup> D. Guder (ed.), *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

<sup>132</sup> In the mid-1980s, the *Gospel and Our Culture Network* was founded largely as a response to Newbigin's work, *The Other Side of 1984: Questions for Churches*. The founders claimed that, 'Bishop Newbigin and others have helped us to see that God's mission is calling and sending us, the church of Jesus Christ, to be a missionary church in our own societies, in the cultures in which we find ourselves. These cultures are no longer Christian.' D. Guder, *Missional*, 5



the intent to return to the original vision of Willingen and to get the discussion of missional church back into the mainstream of church life in North America. Since then numerous works by mission theorists, ecclesiologists and mission practitioners are beginning to produce a somewhat richer field of resources by applying missionary principles to ecclesiology.<sup>133</sup>

In the following section I will give a select literature review of mission ecclesiology. This will lead to the concluding section of this chapter where there is a criteria for constructing the evaluation of the mission engagement of Pakistani churches. In the remaining chapter the terms mission, missionary and missional are used interchangeably in connection to ecclesiology. Although, I prefer using missionary or mission as they are terms of more common usage in Pakistan, where they are unavoidable (in the sense that they are present in original thought or text) so it is only in that chapter I will use the term missional. To define the term, I have borrowed Christopher Wright's definition. In his words 'missional is simply an adjective denoting something that is related to or characterized by mission, or has the qualities, attributes or dynamics of mission. Missional is to the word mission what covenantal is to covenant, or fictional to fiction.'<sup>134</sup>

#### 2.4.1. *Lesslie Newbigin on Missionary Ecclesiology*

After his theological education in Cambridge, Newbigin became a missionary to India. Returning home to the UK in the late seventies after thirty years on the mission field, he found that the religious milieu in Britain had changed. Christendom was a spent force culturally, and Britain had become a pluralist society and a more difficult field than India.<sup>135</sup> Therefore, the missionary principles that he had used

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<sup>133</sup> R. Bliese, 'The Mission Matrix: Mapping Out the Complexities of a Missional, Ecclesiology' *Word and World* 26, no. 3, Summer: 2006, 237-48; M. Frost, *Exiles: Living Missionally in a Post-Christian Culture*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006, M. Goheen, *As the Father Has Sent Me, I Am Sending You: J. E. Lesslie; Newbigin's Missionary Ecclesiology.*" *International Review of Mission* 91, no. 362, July 2002: 354; 'The Missional Church: Ecclesiological Discussion in the Gospel and Our Culture Network in North America' *Missiology* 30, no. 4, October 2002: 479-90; D. Guder, *Be My Witnesses: The Church's Mission, Message, and Messengers*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985; A. Roxburgh, *The Sky is Falling: Leaders Lost in Transition*. Eagle, ID: ACI Publishing, 2005; A. Roxburgh, and F. Romanuk, *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006

<sup>134</sup> C. Wright, *Mission*, 24

<sup>135</sup> R. Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004, 456

for decades in India needed to be used back in England. Newbigin was among the first to call for a mission to Western culture.

As a key leader in ecumenical circles, Newbigin played not only an important role at the Willingen conference but that role continued in the aftermath of Willingen. Newbigin's extensive bibliography of articles and books, beginning in 1933 and continuing to his death in 1999, made a creative contribution to the ongoing discussion of mission ecclesiology by expressing an ecumenical consensus concerning the Trinitarian missionary nature of the church.

In *Household of God*<sup>136</sup> after examining what he roughly characterized as Protestant, Catholic, and Pentecostal traditions, Newbigin attempted to establish a solid theological foundation for the missionary church with the Christological, eschatological, and pneumatological insights of 20th-century theology. He argued that the Church is only to be understood in a perspective that is at once eschatological and missionary, the perspective of the ends of the earth.

His *One Body, One Gospel, One World*<sup>137</sup> combined many of the outcomes of the missionary conferences, providing a theological foundation for them, forging them together in a cohesive unity, and applying them to problems faced by the global missionary community.<sup>138</sup> According to Bosch Newbigin articulated these three principles to summarize the ecumenical consensus that had by now been reached, '[T]he church is the mission,' which means that it is illegitimate to talk about the one without at the same time talking about the other; (2) "the home base is everywhere," which means that every Christian community is in a missionary situation; and (3) "mission is partnership", which means the end of every form of guardianship of one church over another.'<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> L. Newbigin, *The Household of God: Lectures on the Nature of the Church* London: SCM, 1953; American edition; New York: Friendship Press, 1954

<sup>137</sup> L. Newbigin, *One Body, One Gospel, One World: The Christian Mission Today*, London: International Missionary Council, 1958

<sup>138</sup> M. Goheen, 'J. E. Lesslie Newbigin's Missionary Ecclesiology', (PhD Thesis, the University of Utrecht, Netherlands, 2000), 53

<sup>139</sup> Bosch, *Transforming*, 370

In *'The Gospel in a Pluralist Society'* Newbigin argued about how to embrace Christian faith and live it out faithfully in Western, post-Enlightenment culture, which is on most sides hostile to the gospel.<sup>140</sup> This work influenced David J. Bosch. Guder, and others set out to expand the influence of the missional church movement. The second part of his book deals with the constructive project of defending religious belief, Christianity in particular. He believes Christians are to engage in dialogue with other religions,<sup>141</sup> looking for the ways God is working in their lives, willingly cooperating with them in areas that will benefit society. A dialogue, Newbigin suggests, requires listening and developing open, trusting conversations, constituting for the Christian a starting point to enter into the questions of life with those of other faith traditions or no faith at all.

A relevant part of Newbigin's argument is where he speaks of 'The Congregation as Hermeneutic of the Gospel' providing a picture of the congregation as the living, breathing expression of Christ. The picture that emerges as men and women believe the gospel and live it out in a neighborhood where good news overflows in good action becomes the hermeneutic of the gospel.<sup>142</sup> This is a most needed framework for Pakistani churches as the hostile context does not always readily provide opportunity for verbal proclamation.

#### 2.4.2. *Guder, Goheen, Roxburgh, Ed Stetzer, Hirsch and Frost on Missional Ecclesiology*

Darrell Guder, a research fellow of the GOCN, an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and Peachtree Professor of Evangelism and Church Growth at Columbia Theological Seminary, has edited *Missional Church*. Guder is convinced that a theological revolution is needed in the area of ecclesiology that would answer the question, what would the church look like if it were truly missional in design and definition.<sup>143</sup> Along with five other authors he produced a book containing nine papers describing the need for a missional ecclesiology, a cultural-theological rationale behind that need, and providing some contents on

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<sup>140</sup> L. Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society*, London: SPCK, 1997, 3

<sup>141</sup> L. Newbigin, *The Gospel*, 173-185

<sup>142</sup> L. Newbigin, *The Gospel*, 227-232

<sup>143</sup> D. Guder (ed.), *Missional*, 7

missional leadership, structures and connectedness. Guder observes that ecclesiocentric understanding of the mission of Christendom has been replaced by theocentric reconceptualization rooted in Trinitarian theology. The people of God, the fundamental instrument of witness, are called to be missionary church in their own societies, in the cultures in which they find themselves.<sup>144</sup> With this incarnational approach, missional ecclesiology focuses on the church's biblical call to be preparing laity to be sent as missionaries to their own communities.

Michael Goheen's doctoral dissertation traces the development of Newbigin's thought from an ecclesiology of a Christendom establishment, through a Christocentric missionary ecclesiology, the *missio dei* as context for the church's missionary identity and finally to a Trinitarian missionary ecclesiology. It is fine research on the missionary ecclesiology of Leslie Newbigin.

In his *Sky is Falling*, Alan Roxburgh calls for a new leadership framework for the church in North America during a time of discontinuity and change. He deals with the challenge facing church leaders, who want to embark on the missional quest, to return to God and back to the center of what being a Christian is all about.<sup>145</sup> Like many other missional leaders and authors Roxburgh believes that the church is in a time of liminality, a condition of being on a threshold or at the beginning of a process.<sup>146</sup>

Ed Stetzer holds the Billy Graham Chair of Church, Mission, and Evangelism at Wheaton College and serves as Executive Director of the Billy Graham Centre for Evangelism. He has contributed significantly to the literature on missional ecclesiology through his several articles and books. Among them, Stetzer's, *'Breaking the Missional Code'* addresses the need to train leaders to provide leadership in the missional context. He provides insight on church culture and the best form of church vision for missional churches successful in impacting their communities. Stetzer's *'Planting Missional Churches'* is a book of instruction for planting biblically faithful and culturally relevant churches. It provides practical

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<sup>144</sup> D. Guder (ed.), *Missional* 5

<sup>145</sup> A. Roxburgh, *The Sky Is Falling: Leaders Lost in Transition* (Eagle, ID: Allelon Publishing, 2006), 13

<sup>146</sup> A. Roxburgh, *The Sky*, 75

guidance through all the phases of a church plant while taking a missional look at existing and emerging cultures.

Hirsch and Frost in, *'The Shaping of Things to Come'* write as Australians addressing how churches in the West can transition to missional ministry. They offer helpful insights into defining missional church, incarnational ecclesiology, a Messianic spirituality, and an Apostolic leadership.<sup>147</sup>

The works of the above ecclesiolegists speak of mission in a western culture that resides in and struggles with a post-Christendom, postmodern, pluralist society. Their theological reflection is helpful to those church leaders wrestling with an ecclesiology for the current context in the West. However to large extend it is true that contextually for the Pakistani Church these works are more theoretical than practical as the Pakistani context is not primarily post-Christendom but certainly one of religious extremism. However, having reviewed a cultural-theological rationale behind missional ecclesiology, two relevant points are worth mentioning. First, it is evident that in the post-Christendom era, the western church can no longer assume any kind of privileged place of power, influence, or standing in its own cultural context. Michael Goheen has explored factors in the decline of Christendom ecclesiology and he states that the 'most important of these factors are the collapse of colonialism, the dramatic rise, growth, and vitality of the non-western churches, and the decline and marginalization of the church in western culture.'<sup>148</sup> In one sense, the current marginalization of the western church brings it on similar grounds to the Pakistani Church which is also marginalized being a religious minority. Of course, this marginalization of Western and Pakistani churches is in their own unique cultural contexts.

Secondly, the Trinitarian theological construct of missional ecclesiology is significant for the Pakistani context. In this framework the local church is an instrument of witness preparing laity to be sent as missionaries to their own communities. It encourages both leaders and laity in the Pakistani Church to engage in authentic local mission that is rooted in God himself.

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<sup>147</sup> M. Frost & A. Hirsch. *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century Church*. Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003

<sup>148</sup> M.Goheen, 'J. E. Lesslie Newbigin's', 1

### 2.4.3. *Two Titles of Edinburgh 2010 Series*

Edinburgh 2010 brought together an unprecedentedly wide coalition of different Christian churches (Catholic, Evangelical, Orthodox, and Pentecostal and other independent groups such as African Independent Churches), through umbrella bodies, in its celebration of world Christianity and study of what it means to witness to Christ today. The titles of the Edinburgh 2010 Series are divided into two categories: in the first three belong to the official report of the conference and the second includes publications of various study groups such as transversal, regional and different confessional study groups. In this section I will briefly review two titles relevant for the current research.

*Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today* (2010) contains reports of the work of nine groups, working on the main study themes identified for the study process of Edinburgh 2010. All are essential but out of the nine, four are significant themes for the current research. I.e. foundations for mission, Christian mission among other faiths, forms of missionary engagement and ecclesiology and mission. The core group for the theme 'Forms of Missionary Engagement' explores the varieties, manifestations and strategies of missionary engagement in the contemporary world. It affirms that the word missional is related to the nature of the church, as being sent by God to the world.<sup>149</sup> Embracing the concept of 'vulnerable missions' to refer both to mission in contexts of poverty and more general mission it states 'Vulnerability is also a condition of divine mission. The Christian scriptures are replete with images of the vulnerable mission of God (Isa 53: 4-5, 12); of the God who identifies with the most vulnerable in society'.<sup>150</sup> This concept speaks directly into the vulnerability of the Pakistani Church in two ways: first, it carries a fresh perspective that the missionary God can himself identify with the vulnerability of the church in its poverty and powerlessness; second, trusting and discerning his voice in itself becomes an enabling condition for its meaningful engagement with its context.

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<sup>149</sup> D. Balia & K. Kim, *Witnessing to Christ Today: Vol II*, Oxford: Regnum Books, 2010, 120

<sup>150</sup> D. Balia & K. Kim, *Witnessing*, 122

Challenged by Bosch's work on paradigm shifts, *A Learning Missional Church: Reflections from Young Missiologists* (2012)<sup>151</sup> compiles contributions from fresh generations of leaders and thinkers from different corners of the global church. Responding to the major theme 'learning from others and from one another', four perspectives i.e. missional church, encounter between religions, migrant perspectives, and missional challenges are dealt with. The second section on *Encounter between Religions* is helpful as it shows how Islam and Christianity may learn from one another in their perception of obedience and discipleship.

## **2.5. Christopher Wright on Missional Hermeneutic and Biblical Theology of Church- Developing a Criteria**

In this section, first, I will provide a summary of Christopher Wright's work which provides a convenient framework to set out some of the issues that this research will deal with - though not necessarily in the particular order established by him. Second, I will suggest the significance of Wright's biblical theology for the Pakistani context. Finally in this section, I will elaborate on Wright's biblical theology as specified in four major sections of the biblical story line i.e. creation, fall, redemption and new creation - a theological grid that this research has employed to evaluate the beliefs and attitudes in mission theology of Pakistani churches. I will establish criteria by raising questions from Wright's theological framework to evaluate the scope and arena of the mission theologies of CoP and FGA. I will show how questions were constructed and presented to collect data in the field research. The detailed findings of these questions will be evaluated in chapter 4.

### *2.5.1. The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*

Christopher Wright, an Anglican pastor and OT scholar, is a key figure in the Lausanne Movement, one of the leading evangelical voices today addressing the biblical theology of the church's mission. Wright is currently international ministries director of the Langham Partnership,<sup>152</sup> formerly he was a missionary in India and

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<sup>151</sup> B. Fagerli et al (eds.) *A Learning Missional Church: Reflections from Young Missiologists*, Oxford: Regnum Books, 2012

<sup>152</sup> Langham Partnership is a group of ministries originally founded by John Stott, committed to the strengthening of the church in the Majority World by providing literature, scholarships, and

principal of All Nations Christian College. Wright has played a key role as the Chair of the Cape Town 2010 Statement Working Group, which drafted the Cape Town Commitment, the third major declaration of the movement, following the 1974 Lausanne Covenant and the 1989 Manila Manifesto. Wright's publications exhibit his passion for the unity of Scripture and the importance of sound hermeneutics and exegesis for the Church's mission.

In his book *'The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative'* (2006) Wright boldly claims that the whole Bible is a missional phenomenon. 'Mission is not just one of a list of things that the Bible happens to talk about, only a bit more urgently than some. Mission is, in that much-abused phrase, 'what it's all about'.<sup>153</sup> Thus, he sees mission as a major key that 'unlocks the whole grand narrative of the canon of Scripture.'<sup>154</sup> Wright divides his theology of mission into four steps:

- The Bible and Mission
- The God of Mission
- The People of Mission
- The Arena of Mission

Wright begins by asserting the legitimacy of 'mission' as a hermeneutical approach. He asks whether a missional reading of scripture can be applied to the whole of the Scriptures. Taking account of the enormous variety of the contents of the Bible in its genre, authorship, context, ideology, date, editing and history, he claims that Jesus himself on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24) gave his two disciples a hermeneutical lecture to read their Scriptures both '*messianically and missiologically*'.<sup>155</sup> Understanding Bible as a grand narrative, he writes that 'the whole Bible renders to us the story of God's mission through God's people in their engagement with God's world for the sake of the whole of God's creation.'<sup>156</sup> So, he asserts that the 'church's mission flows from the identity of God and his Christ.'<sup>157</sup>

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preaching training for pastors in churches and seminaries. For more information see [www.langhampartnership.org](http://www.langhampartnership.org).

<sup>153</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 22

<sup>154</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 17

<sup>155</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 29-30 & 514

<sup>156</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 51

<sup>157</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 66



While examining the missiological implications of biblical monotheism, Wright highlights the identity, uniqueness and universality of YHWH, who chose to reveal himself in Israel and in Jesus. He argues that Israel was chosen in Abraham, redeemed out of Egypt, brought into covenant relationship and called to live a life of ethical distinctiveness for the nations. Wright identifies Exodus as the redemptive model, which had political, economic, social and spiritual dimensions. He categorizes the Jubilee as God's model of restoration in social, economic, theological and practical angles. Through these two models Wright highlights God's desire to redeem and restore his people who have been affected by sin.

Examining various Biblical covenants with a missiological dimension and seeing the book of Revelation 'as the climax of covenant.' He writes,

Revelation is gloriously covenantal and presents the presence of God among his people as the crowning achievement of God's cosmic redemptive purpose. Revelation 21-22, indeed, combine imagery from all the covenants of the Scriptures. Noah is there in the vision of a new creation . . . Abraham is there in the ingathering . . . of all nations . . . Moses is there in the covenantal assertion that . . . God himself will be with them and be their God. . . David is there in the Holy city, the new Jerusalem . . . And the New Covenant is there in the fact that all of this will be accomplished by the blood of the Lamb who was slain. This is the omega point of the long sweep of covenantal history through the Bible . . . the book of Revelation is the covenantal declaration 'Mission accomplished'.<sup>158</sup>

In last part 'the arena of mission' he moves to the wider canvas of the world itself. He explores the scope of missionary activity and various ways of engaging with creation, humanity, cultures and the nations. Here mission is seen holistically including redemption from sin and liberation from all oppression.

My only disagreement with Wright's approach in holistic mission is that he shies away from the terminology of 'priority' because in his view mission engagement may not always begin with evangelism. Seeing mission chronologically, Wright is concerned that 'language of the priority of evangelism' implies that the only proper starting point must always be evangelism. Instead, Wright chooses the term 'ultimacy' meaning that the ultimate purpose for all mission activity is evangelistic proclamation of the gospel. Wright asserts that mission 'that does not ultimately

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<sup>158</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 355-356

include declaring of the Word is defective, not holistic mission.<sup>159</sup> Wright is a key figure in the Lausanne Movement and I do share most of my theological convictions with him. However, with the concept of ultimacy, Wright himself is inconsistent with Lausanne covenant. However, my conviction remains that 'in the church's mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary' (Lausanne Covenant paragraph 6) and the language of ultimacy downplay 'the urgency of evangelistic task' (Lausanne Covenant paragraph 9) and it may even harm the intentionality to proclaim.

In conclusion, Wright's *The Mission of God* is a thought-provoking book with good sections on missiological hermeneutics, biblical monotheism, the identity, uniqueness and universality of Christ, and other important issues. The outstanding feature of the book is the attempt to make the OT relevant for developing a biblical theology of mission. My two more concerns remaining with Wright's work though are that he consistently links OT and NT but does not include a detailed work on the gospels; and secondly that in Wright's eschatology, he has given great stress to the redemption of the new creation and glorious covenantal climax of Revelation but de-emphasizes the judgment of the nations by not giving even a single reference to hell.

### 2.5.2. *Significance of Wright's Biblical Theology for Pakistani Context*

This research seeks to evaluate the mission theology of the Pakistani churches. The biblical theology of Wright is promising for the Pakistani context for three main reasons. First, Wright's work is by far one of the most comprehensive and contemporary theologies of Christian mission. The appearance of *The Mission of God* marks a milestone in the biblical theology of mission. In Schnabel words,

Wright's new book is a reminder of the unity of Scripture, the importance of sound hermeneutics and exegesis, and the fundamental significance of the missionary calling of the church. Wright demonstrates with consistent and passionate argumentation that the missionary mandate of the church does not simply rest on the great commission in Matthew 28, but that the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation, is the result of the very nature of God and of God's people.<sup>160</sup>

It is the major strength of Wright's work that he sees mission in the unity of the Scriptures. By giving plentiful space to the OT he corrects the error of many authors

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<sup>159</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 318-319

<sup>160</sup> Back cover of ' *The Mission of God*'

who begin their biblical theology of mission from the NT. For example, as seen above, Bosch in *Transforming Mission*, relies heavily on the NT to expound on paradigm shifts in the theology of mission. For the current research the whole canon is significantly important and Wright's approach to the Bible is clearly the right one.

A second important point is that Wright views the Bible as a grand narrative and with unusual skill applies mission as the hermeneutical key to unlock it. Thus, his main aim has been to argue for a missiological reading of Bible.

This is the grand narrative that continues truth for all. And within *this* story . . . there is at work the God whose mission is evident from creation to new creation. This is the story of God's mission. It is a coherent story with a universal claim. But it is also a story that affirms humanity in all its particular cultural variety.<sup>161</sup>

Thus, Wright's missional hermeneutical approach has a potential to embrace Pakistani context and help the Pakistani Church to understand the Scriptures as the grand narrative in relation to her missionary obligation. As seen above, there is a lack of publication and reflection in mission theology of Pakistan. In addition, the churches under study have a significant context of illiteracy and rural background. Most of the clergy is not highly educated to grapple with sophisticated global theological approaches. For example Köstenberger and O'Brien inductive biblical theological methodology and salvation-historical approach for examining Scriptures or Schnabel's historical, geographical, and exegetical and theological analysis of early Christian movement might not serve the purpose best. Whereas Wright's narrative approach of dividing the whole cannon into four major sections creation, fall, redemption and the new creation makes it equally accessible for the Pakistani clergy and laity of different backgrounds to interact with Scripture critically for their own mission thinking.

The third reason for focusing on the Wright's work is that he is inspired by a vision to keep mission theology and mission practice together. He insists that there should be 'no theology without missional impact; no mission without theological foundations.'<sup>162</sup> Not only has he provided an impetus for unified scriptural reflection with a missional hermeneutic but his work is remarkably practical in relation to

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<sup>161</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 47

<sup>162</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 20

church's mission in the world. Wright's two introductory questions in *'The Mission of God's People, (who are we and what are we here for?)* have significant implications for Pakistani Church who is living as a minority group is largely on the margins of society. Finding the answers of these questions strengthens the church's identity that they are prominent and unmistakable part of the story of God's mission. Further, it challenges the church to reflect why is it in Pakistan? How can it intentionally engage in mission?

### 2.5.3. *The Mission of God's People: A Criteria for Evaluating Mission Theology of Pakistani Churches*

In *'The Mission of God'* Wright argues that the whole Bible should be read with a missional hermeneutic. Thus he provides a biblically founded framework for understanding and engaging in the mission of God. *The Mission of God's People* asks a different set of questions: What does the Bible as a whole in both testaments have to tell us about why the people of God exist and what it is they are supposed to be and to do in the world?<sup>163</sup> Here Wright extends his argument around the people of God - the church. In the first half of the book he focuses primarily on the kind of people God's calls Christians to be. Then he elaborates on the fact that Christians should be people who know their story well, care for creation, bless nations, walk in God's way, represent God to the world and attract others to God. With these theological and ethical foundations in place, Wright focuses on the missionary tasks that people of God are called to. He clearly identifies that God calls his people to bear witness, proclaim the gospel of Christ and live and work in the public square.

Wright begins by an affirmation that the story of the Bible should be taken as a whole including OT. He laments,

Tragically, even among Christians with great enthusiasm for world mission, there is often not only profound ignorance of great vistas of biblical revelation, but even impatience with the prolonged effort that is needed to soak ourselves in these texts until our whole thinking and behavior are shaped by the story...<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 17

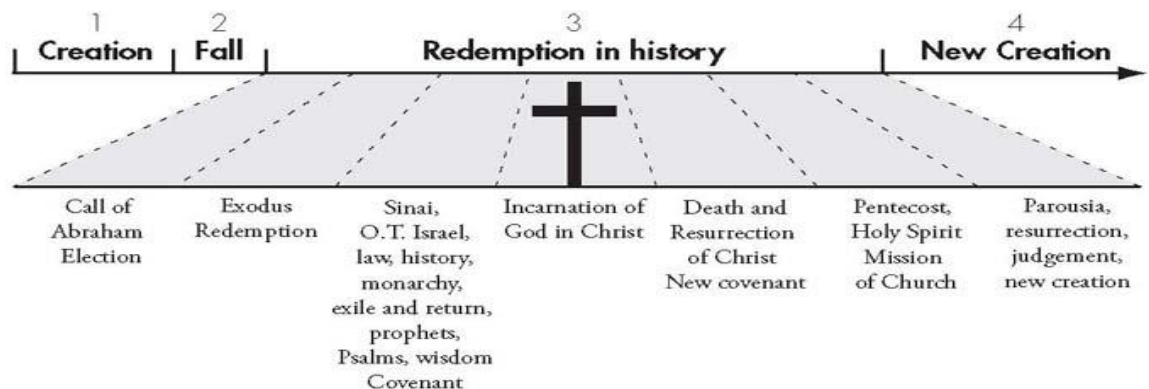
<sup>164</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 39

To evaluate the thinking of Pakistani Christians in these areas the participants were asked the following questions in the qualitative research (interviews and focus groups).

- What are the biblical basis for your mission work?
- How relevant is the OT Scripture for church’s mission? Which of the OT texts hold foundational place in your mission theology?
- Is there a strong and clear foundation for mission in OT Scripture?

#### 2.5.4. Four Major Sections of the Biblical Story Line

In light of this, Wright develops biblical theology of mission in four major sections of biblical story, i.e. creation, fall, redemption in history and new creation. He names it as ‘the grid of the Bible’s own story line’ that shapes and energizes the mission of God’s people.<sup>165</sup> The following table helps to see all four major sections as divided by Wright.<sup>166</sup>



Wright persuasively suggests that ‘the Bible does not begin at Genesis 3 (or end at Revelation 20) . . . the Bible is not just about the solution to our sin problem and how to survive the day of judgment. It begins with creation and ends with new creation. So our biblical theology of mission needs to take this great beginning and ending seriously.’<sup>167</sup> .

<sup>165</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God’s People*, 39-45

<sup>166</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God’s People*, 40

<sup>167</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God’s People*, 40

Wright convincingly argues from Genesis 1-2 that human beings are people with a mission to rule and keep the creation. He gives a quick survey of the OT to show what else is said about creation that reinforces the importance of that task, saying that Christians ought to be in the forefront of caring for creation.

His view of redemption is not limited to humans alone but he asserts that God's redemption includes creation. He claims, 'the creation exists for the praise and glory of its creator God.'<sup>168</sup> Reflecting on various OT texts he says, 'however, the climax of the Old Testament future vision regarding creation is found in Isaiah 65 – 66. The words, "Behold, I am creating new heavens and a new earth" (Isa. 65:17 – the opening word is a participle, suggesting it is something God is already active in doing, not merely a future intention).'<sup>169</sup>

In the NT, examining mission as Christ-centered, Wright supports his argument by expounding on various texts such as Colossians 1:15-23, Romans 8:19-23. He argues that all things are reconciled by the cross thus 'our care for creation is motivated not solely by the fact that it was created by God and we were commanded to look after it, but also by the fact that it has been redeemed by Christ, and we are to erect signposts towards its ultimate destiny of complete restoration in Christ. God's redemptive mission includes creation. Our mission involves participating in that redemptive work as agents of good news to the creation, as well as to people.'<sup>170</sup>

Applying his argument to the Pakistani churches raises questions in relation to human obligations towards care and keeping of the earth. So, the participants in qualitative research were asked:

- How is their church engaged in environmental care or improvement?

To explore the beliefs and attitudes of participants in theology of mission, in quantitative research the participants were asked to respond to the following statements on a scale of agree strongly, agree, not certain, disagree and strongly disagree.

- Earth care is an essential part of mission.
- The purpose of mission is the redemption of the whole creation.

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<sup>168</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 53

<sup>169</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 57

<sup>170</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 61

Next, Wright deals with fall and redemption in history. He write that 'Human disobedience and rebellion against the Creator God brought disastrous results (Gen. 3 – 11). Evil and sin weave their way into every aspect of God's creation and every dimension of human personhood and life on earth.'<sup>171</sup> He explores the disastrous results in physical, intellectual, social and spiritual dimensions. Sin and evil constitute bad news in every area of life. The fall points to the need for the restoration of personhood not only in its spiritual aspect but in every other aspect as well. This highlights the need for a holistic gospel that would redeem all that sin and evil have touched. Thus Wright say 'Bluntly, we need a holistic gospel because the world is in a holistic mess.'<sup>172</sup>

In the section on redemption in history Wright considers both OT and NT to highlight God's intention not to abandon or destroy his creation but to redeem it. Wright states 'I think the unity between the Old and New Testament sections of this part of the biblical story of redemption is why Revelation pictures redeemed humanity in the new creation singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb (Rev. 15:3).'173 Here Wright links redemption to the eschatological vision. Next Wright argues that the OT shows us the scope of God's redeeming purpose, worked out in a specific historical and cultural context, and modelled for us in amazing detail (from the law, the narratives, prophets, wisdom and worship of Israel).<sup>174</sup>

The incarnation brings God right alongside us in our struggle and calls us to embody and be agents of the reign of God through Christ. In the context of Jesus' mission Wright points out that,

The cross and resurrection of Jesus bring us to the central point of the whole line of redemption in history. Here is God's answer to every dimension of sin and evil in the cosmos and all their destructive effects. The gospel presents us with an accomplished victory that will ultimately be universally visible and vindicated. If we have been as radical as we ought in our analysis of the effects of the fall, then we must be equally radical and comprehensive here in our understanding of all the ways in which the cross and resurrection reverse and ultimately destroy those effects. The cross must be central to every dimension of the mission of God's people – from personal evangelism among individual friends to ecological care for creation, and everything in between.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 40

<sup>172</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 110

<sup>173</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 41

<sup>174</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 41-42

<sup>175</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 43

The gospel presents the church with an accomplished victory and the cross and resurrection can reverse the effect of the fall. This raises immediate questions as to how the church should engage in mission? Should it only proclaim the cross or should it also deal with all distorted aspects of the human person? In other words what place should be given to cross and evangelism in the church's mission. This clearly leads to the need to explore the understanding in the churches regarding mission. Therefore, the participants were asked the following questions in qualitative research;

- How would you define mission?
- What comes into your mind when you hear the word 'mission'? You can share words or images.

The quantitative research added the following statements to gather responses on a scale of agree strongly, agree, not certain, disagree and strongly disagree.

- Our social action is also means to express love of God and to reconcile people to God.
- Social action should be separate from the mission of the church.

Finally, Wright concludes the Bible's own story line with the new creation. He says 'The return of Christ will not only bring to its grand finale that section of the Bible story line that we have called redemption in history, it will also inaugurate the ultimate fulfilment of the whole point of the story – namely, the redemption and renewal of God's whole creation.'<sup>176</sup> He goes on to say that 'The reality of judgment is at one level *part* of the gospel, for it is good news that evil will not have the last word but will ultimately be destroyed by God. And at another level it is the bad news about the wrath of God that makes the gospel such eternally good news for our fallen world'. So, this raises a question: in view of the final judgment how are Pakistani churches reaching out to the unreached taking this good news out to other nations?

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<sup>176</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 44



What is the arena of their mission? To explore this the participants were asked the following questions;

- How is your church finding ways to reach out to others?
- How does your church equip, empower and mobilize its congregations to be engaged in God's mission purpose in the host community and in the broader world beyond?

The quantitative research added the following statements to gather responses on a scale of agree strongly, agree, not certain, disagree and strongly disagree.

- Reaching the people groups within Pakistani is the responsibility of the Pakistani church.
- The responsibility for world evangelization primarily rests with the foreign church in the economically developed countries.
- The Pakistani church has taken the responsibility for evangelizing its own people.

## **2.6. Nazir-Ali on Essential Characteristics of Missionary Church: A Criteria for Evaluation of Mission Practice**

Michael Nazir-Ali, a citizen of both Pakistan and the United Kingdom, is president of the Oxford Centre for Training, Research, Advocacy and Dialogue (OXTRAD)<sup>177</sup> and formerly was bishop of Rochester (U.K.) and Raiwind ( Church of Pakistan) and general secretary of the Church Mission Society. His interests have led him to research and study in several fields, including comparative literature, comparative philosophy of religion and theology.

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<sup>177</sup> Oxtrad's mission is to prepare Christians for ministry in situations where the Church is under pressure and in danger of persecution. The Oxtrad vision arises from the growing challenge of international religious extremism, terrorism and ideological secularism faced today by Christian leaders and the churches they lead. For more information see 'Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali' <http://michaelnazirali.com/oxtrad/oxford-centre-for-training-research-advocacy-and-dialogue> (accessed 26 October 2016)

In two books among his several '*From Everywhere to Everywhere: A Worldview of Christian Mission*' (1996) and '*Jesus in the Plural World: The Unique and Universal Christ*' (2010) he argues forcefully that the Church practices her missionary vocation in a number of different ways. Thus, he identifies them as presence, identification, dialogue, action and evangelism.<sup>178</sup>

In the following section, first, I will briefly explore Nazir-Ali's theological basis for his conception of this grid of the Church's mission practice. Second, I will show the relevance of the grid to the Pakistani context. Third I will give a brief summary of the essential characteristics of a missionary church as expounded by Nazir-Ali. A set of questions will be derived from Nazir-Ali's work and will be used as a criteria in Chapter 5 to evaluate the mission practice of Pakistani churches.

### 2.6.1. *Theological Basis for the Grid*

Nazir-Ali begins '*From Everywhere to Everywhere*' in these words

God is love. In Christian thought . . . it has meant primarily that the very internal relationship of the God head are characterised by love . . . God's Creation of the world and of human beings may be regarded as the beginning of the *missio dei*, the mission of God . . . The *missio dei* then is not just about the Love of God bringing Creation into existence. It must also be about the redemption, restoration and, indeed, further development of human beings and of the world at large.

Informed by an evangelical theology of mission, Michael Nazir-Ali has drawn this grid of the church's mission practice by extensive analysis of the theological and historical dimensions of mission. So, it is clear that his theological bases of mission are Trinitarian and creation as the starting point of *missio dei*. With these bases, he turns to a historical consideration of the Christian Mission, which he traces from the days of the Early Fathers. He gives much credibility to the truth that strong forms of Christianity sprang from the global south, particularly from Ethiopia, Egypt and India before it blossomed in the north.

In '*The Unique and Universal Christ*' which is a more contemporary work of Nazir-Ali he argues forcefully that the fundamental values and virtues that are needed today for human flourishing arise from a Christian vision that is centered on the person

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<sup>178</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 104-125 and M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 139-193

and work of Jesus Christ. Accordingly he deals with the doctrine of Christ, who Jesus is – the unique and universal Christ – and what he does. The basic source remains the NT but he also draws on contributions from Muslim, Jewish and even Hindu scholars, suggesting that e.g. ‘Divine Wisdom’, ‘the Son of Man’ and ‘Servant of God’ are key terms.<sup>179</sup> He considers the implications of God’s revelation of himself in Jesus for culture and for humanity’s spiritual destiny. He points out how the Holy Spirit continues to bear witness to Jesus and to be the medium in which the gospel can be both lived and communicated. First, he recognizes the absolute priority of the *Missio Dei*, the mission of the Trinitarian God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to the world, and only then he raises a question about the church’s role in mission. He argues that the Church practices her missionary vocation in a number of different ways, which he identifies as presence, identification, dialogue, action and evangelism.<sup>180</sup> In his view, these are the essential features of missionary obligation. Admittedly they are ‘not exhaustive by any means but if the Church were not committed to nurture some of these qualities, however, it would remain deficient in its understanding of mission and in discharge of its missionary duties.’<sup>181</sup>

### 2.6.2. *Significance of Nazir-Ali’s Grid for Pakistani Context*

For the evaluation of mission practice in Pakistan, Nazir-Ali’s work is relevant for three foundational reasons. First of all, as has been seen the current diversity and innovation of missionary practice has created an ambiguity in the definition and limits of mission. Historically speaking, the expansion of Christianity has never followed a single prescribed method or strategy. This century has seen missionary methods multiply which signifies that there is more diversity and innovation of missionary practice than ever before. Some of the methods include evangelism through mass communication, missionary aviation, gospel ships, relief efforts, tent-making, business as mission, personnel skilled in TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language), technical input and journalism. Business professionals, teachers, sports coaches, doctors, nurses and others have gone into many countries to express mission. Mission includes works of compassion, caring for HIV patients, fighting for

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<sup>179</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 23-43

<sup>180</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 104-125 and M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 139-193

<sup>181</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 105

justice and even earth care. Such a diversity of mission methods creates ambiguity about what are the essential features of the missionary obligation of a Church. With so much diversity of mission practice, this grid helps to limit the research by examining the mission practice of the Pakistani churches in terms of the essential engagements of mission.

Second, the grid provides a holistic view of mission because it covers almost all essential features of mission practice. It gives central place to proclamation but at the same time allocates plenty of space to presence, church planting, identification, contextualization, prayer, advocacy, social action and relating with other religions through dialogue. Thus, like Wright, Nazir-Ali also considers all the dimensions of mission by advocating holistic mission.

The third reason to use Nazir-Ali's grid is that he has both Christian and Muslim backgrounds in diverse contexts that inform his work. A quick glance at his involvement in various contexts affirms his great flexibility in connecting with the secular western world and the Muslim context of Pakistan. Nazir-Ali was ordained as an Anglican priest in 1976 and worked in Karachi and Lahore. He became the first Bishop of Raiwind (CoP). Later he became an assistant to the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth and assisted with the planning of the 1988 Lambeth Conference. He was General Secretary of the CMS and Bishop of Rochester. Recently he was one of the final two candidates for Archbishop of Canterbury, He was a leader of the Network for Inter-faith Concerns of the Anglican Communion and led the dialogue with Al-Azhar. A former Bishop of South Carolina, Fitzsimmons Allison states,

Bishop Nazir-Ali, the most trusted bishop in the Anglican Communion, speaks to both secularism and Islam from the vantage of impressive, judicious and readable scholarship, world-wide experience and knowledge of Islam, as well as from a through grounding in biblical and orthodox faith.<sup>182</sup>

Hence, Nazir-Ali's unique cross-cultural experience both in the Islamic and Western worlds, key leadership roles and wide-ranging scholarship make his insight into the current ecclesiological discussions significant. The grid that he has developed is shaped by such insights that while not ignoring the non-Islamic context of mission,

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<sup>182</sup> Back cover of *'The Unique and Universal Christ'*

he critically takes into account Islamic contexts in regard to mission engagement. Therefore, this grid is most relevant to assess the mission practice of the Pakistani churches in their Islamic context.

Following is a brief section on the essential features of the missionary obligation of the Church, each sub-section followed by a series of questions that will be addressed later, primarily based on the findings of field research.

### 2.6.3. *Mission as Presence*

Reflecting on Paul's church-planting in the Gentile world Nazir-Ali concludes that 'one of the objectives of Christian mission must be the emergence of Christian communities in every locality so that effective Christian witness and service may be established among the people in each city, town and village.'<sup>183</sup> He argues that such a commitment to presence is given in Christian history to territory. Churches in the NT are usually identified with the place of their location, for instance, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth and Rome. Leslie Newbigin is in agreement with Nazir-Ali, for he points out that in the NT 'the Church is always and only designated by reference to two realities; one is God, God in Christ; and the other, the place where the Church is.'<sup>184</sup>

Two modes of presence can be identified, first, there is the witness of life and worship, which does not entail verbal proclamation of the gospel, for example the churches in Islamic lands have been in such situations in which only the first mode of presence has been possible. Secondly, there is open preaching, which invites people to consider the claims of Gospel, repent and ultimately, be baptized.<sup>185</sup>

The churches in the Islamic land of Pakistan, at any rate, have managed to maintain their presence in the society predominantly through the worship places, geographical locations in forms of Christian villages and colonies and institutional presence in the fields of education and medicine. This leads us to ask, which kind of presence is this, silent or does it entail verbal proclamation? Is this current form of presence enough or is something more needed to be done?

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<sup>183</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 106

<sup>184</sup> P. Weston, *Leslie Newbigin Missionary Theologian: A Reader*, London: SPCK, 2006, 132

<sup>185</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 139

#### 2.6.4. *Mission as Identification*

The presence of the Church in a particular place or among a specific group of people can be alienating rather than engaging, especially in association with contexts of violence, and oppression. Therefore, to emphasize authentic presence Nazir-Ali asserts that 'if it is to be truly incarnational, [it] must be one that identifies with the culture, aspirations and perceived destiny of a people, as far as this is possible without compromising the nature of the gospel.'<sup>186</sup> The Gospel must be allowed to become incarnate in the context to which the Good News is being brought. So, Nazir-Ali maintains,

. . . there can be no 'hit and run' mission, no mission from distance, whether that is geographical, cultural or intellectual . . . Admittedly, there are contexts only very limited presence may be possible . . . however, such contexts are comparatively rare...where they occur, it may be necessary to maintain some sort of witness through radio, television or literature. These media can also be extremely useful in focusing and strengthening Christian witness in other contexts where some kind of presence is possible. They can never, however be a substitute for mission as identification.<sup>187</sup>

This raises further questions about the authenticity of the presence of Pakistani churches: how are they identifying with their context? Are they able to influence the society while they themselves have been influenced by it? Are the churches tempted to submit to being co-opted into a system in the hope of obtaining privilege and influence? Alternatively, are the churches speaking from the cutting-edge of what the gospel has to say about dignity, liberty, justice and the common good? These questions must be answered in the light of corruption and power-struggles within the churches, demonstrated by for example, litigation and land mafia, the selling of church properties, and also the growing ghettoization of Pakistani Christian communities.

#### 2.6.5. *Mission as Action*

As seen above, Christians in the early Church were known for their generosity and involvement with the needy. 'Not only in early Church, but throughout history there has been a recognition of the responsibility of the Church towards the poor. It is not accidental that the Church has pioneered medical and educational work among the

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<sup>186</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 108

<sup>187</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 151

poor in so many parts of the world.’<sup>188</sup> There is a growing constituency in the churches world-wide which, while acknowledging the necessity of presence and identification believes that they are not sufficient if the wholeness of God’s love is to be communicated to the contemporary world. Various networks of pastors, theologians and missionary workers are being established with the aim to develop a holistic view of mission, variously termed ‘integral evangelism’, ‘mission as transformation’ or ‘integral mission.’ ‘It emphasizes that in our mission activities we must address the whole of human need – physical, material, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual.’<sup>189</sup> To quote René Padilla,

Commitment to mission is the very essence of being the church. A church that is not committed to witnessing to Jesus Christ and thus to crossing the frontier between faith and no faith is no longer the church, but becomes a religious club, simply a group of friends, or a social welfare agency. When the church is committed to integral mission and to communicating the gospel through everything it is, does, and says, it understands that its goal is not to become large numerically, nor to be rich materially, nor powerful politically. Its purpose is to incarnate the values of the Kingdom of God and to witness to the love and the justice revealed in Jesus Christ, by the power of the Spirit, for the transformation of human life in all its dimensions, both on the individual level and on the community level.<sup>190</sup>

With these comments, questions emerge as to whether Pakistani churches are engaged in integral mission in the first place. If so, is it seen as a substitute for the preaching of the gospel? Are the churches engaged in prayer for the community, particularly for those in need? This can further lead to advocacy for such people in the wider society particularly where there is resistance to justice and compassion, and to action in the political arena. Prayer, service, advocacy and struggle are all integrated in the life and mission of such a missionary community.

In this regard, are Pakistani churches genuinely involved in social action in their context or are they merely wanting to be a beneficiary of the social actions of the foreign affluent churches? This may be answered in the light of the planning and

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<sup>188</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 170

<sup>189</sup> C. Wright, ‘Integral Mission and the Great Commission: The Five Marks of Mission’, [www.evangeliskalliance.dk/.../handout%20-%20integral%20mission%20](http://www.evangeliskalliance.dk/.../handout%20-%20integral%20mission%20); accessed August 2014

<sup>190</sup> R. Padilla ‘What is Integral Mission’ See [http://www.integral-mission.org/PDF\\_files/Rene-What is integral mission.pdf](http://www.integral-mission.org/PDF_files/Rene-What%20is%20integral%20mission.pdf); accessed April 2015

budgeting of local resources for the sake of social action at grass roots level in the local churches.

#### *2.6.6. Mission as Dialogue*

The Bible and the doctrine of God provide abundant resources for dialogue with people of different faiths. Nazir-Ali notes different forms of dialogue.<sup>191</sup> There is, for example, the dialogue where the primary purpose is for partners to learn from each other. Another kind of dialogue focuses not so much on exchange of information but how each partner is nurtured in this life by their tradition. A form of dialogue that is assuming greater significance today has to do with the building up of community-dialogue as an essential aspect of promoting proper integration. Then there is dialogue that is about identifying and being committed to fundamental human freedoms, such as freedom of expression and of belief.

In the Christian use of term 'dialogue', therefore, there has always been an element of witness and of persuasion . . . Authentic dialogue cannot take place unless and until those involved are prepared to lay bare the wellsprings of their motivation to engage in dialogue at all. There can be no coercion, of course, nor should there be any manipulation, but dialogue would be meaningless unless we were able, with sensitivity and love to bear witness to all that Christ means to us . . . and what he longs to do for our partners in dialogue.<sup>192</sup>

With this, there is a genuine question about how dialogue is taking place between Pakistani churches and people of other faiths? Is it in a highly structured form or dialogue of scholars? Most importantly how strong is 'the dialogue of life', that is to say, how well is the daily conversation and mutual learning that goes on among neighbors, colleagues at work or study and even family members progressing? Dialogue at every stage has benefits for it greatly enriches the life of those who engage in it. Does the Pakistani Church understand the value and benefit of dialogue for nurturing its life and the life of its partners or does it think of dialogue as something unnecessary?

#### *2.6.6. Mission as Evangelism*

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<sup>191</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 164-167 & M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 114-117

<sup>192</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 116



The above discussion has shown that the Church can exercise her missionary vocation in a number of different ways: through presence, identification, service and dialogue. Nazir-Ali argues convincingly that all these have ‘an evangelistic dimension in that they bring the Gospel into encounter with individuals and communities.’<sup>193</sup> The action of Christian presence is for the sake of witness and for the sake of commitment to the wholeness of mission and to its integrity. There will be opportunities for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Evangelism (or evangelization, that is, something that is more of a process than an event) is ‘a necessary aspect of mission and its crown because in the course of it we are pointing beyond ourselves to the one who is the source of our missionary involvement.’<sup>194</sup>

‘True evangelism, then is not just about making people aware of their shortcomings and bringing them to repentance, but it is also about that assurance that springs from faith in what God has revealed, and trust in the one who has given us this knowledge of his purpose for us.’<sup>195</sup> This brings forth the most crucial questions: Are Pakistani churches crowning their mission engagement with evangelism? Are they conscious of an evangelistic dimension? If so, how are they adding an evangelistic aspect to their other various activities?

## **2.7. Conclusion**

In reviewing various authors, three types of relevant literatures are considered in this chapter i.e. Pakistani mission literature, biblical theology of mission and mission ecclesiology. Having reviewed the work of Christopher Wright and Michael Nazir-Ali, I have shown that a combination of criteria is an explicit theological and ecclesiological tool for the purpose of this current research. With this, the next chapter seeks to explore the historical roots of the Pakistani Church and particularly the churches under study.

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<sup>193</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 182

<sup>194</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 117

<sup>195</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 119

### **3. A Brief Mission History of Pakistan and of the Church of Pakistan (Lahore and Hyderabad Diocese) and Full Gospel Assemblies of Pakistan**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part gives a broad mission history of the Pakistani Church which is several times referred to in this thesis. As the origins and history of a movement indeed influence its theology and practice, therefore, the second part aims to provide a brief historical background of the churches under study i.e. CoP (Lahore and Hyderabad Diocese) and FGA. It will elucidate how its mission engagement has been shaped in the long run. It explores how the historical consciousness of these churches might have contributed to the formation of their mission theology and practice, which has a profound bearing on their present mission engagement.<sup>196</sup> It provides a glimpse of the challenges and opportunities they had at their beginning and how they continued their mission, which has brought them to the present stage. Based on these historical developments, this chapter concludes with a brief comparison of the denominations under study that provides initial insights into their strengths and weaknesses.

#### **3.2. A Brief Mission History of Pakistan**

##### *3.2.1. Saint Thomas Tradition*

In 1947, when the British left the Indian subcontinent and it was partitioned into Pakistan and India. Thus, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (*Pak* meaning holy or pure; and *istan* meaning land) came into being on 14, August 1947. The history of Christianity in Pakistan until 1947 is necessarily part of the history of Christianity in India.

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<sup>196</sup> For example, the constitution of a church is created at one historical moment but also reflects the theological basis for its existence and ministry and provides a general framework for its mission engagement.

The Indian church has always considered itself as having been founded by Saint Thomas. There exist various legendary traditions about Thomas, a few with strong historical evidence that seem to prove some of the traditions as fact. According to the Southern Indian tradition, 'starting then from Jerusalem, St. Thomas travelled through various provinces and preached to the Parthians, Medes and Persians. He passed through Arabia and embarked for India; and after a long voyage landed on the island of Sokotra.'<sup>197</sup> In his insightful study on historical Christianity in India, Robert Frykenberg's claims that 'Nowhere in the world today are existing non-Western forms of Christianity older or more complex than in India. (Some Thomas Christians like to tell anyone, especially Catholics, that there is as much evidence that the Apostle came to Malabar as that Peter came to Rome.)'<sup>198</sup>

According to northern tradition, Thomas came to India either by way of the sea or land, and he got access to the court of the Gundapharas. Later, he was even martyred in India.<sup>199</sup> It is now believed that the Gundapharas ruled an Indo-Parthian dynasty which stretched from the Punjab to Afghanistan, and the capital of which was Taxila, in present day Pakistan. A plaque in the (Muslim) museum in Taxila claims that he passed through that town near Islamabad on his way to South India. Since Taxila was in those days the major town in that region on the direct route it is a fair claim. Consequently, it is believed that Saint Thomas travelled through Taxila, Pakistan.

John Rooney, a catholic priest and an historian has conducted a comprehensive study in which he asserts that there are evidences that Christianity has existed in Pakistan since the first century. He refers to;<sup>200</sup>

- Coins of Gundapharas (the coins have the name of Gundapharas in Greek and Sanskrit on them, referring to him as a king and appearing to date from the first 60 years of the Christian era).

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<sup>197</sup> W. Young, *Handbook of Source Materials for Students of Church History*, Delhi: ISPCK, 1999, 26-27

<sup>198</sup> R. Frykenberg, *Christianity in India: From Beginnings to the Present*, Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 2008, viii

<sup>199</sup> F.A. D'Cruz, *St. Thomas. The Apostle in India* (n.p.n.d) 43-51, M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 27

<sup>200</sup> J. Rooney, *Shadows in the Dark: A History of Christianity in Pakistan up to the 10<sup>th</sup> Century*, Rawalpindi: CSC, 1984, 29-51

- Identifying the villages known as Karmthom (which means the benevolence of Thomas) and Garang Thom (means the village of Thoma)
- The Taxila cross (was found in a field in 1935 and now is in the custody of the Lahore Cathedral and is symbol of CoP)
- A group known as Thatta Nagar Fakirs (Aramaic name means sons of Thomas).

On grounds of the above evidences the Northern Theory has much to commend. It is also noteworthy that the ancient South Asian Christians have had long relationships with the Nestorian church of the East and with their opponents in Christological matters, the Jacobites of Syria. Many migrants from Palestine, Syria and Persia came to India and settled there. There is some evidence that Christian as well as Jewish women and men fled eastwards after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. Christianity thus became a significant minority within the Persian Empire, but the varying fortunes of Zoroastrianism brought alternating toleration and persecution for the Persian Christians and noticeably stimulated church growth.<sup>201</sup>

At the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D), the Persian Bishop John signed on behalf of Persia and the Indian church. The synods attendance records indicate that bishops from the Eastern Church were regularly present there.<sup>202</sup> There is further evidence of the existence of the South Indian church in the writings of Cosmas Indicopleustes (the Indian Navigator) who lived in the 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>203</sup> During the fifth century there was some serious persecution and strife within the church. However at the first Synod of Seleucia (AD 410), under the Emperor Yazdgard, the church attained the *Millat* status, i.e. the Christians became an officially recognized minority within the Persian State.<sup>204</sup> Millat was followed by a brief period of some missionary expansion of the Persian church strengthening its link with India.<sup>205</sup>

In the context of the persecution of the Persian church and missionary expansion Rooney's research shows that many Persians migrated towards North India thereby contributing to the spread of Christianity in India and Pakistan. Despite some

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<sup>201</sup> J. England, *The Hidden History of Christianity in India*, Delhi: ISPCK, 1998, 15-17

<sup>202</sup> W. Young, *Patriarch, Shah and Caliph*, Rawalpindi: CSC, 1974,38-41

<sup>203</sup> J. England, *The Hidden History*, 91

<sup>204</sup> J. Rooney, *Shadows*, 74-77

<sup>205</sup> W. Young, *Patriarch*, 45

uncertainties he is convinced that at least until the eighth century there were Christian communities in Pakistan. He further claims that between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries there was a time when there were no Christian religious practices in this area.<sup>206</sup>

### 3.2.2. *Portuguese Advance, Mughal Empire and Christian Mission*

The quest for wealth and power brought Europeans to the shores of India's Malabar Coast in 1498 when Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese voyager, arrived on the west coast. This was primarily for trade. When the first man with da Gama arrived in the town of Calicut he was asked by two Tunisians traders what brought him to India. He replied that 'We have come to seek Christians and spices.'<sup>207</sup> A second Portuguese landing at Calicut by Pedro Alvarez Cabral in 1501 consisted of six ships and nineteen (Roman Catholic) missionaries. This Portuguese advance was both more religious and more militant. From the arrival of Vasco da Gama until his death in Cochin at Christmas 1524, Asia witnessed the emergence of the last great Muslim empires, the Safavid dynasty in Iran, the Ottoman dynasty in Turkey and the Mughal Empire in India. The Mughals reigned in northern India from 1526 until 1858. Zahiruddin Babur (14 February 1483 – 26 December 1530) who was a chieftain and prince from Tashkent had pushed ahead with his conquest of India, taking the throne of Delhi and becoming the first Emperor of this newly formed state in 1526. It is noteworthy that all three empires posed new challenges to the Portuguese, who had established their capital in Goa in 1510.

Samuel Moffet describes how the Christians descended from Thomas rejoiced at the arrival of fellow believers. The Portuguese missionaries soon discovered that the St. Thomas Indian Christians were very different in their thinking from them, and these differences were communicated to Rome. For example, the Indian Christians recognized the Nestorian patriarch in Persia as the head of the church, not the Pope. Their liturgical language was not Latin but Syriac. The Indian priests were not celibate but married. The St. Thomas churches had no images of Jesus, the Virgin Mary or saints, which the Portuguese considered a lack of reverence. 'Attributing all

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<sup>206</sup> J. Rooney, *Shadows*, 74-90

<sup>207</sup> C.R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire: 1415-1825*, cited in S. Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia- Volume 2, 1500-1900*, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2005, 4

this to ignorance rather than to faithfulness to the traditions of the ancient church of the East, in which the Indian Christians had been raised, the Portuguese sometimes gently, sometimes rudely, began to press the Indian Christian communities to conform to Western Catholic custom. Understandably, they met resistance.<sup>208</sup> Pickett also notes that 'In both Goa and Bassein the Portuguese government, under pressure from the Jesuits, the Franciscans, and other religious orders, used political power to promote the profession of the Roman Catholic faith.'<sup>209</sup> In 1599 at the Synod of Diamper the Latinizing of the Indian church reached its peak but it could never achieve its aim of a permanent union between the Roman and Syrian Christians of India. However, many of these Christians came to be in communion with Rome and were allowed to retain some of their customs.

By 1509 the Portuguese had established their power in India and by 1510 the Catholic Christians were well settled on the western coast of Goa. 'The padroado<sup>210</sup> was the chief means for Roman Catholic mission until it was replaced by the Roman congregation, *De Propaganda Fide*, which is now known as the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of the Nations or the Propagation of the faith.' John Rooney asserts that the sixteenth and seventeenth century mission to what is now Pakistan was conducted under Portuguese colonial, civil and ecclesiastical control.<sup>211</sup> These patterns along with Padroado agreements, helped to establish Goan Christianity. Goa not only became a center for Catholic Christianity in India, but also provided leadership in all Asian Catholic churches for a long time. Until very recently, in Pakistan particularly, the Catholic hierarchy remained dominated by the Goan bishops and priests and has only begun to come under Punjabi Christian control in

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<sup>208</sup> S. Moffett, *A History*, 6

<sup>209</sup> J. Pickett, *Christian Mass Movements in India*, Lucknow: Publishing House, 1969, 37

<sup>210</sup> Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 40; Padroado was a blanket term under which the Portuguese claimed a whole complex of rights. The Pope in successive bulls granted Portugal and Spain the authority to subdue pagans and unbelieving enemies of Christ and occupy their territories. In addition, Portugal and Spain were given ecclesiastical privileges and responsibilities in the regions that had already been conquered or were to be conquered in future. J. Rooney, *The Hesitant Dawn: Christianity in Pakistan 1579-1760*, Rawalpindi: CSC, 1984, 6-8, S. Neill, *The History of Christianity in India 1707-1858*, Cambridge: University Press, 1985, 111

<sup>211</sup> J. Rooney, *The Hesitant*, 17

the last fifty or so years, despite the fact that the majority of Christians in Pakistan are Punjabi.<sup>212</sup>

The coming of Jesuits in 1542 marked another stage in the Latinizing of the Indian Church. <sup>213</sup> Jesuits started their mission in North India, ruled by Mughals, when in 1579 the third Mughal Emperor Akbar sent his agent Abdullah to Goa with letters that contained a request for two priests to be sent to his court. Ecclesiastical authorities decided to send Jesuit missionaries. The first two missions under the leaderships of Fr. Rudolph Aquaviva and Fr. Edward Leitaio were not successful. However, the third and most successful mission trip was that sent under leadership of Fr. Jerome Xavier. Akbar allowed conversions to Christianity. Regarding these Jesuits missions in the Akbar era, John Rooney writes 'From a Pakistani stand-point, little of any significance was achieved by either the first or the second Jesuit missions to the Mughal court. The third mission sought to have a double impact. One of the priests concentrated on the affairs of the court. The other worked for local conversions'. <sup>214</sup> This time Akbar gave them permission to open a school and to build churches at Agra and Lahore. Another factor that distinguished the third mission from the previous two was a serious attempt to create Christian literature in Persian. Father Xavier translated the Gospel and Acts into Persian and presented them to Akbar. <sup>215</sup>

In contemporary Muslim thinking the third Mughal Emperor, Akbar the Great 1556-1605, is treated as an irreligious believer for his syncretistic religious policies. He was a tolerant man who in 1564 took the first step towards abolition of *Jizyah*, the hated poll-tax. The laws of Jihad allowed that non-Muslims could become *dhimmi*, which meant they had to submit to Muslim rule and pay the *jizyah* (poll Tax) and *Kharaj* (land tax). This gave the impression that only Muslims were full citizens. The abolition of *jizya* for the first time made Muslims and Hindus feel as though they shared common citizenship in a Muslim state.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> C. Amjad-Ali, 'From Dislocation to Dislocation: The Experience of the Christian Community in Pakistan' International Review of Modern Sociology Volume 41, Number 1, Spring 2015, 1-28, citing, 5

<sup>213</sup> S. Moffett, *A History*, 8-9

<sup>214</sup> J. Rooney, *The Hesitant*, 55

<sup>215</sup> E. Zafar, *A Concise History of Pakistani Christian*, Lahore: Humsookhan Publications, 30

<sup>216</sup> S. Neill, *The History of Indian Church*, (n.p, n.d.)166

Akbar's quest for Truth and Knowledge accelerated. He took and expressed interest in the religious beliefs of his subjects, especially those of the Muslims and Hindus. Due to his interfaith interest, he enforced many reforms, including an edict for complete tolerance of all religions. From the mid-1570s, he had instituted weekly religious discussions in a specially built structure called the *Ibadatkhana*, 'hall of worship'.<sup>217</sup> More open-minded than most contemporaries, he invited Islamic, Hindu, Christian, Jain and Zoroastrian scholars to religious discussions. This step was not appreciated by the Muslims.<sup>218</sup> Due to his dissatisfaction with the religious debates and broad fascination with religions, he established his own new religion called *Din-i-allahi* in 1582. This was a monotheistic and syncretistic cult which incorporated Islamic, Hindu, Zoroastrian and Christian beliefs.

In 1605 at the age of 63, Akbar completed fifty years of rule. In the same year he became seriously ill and died. The Christian Fathers made strenuous attempts to see him on his deathbed but his officials did not allow it to happen. Some say he died as a Muslim, some that he died as a Hindu, while others say that he died in the sect which he established. But there is no authentic evidence that he died as a Christian.<sup>219</sup> As Akbar died the unusual experiments of interfaith dialogue also died; none of his successors showed the same measure of tolerance towards other religions.

King Jahangir (Akbar's son) had very warm friendships with Jesuits; however, he insisted in using them as political agents. He had nothing specifically against Christianity but he continued his pro-Muslim policies, for example, he restored the mosques that had been desecrated by his father. After his accession his son Prince Khusrau raised a rebellion against him that was soon crushed. Afterwards, Jahangir relaxed and renewed his friendships with missionaries. He directed generous allowances to the maintenance of churches at Agra and Lahore.<sup>220</sup> A noteworthy fact was the baptism of three sons of Jahangir's brother Daniyal. Jahangir's command to baptize these three princes stirred various suspicions, such as it that it was being used as a means of moving the princes out of the line of succession. A second skepticism was that it was a diplomatic move to soften up the Portuguese

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<sup>217</sup> S. Neill, *The History*, 167

<sup>218</sup> M. Abel and F. Carey, *History of Protestant Christianity in Pakistan*, Lahore: OTS, 2008, 18

<sup>219</sup> J. Rooney, *The Hesitant*, 54

<sup>220</sup> J. Rooney, *The Hesitant*, 57-58



government. Some thought that Jahangir wanted to obtain Portuguese wives for the three princes, and that is why his nephews got baptized.<sup>221</sup>

In 1608 and 1612 the first English ambassador was received in Jahangir's court. His reception was resented by the Portuguese Goan authorities. Jahangir's immediate reaction to this resulted in the severing of diplomatic relations with the Portuguese. Furthermore, churches in Lahore and Agra were closed, the Fathers' allowances were discontinued and the Christians dispersed but due to a change in the king's favor the church was reopened in 1624. After that Jahangir used to attend church with his favorite queen Nur Jhan.<sup>222</sup> The Jesuits continued their attempts to convert Jahangir but there is no authentic report as to whether he was really converted or not.

The Jesuits enjoyed the patronage of Akbar and his son Jahangir; but under the two succeeding emperors i.e. Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb this disappeared. The imperial pensions of Jesuits were cancelled. Many of the local Christians were arrested. Shah Jahan ordered the closure and destruction of all the Christian worship places. Consequently, the Church of Lahore was destroyed. Aurangzeb is regarded as the most Muslim of all the Mughals. He instituted Islamic laws very rigorously. In 1668 he issued instructions to forbid non-Muslim public religious displays. He totally restricted non-Muslim teachings and practices. So in 1672 Christian preaching was banned. To the end of the mission history during the Mughals era, Jesuit missionaries kept their hopes high of converting Akbar and Jahangir but probably none of them did so. The total missionary impact on the Mughal Empire was minimal but it cannot be ignored as useless because for instance it produced a tradition of literature and art that could be used in future.

### *3.2.3. Protestant Missions during British Imperialism*

The British presence in India began to be established as early as the late seventeenth century with initial trade and the founding of the East India Company, whose primary aim was to capture the spice trade by breaking the Portuguese monopoly in Asia. By the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the Mughal Empire was already declining. So, Indian

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<sup>221</sup> J. Rooney, *The Hesitant*, 60-63

<sup>222</sup> J. Rooney, *The Hesitant*, 64

rulers willingly accommodated the newcomers in hopes of using them against the Portuguese.

Through these trade relations Britain had been able to carve out both a political and military foothold in many parts of India. In 1619 Jahangir granted permission to trade in his territories at Surat (in Gujarat) on the west coast and Hughli (in West Bengal) in the east. These and other locations on the sub-continent became centers of international trade. In 1717 the Mughal emperor, Farrukh-Siyar (1713-19), gave the British, who by then had already established themselves in the south and the west, a grant of thirty-eight villages near Calcutta, acknowledging the importance of the British to the continuity of international trade in the Bengal economy. The British company employed sepoy, European-trained and European-led Indian soldiers, to protect its trade. Later, the British commander, Clive, defeated the Mughal forces at Buxar in 1765, and the Mughal emperor, Shah Alam, conferred on the company administrative rights over Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. This imperial grant virtually established the company as a sovereign power. Consequently, Clive became the first British governor of Bengal.

The 1857 War, which is known in India as the 1st Independence War and in Britain as the Indian Mutiny, caused the downfall of the British East Indian Company. It gave an excuse to the British Government to overthrow the last Mughal Emperor and establish its direct rule in India.<sup>223</sup> In 1858 the authority of East Indian directors and board of controls was transferred to the Secretary of State for India. This led to the formation of the infrastructure of military cantonments, the permanent British military residential encampments. A large number of civil servants and other British civilians also lived there because they were protected by the army. Because the British were very concerned about the possibility of the expansion of Imperial Czarist Russia into the Pakhtun part of larger India in the nineteenth century, they established many cantonments around these tension areas in Western/North-Western Punjab, the present-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The churches in these cantonments served the British military only and the local native Christians were not allowed in those areas. The British also established their full presence in Central Punjab which had seen the most aggressive uprising during the "Sepoy Mutiny".

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<sup>223</sup> M. Abel and F. Carey, *History* 29

They also sought a similar control of Karachi, which was becoming a major port, as it was on a much shorter route to ship cotton and other raw materials grown in Punjab to Britain.<sup>224</sup>

Since her beginning, the East India Company had assigned chaplains to minister to its employees; ironically evangelism and conversions of the Nationals were prohibited and the chaplains were instructed to restrict their activities to the European employees. The company being a strictly profit-oriented organization was not concerned with the evangelization and reformation of India.<sup>225</sup> They not only discouraged religious activity but were openly opposed to the idea as they saw missionaries as a disruptive force to their economic interests and the social structure. The company officers tried to control the missionaries and when they could not do so even deported several missionaries to their countries of origin. But missionaries kept coming.<sup>226</sup> Several Protestant missionaries took refuge in the Danish settlements of Tranqubar and Serampore.

With the arrival of the British a new form of Christianity arrived in India, neither Syrian nor Catholic but Anglican or Protestant. The Protestants were slow in their missionary expansions globally. Danish missionaries (1706-1846), German Pietists, Moravians (1706-1803) and English and Dutch chaplains were all Protestant pioneers in India and are worthy of remembrance and admiration. However, they appeared to be forerunners rather than world changers.

A singular latecomer, William Carey, the best known of the Protestant missionaries, arrived in India in 1792 and raised the curtain for a new epoch for world Christian expansion.<sup>227</sup> Known as 'the father of the modern mission movement', he landed in Calcutta. He did not find the East India Company officials very supportive and established his mission in the Danish territory of Serampur (Bengal), where he eventually founded a college. That was at a time when the 'British East India Company was at the height of its hostility towards Christian mission'.<sup>228</sup> K.S.

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<sup>224</sup> C. Amjad-Ali, 'From Dislocation' citing 8-9

<sup>225</sup> V. Mangalwadi, *The Legacy of William Carey*, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1996, 72, P. Augustine, *Jesus and Christianity in India*, Bangalore: Claretian Publications, 1999, 89

<sup>226</sup> S. Moffett, *A History*, 238

<sup>227</sup> S. Moffett, *A History*, 246

<sup>228</sup> F. Hrangkhuma, *Origins of the Church in India, in Perspectives on World Missions*, (Bangalore: New Life Literature, 1998) 116

Latourette notes that in some respects British rule was a handicap to the spread of Christianity in India because the East India Company refused missionaries passage and forbade them in its territories. But later on, in general, due to the peace created by the *pax Britannica*, British rule facilitated the expansion of Christianity.<sup>229</sup>

The East India Company's opposition to evangelism did not go unnoticed in England. When the company was up for renewal of their Charter (1793), Parliament made sure that they permitted evangelism. A young reformer, William Wilberforce, a supporter of Anglican foreign missions who had led a campaign in Britain for the abolition of the slave trade, became chief spokesman to try to force Britain to accept moral and spiritual responsibility for India. He renewed efforts to free Christian missions in the British trading colonies from repression by the East India Company.<sup>230</sup> So, the Company had to allow missionaries to work independently.<sup>231</sup> That was a time when various mission societies were getting established in the West. Consequently, a flood of missionaries from different Protestant denominations poured into India. Missionaries came not only from Britain but also from America and eventually from other countries like Australia and New Zealand.

By 1833 most of India was under British control, after the annexation of the Punjab in 1849 and Sindh in 1843. Various denominations started their work in west Punjab and Sindh such as Roman Catholic, American Presbyterians, United Presbyterians, Anglican (CMS), Church of Scotland, Lutherans and Methodist. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century more denominations such as Salvation Army, Brethren, Seventh Day Adventists and A.R. Presbyterians began their missionary efforts in the areas now part of Pakistan.

#### *3.2.4. A Brief Note on Traditional Mission Engagement*

In recent years there has been a renewed interest in the mission engagement under colonial powers. From 1500-1900 the spread of Christianity in Asia was in an imperialist context. 'The fact that they came together at the same time, colonizers and missionaries, made it difficult for Asians to believe that the Western Christian

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<sup>229</sup> K. Latourette, *A History*, 69- 70

<sup>230</sup> S. Moffett, *A History*, 263

<sup>231</sup> V. Mangalwadi, *The Legacy*,86

missionaries who came in were anything but the religious arm of imperial colonialism.’<sup>232</sup> In one way, the traditional mission engagement was under attack. There are various examples of missionary self-criticism published by missiologists: for example, *Mission in Time of Testing; Missionary, Go Home!; The Unpopular Missionary and The Ugly Missionary*.<sup>233</sup>

Mission engagement in the South Asian sub-continent raises questions: were the missionaries serving a political agenda, or did they come to India with a genuine passion to proclaim the gospel? On the other hand, there is a danger of over reacting to the undoubted evils of some parts of colonialism that can undermine understanding of the contribution made by the missionaries. It is both worthy of admiration and remembrance that thousands of missionaries served in India and made a very significant contribution.

To achieve their aims, missionaries usually followed standard missionary methods of evangelism and social action that included bible translation, evangelism, Christian literature, bazaar preaching, itinerant preaching, church planting, debates, women’s work and the establishment and upkeep of schools, hospitals and other useful work stations. Here it is important to mention that there is very little innovation in current mission practice by the Pakistani church. Most of the current missionary practice predominantly follows these traditional mission methods. Due to the rising religious extremism, some of the methods such as debates and bazaar preaching are no longer relevant, because not possible. On the other hand, mission through educational and medical institutions is still used with some measure of success. There will be more discussion on church planting, debates and evangelism in chapter 5.

A fundamental principle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Protestant Reformation was that the Holy Bible was the final authority for all Christian teaching. For this reason all people should be able to read and understand the Bible in their own languages. Some missionaries made contributions in the field of linguistics. Carey alone was responsible for the translation of the Bible into 36 Indian languages and the publication of many books. Another noteworthy contribution in the translation field was made by Henry Martyn who was a brilliant Cambridge linguist and an

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<sup>232</sup> S. Moffett, *A History*, 663

<sup>233</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 2

evangelical Anglican chaplain. He translated the Bible into Urdu and completed the New Testament in Persian. A copy was later presented to Shah, who, on receiving the copy, praised Henry's distinguished style.<sup>234</sup> Later many translations of the OT and NT were made into Urdu, Punjabi, Pushtu, Baluchi and Sindhi. The Sindhi NT translation was completed in 1878 after twenty years of hard work.

The missionaries set up dozens of educational institutions, hospitals, dispensaries, community centers and orphanages throughout Pakistan. The schools have done great service and many great and famous personalities of Pakistan were educated in them. Many of these institutions gave their services to depressed and deprived classes.

The missionaries played an important role in reformation movements in India. The biggest of their challenges was the stubborn social institution of caste. Through their influence on the government, the Anglicans and Protestants were able to eliminate several obviously sinful social practices such as sati, human sacrifice, temple prostitution, child marriage and female child killing.<sup>235</sup> Some of the missionaries also joined in political struggles, like C.F. Andrews who was closely associated with Mohandas Gandhi and became intimately involved in the independence movement of India.

### 3.2.5. *Mass Movements (1850-1930)*

As a result of the general activity outlined above the area now Pakistan became predominantly Muslim with much smaller Christian, Hindu and Sikh enclaves. Within this situation another important development in the Christian mission history of Pakistan was of mass movements, which appeared in many places, assumed various dimensions<sup>236</sup>and drew attention from a number of religious reformers, social critics, officials and nationalist politicians.<sup>237</sup> These movements were of 'fairly rapid conversions to Christianity over a fairly short period of time without drastically separating the converts from their original sociological groups.

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<sup>234</sup> S. Moffett, *A History*, 264

<sup>235</sup> V. Mangalwadi, *The Legacy*, 28-48 & M. Able, *History* 30-32

<sup>236</sup> J. Pickett, *Christian*, 553-554

<sup>237</sup> C. Harding, *Religious Transformation in South Asia: The Meanings of Conversions in Colonial Punjab*, Oxford: University Press, 2008, 5

The conversions may have been as a result of group decisions, or that of families or individuals, who as a result of their conversions were not completely ostracized, but could continue to live among their original socio-cultural groups, albeit with mild 'persecution.'<sup>238</sup>

This section seeks to set the stage and assemble a few available and relevant facts about the beginning and development of mass movements, so that this part of the origin of Pakistani Christians may be seen against the background from where it emerged. One of the most important aspect of the Christian mass movements is that they were not initiated by the missionaries but by local Indians. There were various mass movements that sprang up all over India, such as in Chota Nagpur (1857), Nadars (1860) Bihar and Orissa (1867), Telugu (1869), Punjab (1870), Tinnevely (1879), Assam (1891) to name a few. Each had distinctive characteristics, and was isolated from the others geographically.

Theoretically speaking, the Hindu caste system is powerful and hierarchical. It is supported by the ancient written Scriptures of Hinduism.<sup>239</sup> There are four large groups of castes or varnas (colors): Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisyas and Shudra. These four castes are sub-divided into about 2200 sub-castes. Apart from these there are millions of Dravidians, many of whom have adopted some form of Hinduism as their religion, and are counted as 'outcastes'.<sup>240</sup> There are other words for outcastes like dalits, pariahs, untouchables, and depressed classes. The caste of untouchables category is very diverse in itself and the term outcast is misleading and self-contradictory as 'what it seeks to convey is that the people being referred to are outside the four Varna which is not the same thing as being outside the caste system, since in themselves, they constitute a caste or a number of castes. The designation implies social exclusion, ritual impurity and economic oppression.'<sup>241</sup>

Fred Stock has observed that the chuhras were the most despised of all untouchables; they worked as landless laborers and used to perform those jobs that Hindus and Muslims considered to be defiling such as moving dead animals from the fields and premises, removing dead bodies, executing criminals, removing excreta

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<sup>238</sup> Hrangkhuma , *Christianity*, 312-313

<sup>239</sup> J. Massey, *Dalits in India*, (n.d.n.p) 39-43

<sup>240</sup> W. Hares, *Gojra :Jungal vichh Mangal, Joy in the Wilderness: The Story of the Canal Colony in the Land of the Five Rivers*, Mysore: Wesley Press, 1934, 12

<sup>241</sup> J. O'Brien, *The Construction of Pakistani Christian Identity*, (n.d.n.p) xxx

from latrines and public comfort areas. In addition, they used to defile themselves by eating dead animals and eating leftover foods from the tables of others.<sup>242</sup>

James Massey's research shows that the Dalits or untouchables were descendants of the earliest settlers of India. For more than 3500 years they have suffered multiple oppressions, which have resulted in the loss of their self-identity as full human beings.<sup>243</sup> Many outcasts wanted to raise their standards, but the rest were not troubled with their degradation. Regarding untouchables' behavior, Heinrich in his research notes that in the miserable conditions of untouchables 'submissiveness and acquiescence' become part of their behaviors.<sup>244</sup> He further discusses that there were three main reactions of the Indian oppressed classes: a) direct reaction of resentment; b) concealed reaction (individual withdrawal of the oppressed in his contact with the dominating group) and c) indirect reaction (the oppressed expressed their anger towards people other than the dominating group such as towards village pastors by showing lack of respect for them).<sup>245</sup>

Both Christianity and Islam are missionary in their very natures, and spread through evangelism and other means among indigenous Indian people. Overall these mass movements across the sub-continent to Christianity, Islam, Sikhism and Buddhism date back at least as far as 1500 AD and they continue to occur in twenty first century India.

The new converts to Islam, Sikhism or Hinduism formed separate groups within these religions. They were called Musallis in Islam and Mazhbis in Sikhism,<sup>246</sup> as they largely remained despised. Their origin prevented them being admitted to full social equality. Although Islam did not officially recognize caste, it has been affected by Hindu cultural concepts. Similarly, M. Niazi admits that Islam 'failed to eliminate the caste barriers left over from Hinduism.'<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> F. Stock, *People Movements in Punjab*, Bombay: GLS Press & FC Durham for Gospel Literature Service, 1978) 57

<sup>243</sup> J. Massey, *Dalits*, 22-72

<sup>244</sup> J. Heinrich, *Psychology of Oppressed People*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1937, 3

<sup>245</sup> J. Heinrich, *Psychology*, 15-42

<sup>246</sup> O'Brien, *The Construction*, 105

<sup>247</sup> M.A. Niazi, *Second Rate Citizens? The Nation Review*, Rawalpindi: May 24, 1998



### 3.2.6. *Exploring the Motives of Conversions*

The spiritual validity of mass movements came into question due to their immense growth. Pickett's research indicates that there were a number of diverse motives that led the oppressed to Christianity. His classification of motives can be divided into spiritual (seeking salvation, faith in Jesus Christ); social (baptized because family or community was doing so); secular (hope of children's education), and natal influences (child of Christian parents). In the end, he concluded that the motives that led Indian people to Christ in mass movements are the motives that led people anywhere to him.<sup>248</sup>

John O'Brien argues that many accepted Christianity so that they could get a 'new identity' and could throw off the 'yoke of oppression' and attain emancipation, dignity and socio-economic improvement. So, there were many 'hopes, attractions, movements of the spirit, consultations, plans, opportunities and incentives whether real or imagined' that contributed to the rapid conversions.<sup>249</sup> James Massey suggests the change of term 'mass movements' to 'spirit movements'. He believes 'there is enough historical evidence showing that the Dalit response all over the country, during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, was a response, under the direction of the Spirit of God, to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.'<sup>250</sup>

On the other hand, although the western missionaries protested loudly that the caste system was non biblical they were not that keen for mass conversions. Many were convinced that winning the high caste was the key to evangelizing the country as a whole. They believed that a powerful influence would be exerted from the high castes to the rest of the nation.<sup>251</sup> Linda Walbridge asserts that the missionaries' main fear was that their interaction with the outcastes would frighten off higher caste Indians.<sup>252</sup> However, they did not have much success in attracting upper caste converts<sup>253</sup> and therefore, the newly converted Christians continued to have minimal social acceptance. Due to this reluctance of Christian missionaries for

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<sup>248</sup> J. Pickett, *Christian*, 152-164

<sup>249</sup> J. O'Brien, *The Construction*, 561-564

<sup>250</sup> E. Hrangkhuma, *Christianity in India*, 1-2

<sup>251</sup> F. Stock, *People Movements*, 20

<sup>252</sup> L. Walbridge, *Christians in Pakistan: Passion of Bishop John Joseph*, New York: Routledge, 2003, 17

<sup>253</sup> E. Hrangkhuma, *Christianity in India*, 45

conversions from the oppressed classes many of them ended up in some non-Christian faiths such as Buddhism or Islam. Furthermore, lack of follow up resulted in some re-conversion movements organized by Arya Samaj.

New converts brought new challenges for missionaries. For example, they came to missionary compounds and started to depend upon missionaries for their needs. They became known as 'rice' or 'wheat' Christians. By far the most difficult and complex part of the problem was re-educating and socializing the behavior of the oppressed group.<sup>254</sup>

Another major issue for missionaries was to handle the migrations and settlements of new conversions. In the 1890s the British government created a series of canals across Punjab province for irrigation and a few new settlements were established in these areas. In '1898 the Catholic and Protestant missionaries were able to persuade the government to allot them small areas of the newly irrigated land.'<sup>255</sup> Many chuhra who had already converted to Christianity and worked as farm laborers with their Hindu, Sikh and Muslim landowners moved to these areas. Some settled in canal colonies of west Punjab through missionary efforts, as the Christian villages of Montgomerywala and Isa Nagri (Batemanaabad) were established in the Jhang Bar in the new canal area of Jhang. Clarkabad was started as a colony for Christian settlements near Lahore in 1868.<sup>256</sup> The Church of Scotland settled some Christians in the villages of Youngsonabad in Sheikupura district. The neighboring villages of Martinpur and Khushpur were also settled by missionaries during the same period. In the 1890's the missionaries and pastors continued to follow these migrations in newly settled areas.<sup>257</sup>

### 3.2.7. Ethnic Composition of Pakistani Christians

Generally, it is believed that most of the Pakistanis have their origins in chuhra background. Wayne McClintock deny the fact by saying that 'Members of the majority community, however, prefer to label all Christians as *chuhra* rather than to acknowledge the diverse ethnic origins of the Christian minority and their

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<sup>254</sup> J. Heinrich, *Psychology*, 2

<sup>255</sup> L. Walbridge, *Christians*, 19; See also, G. Theodore, *Christian Citizens in an Islamic State*, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007, 22; F. Stock, *People Movements*, 244

<sup>256</sup> F. Stock, *People Movements*, 244

<sup>257</sup> F. Stock, *People Movements*, 244

dependence on the expertise of Christians in the educational and medical fields'.<sup>258</sup> Pieter Streefland has researched the diverse ethnic background of Pakistani Christians and has identified five broad ethnic groups within the Christian minority.<sup>259</sup>

- a) Wealthy families of professionals and businessmen from both North and South India who were originally high caste Hindus or from prosperous Muslim backgrounds.
- b) Anglo-Indians of mixed ethnic origins who are usually employed as white-collar workers and skilled tradesmen.
- c) Goans who have migrated from the former Portuguese colony of Goa. They also are mainly white-collar workers and skilled tradesmen.
- d) Christians from low caste Hindu backgrounds of the Sindh and Punjab who have retained many of their customs and social institutions that distinguish them from the rest of the Christian community. Punjabi Christians are mostly the descendants of converts from the scheduled castes. There are a few families, however, whose forefathers were converted from higher status Sikh and Muslim backgrounds (e.g., the Narowal Khojas from Sialkot).

Apart from this several outstanding individuals from among both Muslim and caste Hindu populations and Mazhabi Sikh did become Christians.<sup>260</sup> Among Hindus in Sindh, Kohlis are nomadic people who wander the southern parts of Pakistan. Through the work of the Catholic Tribal Apostolate they converted to Christianity.<sup>261</sup> There were many mass conversions among the Hindus in Pakistan such as among Megs, Doms, Chamars, Batwals and Sansis.<sup>262</sup> Small groups of Balmikis, a scheduled caste of sweepers closely related to the Chuhras were also won for Christ. While they

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<sup>258</sup> W, McClintock, *A Sociological profile of the Christian Minority in Pakistan*, An International Review, Vol XX, No.3, July 1992, 343-353, citing 347

<sup>259</sup> S, Pieter, *The Sweepers of Slaughterhouse: Conflict and Survival in a Karachi Neighbourhood*. 1979, 20-22

<sup>260</sup> Examples include, Thakur Dasa a Hindu medical student, Didar, Singh, a Sikh contractor and Akbar Ali, a Muslim *maulvi* (W. Young, *Days of Small Things? A Narrative Assessment of the Work of the Church of Scotland in the Punjab in the Age of William Harper, 1873-1885*, Rawalpindi: CSC, 1991, 110-116). Many Muslim Ulema converted to Christianity such as Padri Ahmed Shah. Abdul Masih, Padri Sultan Mohammad Paul, Padri Abdul Haq, Padri Imadudin, Padri Barkat Ullah, Khairullah, Padri Waris-Ud-Din, M.B.E and Padri Ihsan Ullah. F. Stock, *People Movements*, 254

<sup>261</sup> J. Rooney, *Symphony on Sands: A History of Catholic Church in Sind and Baluchistan*, Rawalpindi: CSC, 1988, 91-92

<sup>262</sup> F. Stock, *People Movements*, 73

were not welcomed among middle class Christians, they happily integrated with the group of Christian sweepers.<sup>263</sup> In the light of the above discussion, it is legitimate to conclude that the background of Pakistani Christians is quite diverse. However, it cannot be denied that a significant proportion of Pakistani Christians have their origins in untouchables.

With the above selection of the mission history of Pakistan, this section can conclude that Christianity is not a foreign faith in the subcontinent. Rather, the subcontinent has a long history of Christianity which stretches back to the Apostle Thomas certainly predating the Christianization of many parts of Europe. However, the current Pakistani church with its diverse ethnic backgrounds is a product of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and subsequent modern missionary movement. The next section seeks to deal specifically with the history of the churches under study which will also give a glimpse of Christian community in Pakistan today.

### **3.3. Church of Pakistan**

Next to the Roman Catholic Church, the CoP is the largest Christian body in Pakistan. The CoP was constituted by the union consummated on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1970. The union is of the Anglican Communion of Pakistan (dioceses of Dacca,<sup>264</sup> Karachi and Lahore), the Methodist Church in Pakistan (Conferences: Indus River and Karachi Province), the United Church in Pakistan (Sialkot Church Council and Rajshahi Church Council) and the Pakistani Lutherans. The total membership of these churches was only about 200,000 out of a nation of 125 million at the time.<sup>265</sup> The churches that united into the CoP in 1970 had been established prior to the partition of India through the missionary work of churches in Europe, America and Australia who began work in India over different periods. CoP still maintains very strong and meaningful relationships with its 'mother churches' through participating both in bi-literal and multi-literal programs and engagements.

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<sup>263</sup> F. Stock, *People Movements*, 205

<sup>264</sup> In 1971, the civil war between East and West Pakistan resulted in the separation of Dacca Diocese from the CoP and Bangladesh emerged as a separate nation. This also affected the demography of religious minorities in Pakistan, as East Pakistan's substantial Hindu population had meant that non-Muslims formed 14 percent of the population of Pakistan before 1971, but only 3 percent afterwards. (K. Faruki, 'Minorities in Pakistan' in *Al-Mushir*, Vol XVI, Oct, Nov & Dec, Nos. 10-12, 286-290).

<sup>265</sup> B. Haines, 'Editorial', *Al-Mushir* Vol. 12, Nos. 11-12, November-December 1970, n. p.

As an Ecumenical Church of episcopal and non-episcopal traditions, CoP has an episcopal polity (having bishops, presbyters and deacons as clergy). The organization of CoP is on a territorial basis, the unit of such territorial organization is the diocese, and up until 1980 there were four dioceses of the CoP, Karachi, Lahore, Sialkot and Multan. Lahore diocese, with its mainly Anglican heritage, included Raiwind, a big Methodist enclave. Multan diocese, with its mainly Methodist heritage, included Gojra, a big rural Anglican area. This created some problems, and led to the decision to make separate dioceses for Raiwind and Gojra (Faisalabad). Plans had already been made to create the new diocese of Peshawar out of the areas of Lahore Diocese in the North West Frontier Province, and to create the new diocese of Hyderabad out of the part of Karachi diocese in interior Sindh.<sup>266</sup> Thus, within 10 years of union four new dioceses were created. Currently, the Anglicans form a major part of the CoP, with five out of eight dioceses of CoP having an Anglican background with significant Anglican presence in the other ones also.

### 3.3.1. *Union in Global and Regional Context*

The union of CoP has been part of the process of uniting churches in South Asia. It was not an easy journey because it involved the capitulation of inherited denominational culture and traditions but in the midst of the Church's mission and public witness among other faiths it became an imperative. William Marshall, Principal of Bishop Hubback Theological College, notes that the Plan of Church Union in North India and Pakistan, the Act of Unification of the Ministry has received perhaps more discussion than any other feature.<sup>267</sup>

The Inauguration of the Church of Pakistan was made on the basis of the Plan of Union finalized in March 1965, which was the fourth revision, the previous editions of the Plan having been issued in 1951, 1954 and 1957. Work on these Plans was begun at the Round-Table Conference in the year 1929, but its sources can be traced to the movement of the Holy Spirit in the Churches that found expression in the Edinburgh Conference, 1910, from the experience of the Church of South India (Inaugurated In 1947) and from the work on

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<sup>266</sup> J. Kraan, 'Interview with the New Bishop of Lahore', *Al Mushir*, vol. XXII, 1980, 134-137, citing 137

<sup>267</sup>W. Marshall, 'The Unification of the Ministry in the Church of North India' ([biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/ijt/19-1\\_020.pdf](http://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/ijt/19-1_020.pdf); accessed April 2015) 20-29, citing 20

schemes of union in the meeting in Traquebar in 1919, and the appeal of the Lambeth Conference in 1920.<sup>268</sup>

After almost 50 years of efforts, inaugurated in 1970, CoP has been one of the most important Christian voices in Pakistan over the past four and half decades working through its dioceses, institutions, projects, conferences and forums. Given its importance, it would be worthwhile to trace the original intention of the union, which is clearly stated in the plan of union.

This coming together in the visible fellowship representing different heritages of the uniting churches in Pakistan, in no way involves any questioning or repudiation of the gracious gifts of God which have been manifest in diverse ways in their several traditions of the ministry, the sacraments and Church polity, within the one Church of God: our sufficiency is God.<sup>269</sup>

The basis of Church union is the obedience to the Scriptural call to oneness and unity. It has been recongized by the pioneers of union that there is a need of healing for the long standing denominational breach in the Church. The first Moderator of CoP, the Rt. Rev. Inayat Masih, 7<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Lahore, in the very initial phase of union explained 'the aim of the church union movement was to bridge the gulf of division in the Church . . . In God's own purpose . . . the small minority Church in India and Pakistan has been chosen by God to demonstrate that the division could be healed.'<sup>270</sup> In this sense the union was seen 'as a way to strengthen fractured Christianity in the country.'<sup>271</sup>

Bishop Inayat Masih, was clearly determined to have an indigenous church therefore he maintained that 'the life of the new Church will be rooted and grounded in the life and culture of Pakistan.'<sup>272</sup> He strongly urged that the 'purpose of the church union movement in Pakistan is to make the Christian faith indigenous.'<sup>273</sup> For

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<sup>268</sup> The Constitution of the Church of Pakistan, v-vi, also see, E. Hoyt Smith, Pakistan Moves Ahead, *New World Outlook*: Nov 1970, 7-9

<sup>269</sup> Plan of Union in North India and Pakistan, Fourth Revision, 1967, VII

<sup>270</sup> I. Masih, 'United Church of Pakistan', *Al-Mushir* Vol. 12, Nos. 11-12, November-December 1970, 1-2 (This article was first published in the *Pakistan Times*, Sunday, November, 1, 1970)

<sup>271</sup> L. Walbridge, *Christians*, 196

<sup>272</sup> W. Scopes, 'Church Union Movements in Southern Asia: Possibility of New Church/Mission Board Relationships', *Occasional Bulletin from the Missionary Research Library*, December 1970 Vol. XXI, No .12, 1-5, citing 2

<sup>273</sup> I. Masih, 'United Church of Pakistan', citing 2

him the significance of church union was that the national leadership should take an active share in the development and Christian witness of the Church in Pakistan.<sup>274</sup>

The nature of Church union in Pakistan ranged from institutional integration, to mutual recognition of ministries and sacraments. All four denominations brought a rich traditional heritage of physical structure, liturgy (worship) and ministry.<sup>275</sup> The visible unity of four denominations was well received both within and outside the country. The presence of the Bishop of Iran H.B. Dehqani-Tafi at Lahore on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1970 and his giving of the inaugural address, along with the addresses from Rev. Dr. William Steward from the Church of Scotland and Rev Bernard Mundi from the East African Presbyterian Church testified to Pakistan's growing relationships outside the country.<sup>276</sup> In addition, the presence of Bishops of the Mar Thoma Church of India brought the witness of subcontinent Christianity to bear on the union.

Pakistan's President, General Yahya Khan, graciously sent a message of congratulations with the reassurance 'that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan means to stand by its pledges to accord just and equal treatment to all people regardless of caste, creed or color.' Abu Al-Asar Hafeez Jullundhri, the Muslim composer of the national anthem, who was present, spoke briefly in praise of the movement to unity among Christians, hoping that Muslims would learn from their example.<sup>277</sup> Such recognition of the union was an encouraging move for the mission engagement of Pakistani churches. In this regard Bishop Inayat Masih, commented that, 'Such national recognition of the tiny Christian community . . . must encourage those who fear that a State whose ideology is firmly Muslim is no place for Christians . . . One relic from the national past has been pressed into service by the new Church to claim Pakistan for Christ.'<sup>278</sup>

### 3.3.2. *Missional Significance of Church Union*

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<sup>274</sup> I. Masih, 'United Church of Pakistan', citing 2

<sup>275</sup> P. Sultan, *Church and Development: A Case Study from Pakistan*, Karachi: FACT Publication 2001, 164-165

<sup>276</sup> Their speeches can be found in *Al-Mushir*, Nov-December 1970, Vol. XII, Nos 11-12, 3-12

<sup>277</sup> W. Scopes, 'Church Union', citing 2

<sup>278</sup> W. Scopes, 'Church Union', citing 2

After such a recognition of the unification of ministries, it is important for this study to ask what place was given to mission engagement in the union by the pioneers. The constitution of CoP was formally accepted on the inauguration day. The constitution does not only tell about the theological self-understanding of those who wrote it. In addition, as a consensus document it clearly set the direction for the ministry of CoP's territorial units. To quote it, 'it is the duty of every diocese acting as a whole to spread the knowledge of the Gospel throughout its territory and to provide for the spiritual needs of the members of the Church who reside within it.'<sup>279</sup> It implies that the diocesan structure of CoP has two distinct ministries, which are placed together at least theoretically. First, the spreading of the Gospel and second, nurturing of the members. To carry on these ministries each diocese and its parishes are given full freedom and are encouraged to engage in local mission and context.

In 1976, the first significant international consultation of CoP on 'Selfhood and Mission of the Church' was organized. A group of prominent Christian leaders and foreign partners participated in it. Rev. Bashir Jiwan persuasively reminded the participants that one of the main purposes for unification of churches was to engage in their contexts through proclamation of the Gospel by word and deed. In his words,

One of the main purposes for uniting Churches is to be an effective instrument for His work, more eager and powerful *to proclaim by word and deed the gospel of Christ*, filled with greater charity and peace and enriched in worship and fellowship. According to the Plan of Church Union, both ordained ministry and laity are committed to proclaim the gospel of Good News.<sup>280</sup> (emphasis added)

This strongly suggests that the unification of the ministries had a robust mission significance, and that the pioneers had a well-defined mission purpose for the union. This purpose is evident by the careful wording of the constitution and was showed great concern in the subsequent consultation.<sup>281</sup> The duty of each diocese and the ministry of both ordained and laity is to proclaim the gospel. At this point, also certain questions need to be raised; how has this vision of the pioneers been carried on by the dioceses, its parishes, successor leadership, and the laity? Have they carried the mission goal of the union with the same zeal as their pioneers? If so, how? If not, why have they lost it?

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<sup>279</sup> Constitution of Church of Pakistan, 20

<sup>280</sup> B. Jiwan 'Mission and Selfhood' in A. Barkat (ed.) *Struggle*, 18-33, 27

<sup>281</sup> International Consultation on Selfhood and Mission of the Church in 1976



### *3.3.3. Revisiting the Purpose of Study*

This study mainly focuses on assessing the mission engagement of Pakistani Churches with a view to identifying ways in which this mission engagement can be improved and made effective. Chapters 4 and 5 seek to compare the mission theologies and mission methods of the CoP and FGA to bring out the similarities and differences, as well as issues of growth and decline. Chapter 6 will challenge and evaluate the perceived restrictions of the Pakistani churches for mission engagement. These chapters will focus on understanding the phenomena of lack of intentional mission engagement.

For evaluation purposes, the Lahore and Hyderabad diocese are chosen out of the eight dioceses of CoP. Lahore is chosen for it is the most historical diocese of CoP and it has managed to maintain its iconic presence and mission engagement for nearly one and a half centuries. The Hyderabad diocese, due to its significant engagement in the tribal context, is the most evangelistic diocese of CoP. CoP's mission engagement is compared with that of the FGA's. That is a pioneer Pentecostal denomination in Pakistan. Within 70 years of its origin, it has shown significant growth to over 200 churches all around Pakistan.<sup>282</sup>

As a pioneering study, this research seeks to assist Pakistani churches' mission reflection today. It is hoped the comparison of these denominations from different traditions would have larger implications for the mission engagement of other Pakistani churches. In this light, the following sections of this chapter provide a brief historical overview of Lahore and Hyderabad dioceses and FGA in order to provide background for the purpose of evaluation in next three chapters.

## **3.4. History of Lahore Diocese from 1970 Onwards**

### *3.4.1. Historical Background*

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<sup>282</sup> Information taken from FGA's Head Quarters, Kot Lak Pat, Lahore

Lahore diocese is the 'mother diocese' of Anglicanism in Pakistan and is now a major diocese of the CoP. It is both urban and rural in nature. Initially the Church of England formed the Lahore diocese. The Church of England initiated mission work in Pakistan through the Church Missionary Society, which opened its first station in Karachi in 1850.<sup>283</sup> The work spread to Peshawar (1854), Hyderabad (1856), Narowal (1859), Sukkur (1867), Clarkabad (1873) and Quetta (1886), making it the most widespread of all the Missions, having stations throughout what is now Pakistan.<sup>284</sup> The Anglican work was divided among government, military and civil chaplaincies, the Church Missionary Society and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (a High-Church society).

Later the Anglicans from New Zealand and Australia joined their efforts to the missionary work.<sup>285</sup> The original diocese of Lahore was constituted under the provisions of an Act of the British Parliament in 1877. Milman, Bishop of Calcutta from 1867 to 1876, was very eager and struggled hard to create a Lahore Diocese. On his third visit to Rawalpindi, Bishop Milman died in March 1876 and is buried there.<sup>286</sup> Although he did not live to see his dream come true, the Lahore Diocese was created carving some parts out of Calcutta Diocese, 'the largest of all Anglican dioceses in history'<sup>287</sup>, and a little area from the Bombay Diocese. Dr. Thomas Valpy French, who had been in India since 1851 was the first Bishop of Lahore. At that time, the area of the Lahore Diocese included the whole area of present day Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Colombo, Cyprus and the complete Gulf region. Today, the total area of the Lahore Diocese is only one hundredth of its original area.<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> The Church Mission Society (CMS) an evangelical and Anglican missionary society was founded in 1799 at Clapham by evangelical lay Christians of the Church of England as "the Society for Missions in Africa and the East." In 1812 it adopted the name "The Church Missionary Society" and in 1995 modified it to the present one. In this dissertation both names of the society are used with awareness of the development mentioned.

<sup>284</sup> F & M. Stock, *People Movements in the Punjab*, South Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1975, 234

<sup>285</sup> J. Gordon Melton, Martin Baumann (eds.) *Religions of the World: A Comprehensive Encyclopaedia of Beliefs and Practices, Volume 2 C-D*, California: ABC CIO, 2010, 697

<sup>286</sup> F. Milman, 'Bishop Milman, a Great Evangelist Books of Reference.--Memoir of Robert Milman, D.D.,' in Project Canterbury in Eyre Chatterton, *A History of the Church of England in India: Since the Early Days of the East India Company*, Bishop of Nagpur, London: SPCK, 1924, n.p

<sup>287</sup> V. Stacey, *Thomas Valpy French: First Bishop of Lahore*, Rawalpindi, Christian Study Centre, 1993, 43, Calcutta diocese included all the territories of East India Company, South Africa and Sri-Lanka and then enlarged to include Australia.

<sup>288</sup> Diocese of Lahore ( [www.dol.com.pk/DiocesanChurches.htm](http://www.dol.com.pk/DiocesanChurches.htm), accessed 21 June 2014)

### 3.4.2. Post-Union Problems and Adjustments

At an early stage of union, the Lahore diocese had to face a number of challenges both of an internal and external nature. The first was the crisis developing by fragmentation within the diocese concerning property and disunity,<sup>289</sup> which show how unprepared many of the Pakistani people were to take the responsible risks involved in the kind of Christian obedience that Church Union demanded.

Due to the Comity<sup>290</sup> agreements of the past, denominational affiliation had often been a matter of geography rather than conviction. After the Church union, some districts of the Lahore Diocese were handed over to other dioceses, but some adjustments became necessary later. Narowal Deanery was planned to become part of Sialkot Diocese; Gojra Deanery, Chak No. 13 Jhandwali, Okara, Bethlehem and Christ Church, Kachery Road, Multan were to become part of Multan Diocese. Raiwind Deanery of the former Methodist Church became part of Lahore Diocese. Various court cases ensued, with the result that Narowal, Okara and Bethlehem were returned to Lahore Diocese, whilst Jhandwali and Christ Church remained part of Multan Diocese. Eventually, in 1980, it was decided that Raiwind and Gojra (Faisalabad) should become independent dioceses in their own right.<sup>291</sup> This is how the issues were resolved but it created difficulties. On the one hand, it restricted the mission work, for the diocese was overwhelmed by the internal issues rather than pursuing its mission goals of becoming an effective instrument for proclaiming the Gospel by word and deed. On the other hand, the strife and disunity, even stretching to court cases, damaged CoP's reputation among other churches and faiths.<sup>292</sup>

However, there was also a more long-term positive aspect to the creation of new dioceses. The newly carved out dioceses gave scope for new leadership to emerge in the similar units. In Raiwind diocese, for example, Michael Nazir-Ali as the first

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<sup>289</sup> News from the Country, The Christian Community' *Al Mushir*, 206-213, citing 208

<sup>290</sup> Comity is a concept derived from the general principle that mission groups ought not to compete with each other. Each mission agency was assigned a particular territory or among a particular people for evangelism. The need for comity arose because missions entered many territories in a rather haphazard fashion, with frequent chaos and overlap. The comity areas were divided among 12 of the major denominations in Pakistan. However, the large cities of Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Hyderabad, Multan and Peshawar were not restricted to comity but were open to all churches (F & M. Stock, *People Movements*, 235)

<sup>291</sup> A. Barkat, *Mirror: Church of Pakistan, Lahore Diocese*, Lahore: Self Publication, 2002, 187

<sup>292</sup> A. Barkat, *Mirror*, 187

Bishop of Raiwind Diocese took his place on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1984, following his election with an overwhelming majority on 3<sup>rd</sup> August. Bishop Nazir Ali considered that it was an encouraging move that many former Methodists accepted an Anglican priest as their Bishop.<sup>293</sup> Thus, in itself the diocese, when unified through CoP with the Methodists, became a significant achievement in that clergy from one tradition now minister in churches which have origins in another tradition.

### 3.4.3. *Institutional Presence and Nationalization*

Another immediate challenge after the union, along with the whole of the Christian community, was that in the aftermath of the civil war of 1971, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party resumed power in what was left of Pakistan after the partition with Bangladesh, and a new Constitution was drawn up in 1973. The Bhutto Regime had promulgated Martial Law under Regulation No. 118, and in the name of 'Islamic Socialism', the government embarked on a program of nationalization including educational institutions. Under this regulation the government nationalized 176 colleges.<sup>294</sup> Among those were 56 Christian High Schools and four colleges in Punjab alone.<sup>295</sup>

It is also important to note that the Christian community was not consulted on this. As a result of nationalization, the Lahore Diocese was left with only three schools; unfortunately, twelve of her institutions were taken away by the government.<sup>296</sup> The issue of nationalization of Christian institutions aroused a great deal of discussion, indignation and reaction in the community.<sup>297</sup> Christians protested and some of the leaders arranged meetings with the high officials to claim exemption but the situation remained unchanged.

Nationalization has always been seen by the Pakistani Christians as a cruel act. It was seen as a way to marginalize Christians by taking them out of the mainstream of the community, as they were largely dependent on these institutions for their

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<sup>293</sup> 'News from the Country', *Al Mushir*, Vol XXVI, 1984, 192

<sup>294</sup> M. Hussain & Y. Haroon, 'Nationalization of Education in Pakistan: Z. A. Bhutto's Policy and Implementation', *Journal of Political Studies*, Vol. 21, Issue - 1, 2014, 61-77, citing 63

<sup>295</sup> M. Abel and F. Carey, *History*, 182

<sup>296</sup> A. Barkat, *Mirror*, 190

<sup>297</sup> J. Slomp, 'Nationalization and Christian Education', *Al-Mushir*, Vol XIV, July-September 1972, Nos 7-9, 200-204; A. Barkat, *Christian Reflection on New Educational Policy, Lahore: Church of Pakistan*, 1972 ; F. Khair-Ullah, 'The Future of Christians in Pakistan' *Al-Mushir*, Vol XV, 1973, 1-8

education and jobs. Mulana Kusar Naizi, a minister in Bhutto's government in his book 'Mirror of Trinity' wrote that 'if Christian schools and institutions would be nationalized then Christians will die their own death.'<sup>298</sup> Although, it is not clear if he uttered those words out of hatred or concern. To a large extent, he was right, for nationalization was a difficult and uncertain time for Christians. It not only damaged the Christian economy and deprived Christians of the main means for social advancement but also caused the deterioration of several Christian-run schools. This resulted from the expropriation of properties such as school buildings belonging to the Christian community.<sup>299</sup> John O'Brien observes that,

The nationalization of the large network of Christian schools established by the Church deprived the oppressed minority of Christians of their main means of social advancement. Under the ongoing Islamization process nationalization became Islamization. Christian children . . . were being taught Islamiyat in their own former Christian schools now nationalized, while being deprived of Christian religious instruction in these same nationalized schools, which were often actually situated within Church grounds.<sup>300</sup>

The review of the history of mission in India reveals that to achieve their first and foremost aim of acquiring a sympathetic audience for the gospel Christian missionaries usually set up a number of educational institutions, hospitals, dispensaries, community centers and orphanages. Jeffery Cox calls this presence 'the gospel of institutional presence.'<sup>301</sup> Which indicates that institutions were a main means of sharing the gospel. The Anglican Church Mission Society had a strong emphasis on institutions and had established various schools and hospitals in all the major urban stations.<sup>302</sup> These schools were later inherited by the Lahore diocese and the process of nationalization not only cruelly affected that institutional presence by depriving the Christian community of their own institutions - one of the crucial components of their mission methods - but simply killed the evangelistic purpose of institutions to spread Christianity.

However, instead of getting discouraged, Bishop Inayat, (who was already coping with the pressures of being the first national Bishop of the Lahore diocese)

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<sup>298</sup> Cited by M. Abel and F. Carey, *History*, 184

<sup>299</sup> R. Tebbe, 'Education in Pakistan: A Minority Perspective, 1982' in *Al-Mushir*, Vol. XXV, Autumn and Winter 1983, No 3 and 4, 183-190

<sup>300</sup> J. O'Brien, *The Unconquered People: The Liberation Journey of an Oppressed Caste*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2012, 284

<sup>301</sup> J. Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial Power in India, 1818-1940*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002, 52

<sup>302</sup> F & M. Stock, *People Movements*, 235

continued to open more schools with the vision to continue providing education to all at an affordable cost.<sup>303</sup> Bishop Inayat wanted to educate all poor children in the villages so he opened schools in nearly every village and established Cathedral Schools Nos. 2, 3 and 4 in Lahore for further education. Cathedral School No.2 was established in Anarkali in 1976, in the premises of the Younghusband Hostel, under the headship of prominent educationist Yusuf Wahab, who also served part-time as Coordinator of the Lahore Diocesan Board of Education (LDBE).<sup>304</sup>

Denationalization of certain Christian schools in Sindh was proposed in 1985, but was delayed by a year. This step was much longer delayed in Punjab, and President Zia ul-Haq was adamant that the former Christian colleges would never be returned to the Christian community.<sup>305</sup> It was only under the government of President Pervaiz Musharraf that the original promises began to be fulfilled, with the denationalization of Forman Christian College and other schools in 2003 but most of the institutions were in a shape that physically, and in some cases even in the curriculum, seemed beyond repair.

#### 3.4.4. *Growing Islamization*

In 1977 the Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto government was over-thrown through a military coup. Under Zia-ul-Haq's presidency (1977-88) the Islamization of Pakistan moved from rhetoric to reality. The gradual Islamization of Pakistan saw an extraordinary intensification under Haq, (who launched an Islamization project with the slogan of Nizam-e-Mustafa (Prophetic Order). The effects of Haq's program of Islamization continue to the present day. A separate electorate system for minorities was introduced. Nizam-e-Mustafa was to propagate and implement an exclusively Islamic identity for the country. The aim of that manifesto was 'enforce the whole of the Islamic Shari'ah, and you will do away with the academic social evils and usher in a new and pure society.'<sup>306</sup> Nizam-e-Mustafa was proclaimed as a political, social and economic panacea Amjad-Ali states that ' . . . demand for Nizam-e-Mustafa was transformed into the 'Islamization' process that General Zia used both as a tool of repression and as a means of legitimizing his rule.'<sup>307</sup> The detailed consequences of

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<sup>303</sup> A. Barkat, *Mirror*, 145

<sup>304</sup> A. Barkat, *Mirror*, 143-153

<sup>305</sup> A. Ali, 'News from the Christian Community', *Al-Mushir*, Vol XXVIII, 1986, 174-175

<sup>306</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *Islam*, 125

<sup>307</sup> C & C Amjad -Ali (eds.), *The Legislative History of The Shariah Act*, Rawalpindi: CSC, 1992, 1

Islamization will not be discussed here, since chapter seven will deal with the subject in detail when considering the restrictions on the mission engagement of Pakistani churches. However, it is important to note that in Zia's era the Islamization process added to the marginalization of Christians, which significantly restricted the context for the mission engagement by churches.

#### 3.4.5. *Alexander John Malik, eighth Bishop of Lahore 1980 - 2012*

Bishop Inayat died suddenly in June 1980, and Rev. Alexander John Malik was elected as eighth Bishop of Lahore in September 1980 to fill the vacant episcopate of this most historic diocese. His consecration was well attended by many Christians, government officials, clergy and representatives of foreign missions. In his address, Bishop Alexander emphasized that he wanted to be a pastor and a humble servant. He asked for co-operation and stressed that clergy and laymen are called to serve together. At the beginning of his installation, he shared his vision for pastoral ministry in the diocese, community development, as a dialogue between Muslims and Christians, service to the world and ecumenism. However, his concern for other faiths and reaching out to them through word and deed was not clearly announced apart from his mention of dialogue.<sup>308</sup>

Bishop Malik, out of 46 years of priesthood, was bishop for 32 years, the longest episcopacy in the history of Lahore diocese and CoP. During his episcopacy, he introduced various reforms, conceptualized the dynamics of change and strategized a new framework for the management of the process of change both in the churches and in the Church managed institutions.<sup>309</sup>

As well as having a great concern for the pastoral ministry and spiritual health of the church, Bishop Alexander also laid great emphasis on sharing the love and grace of God through education, medical and other ministries. Under his administration schools, hostels, Church buildings, dispensaries, welfare centres and asset creating

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<sup>308</sup> 'News from the Country', *Al Mushir*, vol. XXII, No.3, 1980, 133-137

<sup>309</sup> E. Massey, 'The Footprints' in E. Massey (ed.), *Bishop Alexander John Malik: 32 Years of Episcopacy, His Vision and Commitment: Lahore Diocese*, 2012, 9-16, citing 10

projects were built. For building various institutions, Bishop Malik is called the Shah Jehan of the Lahore Diocese.<sup>310</sup>

On his 32 years of episcopacy, Eric Massey graciously comments that,

At the national and global levels, Bishop Malik vigorously projected the image of the Church and that of Pakistan with missionary zeal and passion . . . [he] remained actively associated with the on-going interfaith dialogue with the Muslim World and with people of other religions . . . He continued to condemn the unwarranted occupation of Iraq . . . Drone attacks must stop, he angrily protests . . . he condemned the persecution of Muslim minorities of Myanmar as a violation of human rights . . . he represented Pakistan as a member of the Pakistan delegation to the UN General Assembly in 1999; was awarded Sitara-e-Imtiaz twice for his outstanding public services . . . He heads a large number of international and regional organizations. . . He launched various programs for women's empowerment, gender equality and development of youth as a pressing need for time. . . he is a gifted preacher . . . Although some parishioners differed from his unorthodox theology, he advocated leaving the tradition. . . in an effort to bring people to God.<sup>311</sup>

Massey has addressed different aspects of Bishop Malik's ministry in quite an optimistic way. At a fundamental level, I am in agreement with Massey that Bishop Malik's ministry is exceptional in the restricted context of Pakistan. However, I am not yet convinced, of his interpretation of Malik's missionary zeal. In fact, Bishop Malik organized only three mission conferences in his episcopacy of 32 years and successfully published the papers from these conferences in the form of two books.<sup>312</sup>

Bishop Malik is called the Shah Jehan of Lahore diocese for building institutions but one fails to see a desirable building of the real body of Christ, the church, in terms of growth, spiritual maturity, discipleship, passion for mission and mission engagement at the parish level. With some exceptions, Bishop Malik could not transfer his vision and missionary zeal to the parishes. A notable example is the Sending Fellowship of St. Andrews Church Lahore. That fellowship has been sending missionaries cross-culturally for many years but not in the last 20 years or so.<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> E. Massey, 'The Footprints', citing 11, Shah Jahan was the fifth Mughal Emperor. His reigning period was considered the golden age of Mughal architecture. Shah Jahan erected many monuments, the most famous of which is the Taj Mahal at Agra.

<sup>311</sup> E. Massey, 'The Footprints', citing 11-13

<sup>312</sup> Mission and Evangelism, International Conference 2000, Pakistan & Church of Pakistan; Lahore Diocese 125 Anniversary, Consultation on Mission and Evangelism: Keeping our Faith Alive in this Millennium 2002.

<sup>313</sup> Participant Identification code\_ MA\_1. 13



During the field research, one of the key observations is that there is a lack of intentional cross-cultural mission in the diocese. Most of the parishes are rather introverted and lack intentional mission engagement even at the basic level in their own contexts, let alone in a wider context, or even a vision for it. For example, the churches lack concern for the unreached people groups and do not have any intentional plan to reach out to others through prayer or witnessing or raising mission awareness at the congregational level. They are satisfied with their fellowship and ministry within the church and have goals to serve only those who are already in the church and maintain the status-quo. In this regard, one key respondent claimed

We have a lot to do within the church.<sup>314</sup>

Another said that,

How can we go to Judea or Samaria, when we still have to reach our Jerusalem?<sup>315</sup>

There are many who are in agreement with them. In other words, they are waiting for their Jerusalem to be won first. For they think that the need is greater within the Church due to the presence of nominal Christianity before they can move out to their Judaea let alone Samaria or to the ends of the earth. This is in sharp contrast to the early Church's mission and can also be seen as misinterpretation of the Great Commission in Acts (1:8).

The field research has also identified that a number of individuals have a strong passion for mission engagement. However, their expression is limited in the overall culture of the diocese, which does not strengthen passion for intentional mission as such.<sup>316</sup>

Over 138 years, the Lahore diocese has not only managed to survive and maintain her iconic presence but has also maintained her concern for mission which is theoretically strong but on ground realities it would be difficult to characterize

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<sup>314</sup> Participant Identification code\_ IJ 1.1

<sup>315</sup> Participant Identification code\_ IJ\_1.11

<sup>316</sup> Participant Identification code\_ SS\_1.7

Lahore diocese as a mission oriented diocese. However, it is noteworthy that despite several internal and external challenges the diocese has established significant self-sufficiency in fellowship (*Koinonia*) and service (*Diakonia*) ministries. It has a substantial influence in Pakistani society through dialogue at the different national and international forums. Nevertheless, various gaps can be identified in its proclamation (*Kerygma*) and witness (*Marturia*). Comprehensive evaluation of her engagement will be discussed in the next chapters. The diocese has stated her vision as follows:

The Diocese of Lahore, Church of Pakistan, believes that the Church is the Body of Christ and that its members are the members of His Body and are members according to the will and purpose of God. The mission of the Lahore Diocese is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ through evangelism and the spiritual and socio-economic uplift of its members, in the Islamic setting of the country. In fulfilling its mission, the Diocese recognizes [sic] and utilizes [sic] the rich diversity of gifts both to men and women, and seeks to provide training where possible.<sup>317</sup>

Irfan Jamil has been the bishop of Lahore diocese since 2012. He is known for his evangelical approach and evangelical work among the youth and as head of mission and evangelism under Bishop Malik's episcopate. At the moment the diocese has 120 parishes, 5 hostels for poor children, 28 schools, 1 technical training College, 1 Vocational Training Institute with about 15,000 students and an annual budget of over 370 million Rupees.<sup>318</sup>

### **3.5. Hyderabad Diocese**

#### *3.5.1. Historical Background*

Hyderabad diocese was formed in 1980, it emerged out of 'the missionary diocese of Karachi.'<sup>319</sup> Previously, the new diocese of Karachi was created out of Lahore diocese in February 1963, with Bishop Chandu Ray (1<sup>st</sup> Pakistani Anglican Bishop) as its first Bishop. The diocese was to take over the area of Karachi, Sindh and Baluchistan, which had previously been designated as an Archdeaconry. The creation of the diocese had its own benefits, first, in terms of administration, which

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<sup>317</sup> Diocese of Lahore ( [www.dol.com.pk/DiocesanChurches.htm](http://www.dol.com.pk/DiocesanChurches.htm), accessed 21 June 2014)

<sup>318</sup> E. Massey, 'The Footprints' citing 10

<sup>319</sup> S. Entwistle, *From Every Tribe: NZCMS Missionaries and the Tribal Church in Lower Sindh, Pakistan 1921-1997*, Christchurch: NZCMS, 2013 (2nd edition), 77

was geographically closer now as compared to Lahore in the Punjab. Second, it also enabled the leadership to advocate more strongly with mission agencies for personnel and funding. But the creation of the diocese had its own set of challenges. Stewart Entwistle points out that 'because of the complexity of ministering in a major city and vast rural areas, as well as the multitude of language groups and cultures involved, the Bishop was faced with a mammoth task'.<sup>320</sup> Therefore, the later creation of Hyderabad diocese was with the purpose of focusing on evangelism, in particular in the rural villages of Sindh. There was a huge population of lower caste Hindu communities living there as nomadic and semi-nomadic people.<sup>321</sup>

Bishop Chandu Ray, who himself told his story in a leaflet on Sindi and Tibeahen Bible translations, was from a middle-class Hindu Sindhi family. He wrote about his conversion experience that

God called me out of the darkness of Hinduism into his marvellous light...I had been with my mother on pilgrimages all over India . . . Then I met a Christian friend with eye disease who asked me to read the Bible to him. I read John chapter 14, 'I am the way, the truth and the life . . . Ask what you will in my name and I will do it'.<sup>322</sup>

After prayer in faith, God gave physical sight to his friend and spiritual light to Chandu. While in his episcopate in Karachi, he did much to spark interest in tribal evangelism, plant churches in Sindh and to provide workers for it. According to the comity arrangements mentioned earlier, Sindh was assigned to The Church Mission Society (UK, New Zealand and Australia) and the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship (now Interserve). Ray had the great support of both mission organizations as Bishop. They formed a team of medical and socio-economic workers, who were also committed to evangelize among the Sindhi people.<sup>323</sup> Although comity prevented the overlap of ministries, it raises a question about the development and ownership of the local church and leadership for the local mission. It shows that at that point in time there was not enough indigenous leadership

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<sup>320</sup> NZCMS News, December 1962. 'Advances in Pakistan: New Diocese of Karachi' cited by S. Entwistle, *From Every Tribe*, 70

<sup>321</sup> Sindh is the one of the oldest civilizations of the world; actually. It remains from pre-Abrahamic civilizations.

<sup>322</sup> Pakistan Bible Society Annual Reports, 1983 & leaflets on the Sindhi and Tibetan Bibles & V. Stacey, *Pakistan: Land of Challenge, Bible & Medical Missionary Fellowship* London n.d. n.p

<sup>323</sup> P. Sultan, *Church and Development: A Critical Analysis of Development Work and Mission Strategies-Dioceses of Multan and Hyderabad, Church of Pakistan (From 1970-1990)*, Karachi: FACT publications, 2001, 187 & 204

developed that could be trusted with the responsibility and resources of the diocese in rural areas.

In 1968 Bishop Ray was one of the two candidates for the Bishopric of Lahore. Archdeacon Inayat Masih was chosen. Shortly after his disappointment in Lahore, Bishop Ray resigned from the Karachi Diocese. It is reasoned that the Church union of 1970 was the reason that the Bishop resigned in the beginning of 1969, so that by his resignation a new Bishop would be given time to be in place prior to the inauguration of CoP.<sup>324</sup> After two years of service, in 1972 Selby Spence, the second bishop of Karachi, resigned from the office.

Bishop Arne Rudvin a Lutheran Bishop (Norwegian missionary) from Mardan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was appointed temporarily as a bishop until elections were held. He gave the work new impetus by taking definite steps to give tribal evangelism a greater priority. In 1974, he appointed Rev. Bashir Jiwan as Bishop's commissary for Evangelism in Sindh. This was a turning point for the work amongst the tribal people. Jiwan was relieved from parish duties allowing him to focus on that ministry.<sup>325</sup> He was leading pioneering work in the province as rural Dean for Hyderabad with special responsibility for encouraging evangelism among scheduled castes. He encouraged missionaries to come to the diocese to establish the ministry.<sup>326</sup> Dr. Pervaiz Sultan, out of his couple of decades experience with the diocese, said

At one time, there were more foreign missionaries than the local pastors.<sup>327</sup>

The clear goal for Hyderabad diocese was to establish new communities. Due to church planting thousands of people were converted to Christianity.

At one time when the membership of the diocese was 50,000, out of this number 35,000 were converted from tribal people groups.<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>324</sup> S. Entwistle, *From Every Tribe*, 77

<sup>325</sup> Manuscript prepared after the death of Bashir Jiwan, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2010

<sup>326</sup> F & M Stocks, *People Movements*, 230

<sup>327</sup> In an interview with Dr. Pervaiz Sultan, Principal of St. Thomas Theological College, CoP, Karachi, March, 2015

<sup>328</sup> In an interview with Dr. Pervaiz Sultan

The decision to create a new diocese was made in the Synod of CoP on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1980 and the details were settled by 4<sup>th</sup> September 1980. The transfer of authority from the Diocese of Karachi to the new diocese was very smooth.

For the church in Hyderabad, having already had several years of administrative experience because of the already established Sindh Regional Office, it was not a huge step to move into Diocesan mode. It was almost as simple as changing the letterhead on the note paper because Bishop Rudvin had been slowly devolving authority over the months as administrative systems were established.<sup>329</sup>

This also marks the development and testing of local leadership, which could be trusted with rights, responsibilities, and rural resources of the region and Bishop Bahir Jiwan proved himself for that.

### 3.5.2. *Bashir Jiwan, First Bishop of Hyderabad*

Bishop Bashir Jiwan was installed in January 1981 as the 1st Bishop of Hyderabad Diocese and he served the diocese until 1997. Although during Bishop Jiwan's episcopate, the diocese had to face a number of challenges, including the lawlessness of Sindh province in the 1980s and '90s, which threatened and claimed many lives. Additionally, the Christian community was very small and a large number were uneducated. Many were in villages and practiced a nomadic mode of life. So, they were difficult to reach and follow-up. Most members of the towns of the diocese were of Punjabi-background, but the growth of the Church was among Hindu Sindhis in rural areas. In addition, there were some cultural and sociological differences and conflicts within the diocese.

Despite these challenges, the bishop had a clear understanding of indigenous mission.<sup>330</sup> Pervaiz Sultan points out that 'Bishop Jiwan has been evangelical and greatly committed to an evangelical developmental approach, which included evangelistic outreach characterized by the Lausanne Covenant.'<sup>331</sup> With these same evangelistic concern Bishop Jiwan wrote,

We share the Good News of Jesus Christ throughout the Diocese, in city and village, to Punjabis, Bhils and Kohils, to all who wish to listen . . . Many people have come to Christ through healings at the regular healing service that are conducted through the Diocese. But

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<sup>329</sup> S. Entwistle, *From Every Tribe*, 142

<sup>330</sup> P. Sultan, *Evangelization: Mission in Context, A Case Study of Hyderabad Diocese, Church of Pakistan*, Karachi: FACT Publishers, 1997, 10

<sup>331</sup> P. Sultan, *Church*, 199

we see much sickness and suffering that can be relieved by medical work and the Diocese has expanding medical services . . . Literacy and the education of children become important and we have children's schools, hostels and literacy classes to help meet these needs. . . Books are being prepared and the Bible translated into several tribal languages, audio visual material is being produced and various training courses are being run.<sup>332</sup>

By the time Bishop Jiwan retired reports show that there were 19 parish churches and several preaching points in the diocese, 15 schools and hostels, two hospitals and five TB clinics. There were Christian centres at Khipro and Tando Mohammad Khan, along with a Conference centre and Audio-Visual Centre, and the Rural Development Programme based on Rattanabad and the Bible training centre at Mirpurkhas and in Hyderabad city. There was the diocesan administration meeting centre as well.<sup>333</sup>

### 3.5.3. *Bishop S.K. Dass and Bishop Rafique Masih*

After Bishop Jiwan's retirement, Bishop S. K. Dass was chosen as the second Bishop of Hyderabad. He served the diocese for 5 years (1997-2002). As an experienced educator, Bishop Dass' main focus was on developing educational institutions and raising the literacy rate, especially among the converts. In 2003, Bishop Rafique Masih was chosen as the Bishop of the Diocese of Hyderabad. His approach was more pastoral.<sup>334</sup> After his retirement in June 2011, the Rt. Revd. Irfan Jamil, newly elected co-adjutor Bishop of Lahore, took charge of the Hyderabad Diocese as its Commissary.<sup>335</sup>

Although the challenges that Bishop Jiwan had to face continued to be faced by the next two bishops, the field studies showed that the internal problems, which include particularly financial crisis, politicising, and lack of vision grew. Three key informants with their long historical perspective on the diocese clearly pointed out the loss of missionary vision for the tribal during the episcopates of both Bishops Dass and Rafique.<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> J. Hayward, *A Handbook of the Diocese of Hyderabad: Church of Pakistan*, Hyderabad: Diocesan Office, 1989, 3

<sup>333</sup> F. Stock, *Sowing the Seed in Sindh: A View of the Past & Present a Vision for the Future, The Work of Hyderabad Diocese of Church of Pakistan 1980-1997*: Hyderabad, DOH, 1990?

<sup>334</sup> Participant Identification code\_ PS\_2.9

<sup>335</sup> News from Hyderabad Diocese, *The Frontier News: Diocese of Peshawar, CoP*, June, 2011, Volume IV, Issue VI 1-6, citing 2

<sup>336</sup> Participant Identification code\_ MB\_ 2.8 & PS\_2.9

Bishop Jiwan had an emphasis on evangelism but Bishop Dass as an educator focused mainly on the establishment of a practical general education to increase literacy. About the ministry of Bishop Dass, one of the informants said that,

Bishop Dass' direction was very different from Bishop Jiwan's, he was an educator, he smoothly completed his term. Although, he opened many schools due to which the literacy rate grew by 33% but the pastoral work in the diocese suffered. Plus, he was not theologically trained either, which means that his election and installation as the Bishop was a violation of the constitution of CoP in itself. Nevertheless, he was a people's Bishop and people liked him.<sup>337</sup>

While describing the inception and development of Hyderabad diocese, another key informant commented on the distinctiveness of all three bishops in a rather harsh manner;

Bishop S. K. Dass came and did not understand the rural and tribal nature of the diocese, although he did focus on developing education with some success. He was involved in COP-wide issues that split the church, so when he retired the diocese re-aligned itself with the COP and Bishop Rafiq Masih, from within the diocese was elected bishop. He also struggled with the internal politics of the diocese . . . [Later] various semi-independent activities across the diocese were brought into a more coherent network under the diocese. This helped accountability and finding financial support, improved quality of activities and helped evangelism, while also making the diocese a stronger entity. . . The diocese kept out of national politics in most senses, ignoring minority rights and other issues so as to focus on outreach; it played little part in national church forums. The policy of receiving as many missionaries as possible while there opportunity was derided by most other church leaders. However, many foreign missionaries were lost during the 1990s when Bishop Bashir was ill and lost his focus and control. Visa 'slots' were also lost due to loss of interest in having missionaries after 1997. <sup>338</sup>

The major strength of Bishop Dass' era is the establishment of schools in the context of the high rate of illiteracy in Sindh. Unfortunately, the present Bishop, Kaleem had to shut down a number of schools at the beginning of his service due to the lack of finances.

Although, during field research some key informants did not speak very well of Bishop Rafiques' leadership and mission policies. It is significant to note that he shared his vision for the future in clear words. He declared that the task is 'to make the diocese strong and sustainable. Reaching the marginalized through Word and deed for the glory of God.'<sup>339</sup> Generally speaking, the diocesan council meetings of

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<sup>337</sup> Participation Identification code\_DF\_2.3

<sup>338</sup> Participant Identification code\_JH\_2.2

<sup>339</sup> Hyderabad Diocesan Council, Bishop's Annual Report 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2006- April 2007, Church of Pakistan, Minutes of the 29th Session of the Diocesan Council

his time went very smoothly and he gave comprehensive reports on the evangelistic work, parish ministries, youth, Sunday school, women's ministry, education, medical ministry, and development work that has been going on in the diocese during his time.<sup>340</sup> In such a controversial situation, it requires skill in testing how far mission reports can be decoded, interpreted, and squeezed for valid meaning where authentic mission perspectives are concerned. Doing so helps to answer present-day questions about the mission-engagement of the Hyderabad diocese. However, writing exaggerated evangelistic reports for soliciting funds and saving one's reputation is not uncommon either. In short, Bishop Rafique completed his tenure fully and maintained the diocese with skill in the midst of the numerous challenges mentioned above.

Overall, it was evident through field research that there is a strong loyalty of the clergy and laity in the diocese of Hyderabad and commitment to the people of Sindh, after all the politicking that goes on the ministry is protected. The diocese has, kept its focus despite internal and external problems. Many activities started by missionaries have re-established themselves or even re-invented themselves under local leadership. For example, Kunri Christian Hospital has had enormous financial problems under missionary control, but after many years has re-established itself as financially viable. A network of churches across the diocese has been established and from them the wider community is served and the Gospel proclaimed.

Currently Bishop Kaleem is the bishop of the diocese and has been since 2012. The diocese is divided into three regions, that is Hyderabad, Mir Pur Khas, and Sukkur regions. It consists of 26 parishes and 60 preaching units. The Diocese is working with the vision, 'to be a strong, sustainable, worshipping community that is a light to the people of Sindh, committed to serving them for the glory of God'. Therefore,

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<sup>340</sup> Hyderabad Diocesan Council, Bishop's Annual Report 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2006- April 2007, Church of Pakistan, Minutes of the 29th Session of the Diocesan Council, April 18,2008, Rattanabad Conference Centre, Sindh; CoP Minutes of the 29th Session of the Diocesan Council; Annual Report 27th April 2007 to 18th April 2008. DOH (CoP), Annual Report, Bishop of Hyderabad (C O P), July 05 to May 06. Annual Report 16th May 2010 to 23rd March 2011, The Rt. Rev. Rafiq Masih Bishop, Diocese of Hyderabad Sindh at the 32nd Session Diocesan Council, CoP  
The field research has discovered that some of the resources have disappeared from the diocesan office, so no reports of Bishop S.K. Dass' time could be found.



the diocesan mission is 'to uplift, support and empower the marginalized communities of Sindh in order to express the love of God through word and deed.'<sup>341</sup>

Along with 26 parishes and 60 preaching units, the diocese has 6 schools, 3 hostels, 2 hospitals (Kunri Christian Hospital, and Mission Hospital, Sukkur), an Audio Visual Centre (with its outreaches in 60 villages), Aman Gah (Previously Kunri Crafts). It has four projects, which includes the Integral Mission Programme, the Capacity Building Programme, the TB Control Programme, and the Village LEAP Programme (Primary Education Project in 84 Villages of rural Sindh).

### **3.6. Historical Background of FGA**

Generally, the Azusa Street revival, at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles, CA, (1906) is known as 'a fountainhead of the worldwide Pentecostal Movement.'<sup>342</sup> For discovering the story of Pentecostal origins in Indo-Pakistan, largely the first and dominant one is the Eurocentric or North America-centred approach. This view holds that the Pentecostal Movement came to and spread in India through western Pentecostal Missionaries, who had the Azusa Street experience.<sup>343</sup>

However, it is important to note that Pentecostalism had its own indigenous origins in India. Frank Bartleman, a participant of the revival, believed that Azusa Street 'revival was rocked in the cradle of little Wales. It was brought up in India, following; becoming full-grown in Los Angeles later.'<sup>344</sup> Although Bartleman accepted that the Indian revival took place prior to the Azusa event, his statement shows that he wanted to give the later a superior place. Nevertheless, Garry McGee is convinced that there were many spontaneous and roughly contemporaneous revivals that were not more or less Pentecostal than the others.<sup>345</sup> Pentecostal-like revival movements had occurred in South India since 1860, for instance revivals like the

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<sup>341</sup> Information taken from the diocesan office at Hyderabad

<sup>342</sup> J. Bowden et al (eds.) *Pentecostalism*, in *Christianity: The Complete Guide*, London: Continuum, 2005, 910

<sup>343</sup> During the field studies, it was observed that most people hold a Euro-centric approach for historical origins of FGA.

<sup>344</sup>F. Bartleman, *Azusa Street*, S. Plainfield : Bridge Publishing, 1980, 19

<sup>345</sup>G. McGee, 'Latter Rain, Falling in the East: Early Twentieth-Century Pentecostalism in India and the Debate Over Speaking in Tongues', *Church History*, Volume 68:3, September 1999, 648-665, citing 650

awakening of Tirunelveli (in Today's Tamil Nadu state in south India) in 1860 and the Khassi Hills (in the north east part of India) revival in 1905.<sup>346</sup>

Another revival at Pandita Ramabai's Mukti Mission for young widows and orphans in Kedgaon, near Pune, commenced in 1905 and lasted 2 years, as Anderson argues in line with Gary McGee. The Mukti revival was a 'full-grown' Pentecostal revival like the Azusa Street one even before the report on the Los Angeles events had reached India.<sup>347</sup> The Pentecostal revival within mainline Protestantism in Punjab is distinguished from classical Pentecostalism; its adherents remained within their churches and brought renewal in their own denominations. Fresh impetus to church growth was received from periods of revival or spiritual awakening in 1896 and 1904-1910. The revival that begun in 1904 affected the whole church, through the Sialkot convention called by some 'the Keswick of India'<sup>348</sup> (Referring to the Keswick Convention in England which promoted a real lived out faith from the 1870s on). These indigenous revivals are significant to rediscover and unfold the full story of Pentecostal origins in the Indo-Pak region.

### 3.6.1. Historical Origins

The Pentecostalism revival reached what is now Pakistan under the leadership of a South Indian Pastor Jacko who began to visit Dharampura, Lahore in 1940 to hold worship services and give Pentecostal teaching. Pastor Jacko invited another South Indian Pentecostal pastor, K.J. Samuel, to come to Lahore to provide regular pastoral care for the Pentecostal church that had been established, under the name of The Full Gospel Assembly.<sup>349</sup> Initially, in 1942, a hall was rented in Ghari Shaw, Lahore

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<sup>346</sup> T. Nongsiej, 'Revival Movement in Khasi-Jaintia Hills', in Churches of Indigenous Origins in Northeast India, ed. O.L. Snaitang, Delhi: ISPC, 2000, 32-34, cited by A. Anderson, 'To All Points of the Compass: The Azusa Street Revival and Global Pentecostalism, Worldwide Revivals In The Early 20th Century' ([http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200602/200602\\_164\\_allpoints.cfm](http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200602/200602_164_allpoints.cfm); accessed 2 December 2014)

<sup>347</sup> B. Stanley et al (eds.) *Ramabai, Sarasvati Mary (Pandita) in The New International Dictionary of Pentecostalism and Charismatic Movements*, 1016-1018; A. Anderson, 'The Present Worldwide Revival ... Brought Up in India: Pandita Ramabai and the Origins of Pentecostalism,' (An Unpublished Paper Presented at the 'Indian & Christian: The Life and Legacy of Pandita Ramabai' Conference, 17<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> Jan 2005, Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India). G. McGee, 'Latter Rain', 648-665

<sup>348</sup> F & M. Stocks, *People Movements*, 129-131, J. Rooney, *Into Deserts: a History of the Catholic Diocese of Lahore 1886-1986*. Pakistan Christian History, no. 4. Rawalpindi: CSC, 1986; J. Rooney, *Symphony on Sands: A History of the Catholic Church in Sind and Baluchistan [with] Of Wheat that Ripens: the Dioceses of Multan & Faisalabad, a Historical Essay*. Pakistan Christian History, no. 6. Rawalpindi: CSC, 1988; M. Abel and F. Carey, *History*, 154

<sup>349</sup> M. Abel and F. Carey, *History*, 154, 163

for the purpose of church gatherings.<sup>350</sup> In 1943 Karin Com  th, a nurse of the Scandinavian Free Mission, was sent to Lahore. She had already spent 18 years serving in north India in Uttar Pradesh. She joined in the efforts of K.J. Samuel, who had been leading worship services in other parts of Punjab, including Narowal, Faisalabad, and in Lahore also, including in the home of Dr. E. J. Sinclair who was college principal of Forman Christian College, an American Presbyterian College.<sup>351</sup> Dr. Sinclair became very instrumental for the early spread of Pentecostalism in Lahore. He was baptized in the Holy Spirit during a prayer meeting led by Robert Cummings (a United Presbyterian missionary).<sup>352</sup> In 1947 Karin Eriksson, joined Karin Com  th for missionary work in British India.

### 3.6.2. *Post-Independence Era*

When Pakistan became an independent nation in 1947, with the Muslim faith as its foundation a civil war broke out between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims claiming many lives, the count of the dead ranging between 200,000 and 360,000.<sup>353</sup> Neill marks this period as including one of ‘the most terrible massacres recorded in modern history.’<sup>354</sup> This ethnic cleansing was tied in with one of the largest and most rapid migrations in human history. An estimated 14.5 million people migrated in both directions over the partition border within four years.<sup>355</sup> In the chaos that followed partition, the Christians, being neutral and not generally the target of persecution, did not migrate in big numbers but ministered to the wounded, sick and needy people of all social communities.<sup>356</sup> Pastor J. Samuel moved to India but before he left he asked Sinclair to resume responsibilities for the new group along with Karin Com  th, who had moved with Karin Erikson to Lahore from India where they had been working.

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<sup>350</sup> Participant Identification code\_LQ\_3.1

<sup>351</sup> Participant Identification code\_LQ\_3.1

<sup>352</sup> M. Abel and F. Carey, *History*, 154

<sup>353</sup> ‘Partition - August 1947’, (<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/indo-pak-partition2.htm> accessed 30 November, 2014)

<sup>354</sup> S. Neill, *A History of Christian Mission Vol 6*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1965, 484

<sup>355</sup> P. Bharadwaj, ‘The Big March: Migratory Flows after the Partition of India’ *Economic & Political Weekly*, August 30, 2008- 39-49, citing 39

<sup>356</sup> F & M Stocks, *People Movements*, 129-131; C. Pollock, *Shadows Fall Apart: The Story of the Zenaana Bible and Medical Mission*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1958, 181-182, S. Neill, *A History*, 484-485

The understanding of the FGA pioneers was that the 'existing churches did not have a full understanding of, and thus did not have a full experience of, the message of the Gospel because they were missing the fullness of the Holy Spirit.'<sup>357</sup> Therefore, their goal was 'to start indigenous churches in Pakistan in line with the Pentecostal/Charismatic tradition . . . an emphasis on the work and experience of the Spirit was considered the hallmark of the growing network of FGA churches in Pakistan.'<sup>358</sup>

The year of 1947 was a defining moment for the history of Pentecostalism in Pakistan. Initially the female missionaries started working in Lahore and focused on children's ministry but soon their mission field expanded to other places in Pakistan. In 1949, a revival started when at that time the Pentecostal Church was comprised of only 50 people.<sup>359</sup> Various tent meetings were organized which were attended by people from surrounding villages. This contributed to the spread of Pentecostalism in the surroundings of Lahore.

### 3.6.3. *Initial Challenges and Set Backs: Internal and External*

As Pentecostalism was strengthening in Lahore, the movement had to face a number of challenges from inside and outside. It included disunity resulting in a controversy between Karin Cometh and Professor Sinclair who were the main leaders of newly-born Pentecostalism. A sharp spilt arose in early to mid-1950s.<sup>360</sup> These differences revolved around three issues:<sup>361</sup>

- a) Due to the expansion of Pentecostalism Karin was in favour of more missionaries, who would provide pastoral care to the brand new Christians, for she feared if that did not happen then the group would turn to other missions such as Assemblies of God. However, for Sinclair indigenous leaders were to take up the leadership role based on the local resources, he objected

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<sup>357</sup> Participant Identification code\_LQ\_3.1

<sup>358</sup> Participant Identification code\_TW\_3.9

<sup>359</sup> B. Anderson, *Swedish Pentecostal Movement in Pakistan 1943-1995*, Huddinge: PMU Institute 1999, 26 & M. Abel and F. Carey, *History* 164

<sup>360</sup> A correspondence between Karin Cometh and her home church, cited in B. Anderson, *The Swedish*, 27-28, S. Akthar, *Global Pentecostal Charismatic History*, Lahore: International Gospel Mission, 2008, 178-179,

<sup>361</sup> Letter from Karin Cometh to Philadelphia, Stockholm, 18/01/1954, cited by B. Anderson, *Swedish Pentecostal Movement in Pakistan 1943-1995*, Huddinge: PMU Institute 1999, 27-30

to the fact that foreign leadership would dominate to build into the functioning of church.

- b) The spectre of weak finance and support for churches and leaders haunted the work and caused considerable disunity. After the disastrous flood of 1955, the Swedish missionaries were committed to supporting the flood victims through material and money. However, Professor Sinclair rejected the idea. He was in favour of need assessment in order to avoid envy and greed but the Swedish missionaries did support the flood victims. Coupled with that there was the issue of support for the national leaders and evangelists, who were largely living in poverty. The Swedish missionaries believed that they should be receiving financial support, whereas Sinclair wanted the national leaders to be self-supported. Along with Karin some indigenous leaders were also in favor of foreign support. Some of these were Pastor Sardar, Pastor Yaqoob Paul and Principal Barkat Masih. Due to the issue of poverty these leaders thought that it would be very difficult to run FGA with local funds therefore that foreign aid should be accepted.<sup>362</sup>
- c) The third issue that arose was concerning the church model for emerging congregations. Karin desired the Pakistani Pentecostal church to be independent like the Swedish Pentecostal church. In contrast, Sinclair wanted a mission committee to represent the organization as a whole, and preside over the various churches.

These differences of opinions got worse. Consequently, Karin and Professor Sinclair went their separate ways. Both groups were relatively fresh in purpose and commitment, so they continued their work in their own capacities. The group with Sinclair joined Assemblies of God, active in East Pakistan at that time, and continued

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<sup>362</sup> Participant Identification code\_ SS\_3.2

to work with them.<sup>363</sup> Whereas, the Swedish missionaries continued their work under the name of FGA.<sup>364</sup>

Along with all these internal complexities, FGA drew responses and critiques from other denominations as well. By the 1940's the context of the Church in Punjab was rapidly changing from what it was at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There were missionaries in Punjab from 1542. That refers to the coming of Jesuits who continued their mission in North India, ruled by Mughals.<sup>365</sup>

The Pentecostals were infamous for ignoring the comity agreements, which were supposed to set territorial boundaries for different missions spheres of evangelization.<sup>366</sup> Accusations of what was known (in an extension of the biblical metaphor of 'flock') as 'sheep-stealing' tended to be made disproportionately against the Pentecostals, and not without reason. FGA was open about the fact that they regarded Protestant converts as 'fair game'. Having arrived in the Indian Sub-continent as late-comers the Pentecostals mainly established their work on the work of Protestants. Protestant presence in Punjab pre-dated that by some 150 years,<sup>367</sup> as seen above.

In his article on *Asian Pentecostalism* Wonsuk Ma argues that 'Pentecostalism was born as a religion of the poor.'<sup>368</sup> This proved to be true in Pakistan, because in its early stage FGA was dominated by poor, heavily working-class and mostly less educated people and based itself on the principle of voluntarism. It was in a clear contrast with the other Protestants and Catholic denominational and institutional structures, who were better resourced and paid monthly salaries to their workers<sup>369</sup> and also socialized in high colonial society.

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<sup>363</sup> M. Boot, 'The Origins, Growth and Development of the Pentecostal Movement in Pakistan from 1900-1990', (MA Dissertation, Mattersey Hall, September 2003) 33

<sup>364</sup> Participant Identification code\_ LQ\_3.1

<sup>365</sup> S. Moffett, *A History of Christianity*, 8-9; J. Rooney, *The Hesitant Dawn: Christianity in Pakistan 1579-1760*, Rawalpindi: CSC, 1984, 6-8 & 17

<sup>366</sup> F & M Stocks, *People Movements*, 289

<sup>367</sup> Abel and Carey have also mentioned that Pentecostals have mainly grown in Pakistan by attracting people from other denominations which look traditional and un-spiritual, rather than brining non-Christians to the Church See, M. Abel & F. Carey, *History*, 153

<sup>368</sup> W. Ma, 'Asian Pentecostalism: A Religion Whose Only Limit Is The Sky', *Journal of Beliefs & Values: Studies in Religion & Education*, 2004, 25:2, 191-204, citing 198

<sup>369</sup> For example, in the context of Presbyterian Missions, M. Abel and F. Carey observe that if Presbyterian Missions had not paid the salaries to their evangelists, it would not have been possible

Not only that, the institutional presence of non-Pentecostal missionaries was strong but due to their enormous resources they had clear advantages over FGA to settle new converts in Christian villages. As discussed in the first part of this chapter, in the 1890s the British government created a series of canals across Punjab province for irrigation where new converts were settled down. Each village had a church, school and a dispensary developed by the missionaries.<sup>370</sup> Whereas, reflecting back on the early stage of FGA one informant said,

We had nothing to begin with, other denominations inherited buildings and institutions and resource from their parent missions . . . However, we were empty handed, the main line churches were situated on the main roads. We used to go in teams of young boys, we used to work in the slums and in areas, where no one liked to go. Although we were from very poor families, we use to rent bicycles with our own pocket money; we had no salary from the head office of FGA. We had only one tool and that was prayer. We were so committed to prayer that we used to pray for whole nights.<sup>371</sup>

The distinctiveness of Pentecostals is due to their pneumatological uniqueness with evangelical beliefs and experience of dynamic works of the Holy Spirit. The rituals of fellowship, preaching, healing prayer, new birth, water baptism, Spirit baptisms, revival meetings, exorcism and healing crusades coupled with their loud prayers, emotionalism, shouting, weeping were prominent features of the newly launched movement of FGA which were viewed with suspicion and disapproval. The other denominations looked down on this divergent form of Christianity. One of the key informants expressed the non-acceptance of other denominations in these words,

. . . in the earliest stages was the non-acceptance of the already existing denominations of the time such the Catholic Church, Presbyterian Church, Church of Pakistan and others. Not only did they show reluctance to accept FGA as a legitimate mission movement with distinctive emphasis on the experience of the Holy Spirit's person and work but some of their more radical elements also demonstrated active opposition. They viewed FGA in terms of a heretic movement . . . because of the FGA's stress on a vibrant worship style coupled with the practice of Charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit such as tongues, prophecy and healing.<sup>372</sup>

Another informant, associated with the movement since 1968 said,

Some of the people from other denominations used to call us with different names such as *Weeping Mission, Noisy Mission and Sticky Mission*. If they saw us in the street coming from the front, they would change their path. In the Catholic churches, there was even an announcement that do not mingle with Pentecostals, do not get merry with them and do not

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to work among the lower castes during and after the mass movements. See M. Abel and F. Carey, *History*, 155-156

<sup>370</sup> Participant Identification code\_FC\_1.4

<sup>371</sup> Participant Identification code\_SS\_3.2

<sup>372</sup> Participant Identification code\_TW\_3.9

let them use our graveyards. I was in Don Basco School Lahore and I was discriminated against by the Catholics on a consistent basis for being associated with the Pentecostal group . . . however, we cope with the challenges with prayer and thanksgiving.<sup>373</sup>

This probably can be reckoned as a cause and effect of 'us vs them' situation between newly launched FGA and already existing denominations which continues to the present day in various forms and levels. For if, the non-Pentecostal denominations looked down upon FGA for the above reasons FGA, as a defence, looked down upon them for lack of a sound theology of salvation and experience of new birth to the point of considering them nominal or non-Christians. Hence, the whole focus of FGA was reaching to the people of other denominations, defending this as going after 'the lost sheep'.

With the Pentecostal emphasis on prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit, there were many miraculous manifestations, such as healing and exorcism, due to which people were attracted towards them.<sup>374</sup> Consequently, many Muslims and Christians from other denominations were led to the healing crusades of FGA.

An emphasis on the work and experience of the Spirit was considered the hallmark of the growing network of FGA churches in Pakistan. A key opportunity that the earliest FGA leaders capitalized on was the lack of spiritual fervor among the traditional denominations of the 1960s. Powerful preaching with emphasis on the new birth experience and the subsequent Spirit experience distinguished FGA from other conventional mission movements.<sup>375</sup>

FGA did not start by founding impressive institutional structures and extensive community development projects but its beginnings were rather humble. FGA started its fellowship in a rented hall, and then moved to be a house church on a Presbyterian college campus. The workers mainly worked on the voluntary principle. However, at any rate, as a denomination FGA has served both to protect its doctrinal distinctiveness and identity along with maintaining its significant growth by raising the profile of its tradition. Over the years, FGA has become acceptable among other mainline denominations. The principal of a Bible College, Rev. Liaquat Qaiser, and other pastors of FGA churches are involved with other denominations and para-church organizations in their mission projects. FGA works

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<sup>373</sup> Participant Identification code\_ SS\_3.2, some other informants also shared same kind of experiences; Participant Identification codes\_ BS\_3.3 YN\_3.4 & KC\_3.8

<sup>374</sup> Participant Identification code\_LQ\_3.1 and SS\_3.2

<sup>375</sup> Participant Identification code\_TW\_3.9



in close partnership with Pakistan Bible Society (historically an interdenominational organization), Operation Mobilization (an interdenominational mission organization) and the Open Theological Seminary (an interdenominational seminary).<sup>376</sup>

#### *3.6.4. FGA Bible College*

The biggest challenge was to prepare new leaders. This challenge was met with the establishment of the FGA Bible College in 1967 by Kjell Sjoberg, when the Pentecostal movement was growing rapidly among the cities and villages of Pakistan and there was a need for more full-time ministers to carry out extensive evangelistic work. The beginnings of the college were very humble, one informant said

we did not have any proper place, so the earlier classes were started in a room where chickens were kept. We washed the room, spread rugs on the floor and the bible college was started there. We continued at that place for more than a year, later on a building was built.<sup>377</sup>

The FGA Bible School started a one-year course to train men who felt the call of God to full-time ministry. The first principal of the newly-fledged Bible School was Kjell himself. The Bible College still offers regular, planned, residential Christian education on certificate, diploma and B.Th. level. Which serves as one of the main source of contextual Pentecostal theology and development for FGA and other denominations.

#### *3.6.5. Extension of Pentecostalism and Deeper Commitment to the Social Projects in 1960s and 1970s*

In 1957 Tage Sojberg, a Swedish preacher and pastor visited Pakistan. Although he stayed for only a year, he was a great help for the extension of Pentecostalism in Pakistan and this period was marked by the growth and consolidation of churches both in Lahore and other main cities of Punjab.<sup>378</sup> This period also witnessed the emergence and growth of a number of indigenous Punjabi FGA churches in such

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<sup>376</sup> Participant Identification code\_SS\_3.2 & TW 3.9

<sup>377</sup> Participant Identification code\_SS\_3.2

<sup>378</sup> L. Qaiser, 'Stanley Sjoberg: A Glimpse of God's Grace' *Satoon-e-Haq*, 20:11 November 2008, 3-15

places as Lahore, Rawalpindi, Baddomalhi, Gujranwala, Sargoda, Lyallpur, Sialkot, Narowal and Pasrur.<sup>379</sup>

By the 1960's many new Swedish missionaries had arrived in Pakistan as the interest in missionary work in Pakistan began to grow in the Pentecostal churches of Sweden. This strengthened the work of FGA in Pakistan. Some came to work in the community development projects and others arrived to work in church-planting and the Bible school. Many churches from Sweden started supporting the FGA's work financially. During this time, the Sjoberg brothers (sons of Tage Sjoberg) arrived for extensive ministry. The Sjoberg family was very committed to and passionate about the progress of Pentecostal work in Pakistan. Tage Sjoberg on his death-bed persuaded Kjell to leave for mission work in Pakistan. Kjell Sjoberg in his book recalls the incident and quotes his father's words; 'I know I am going to die, but I don't want you to stay in Sweden waiting for that to happen. You will make me much happier if you go on out to Pakistan and get on with your missionary work.'<sup>380</sup> This indicates the height of passion and depth of commitment of the Sjobergs to Pentecostal expansion in Pakistan. Kjell Sjoberg was influenced by the Church Growth Movement that emerged in the 1960s in the United States. Kjell was very determined to plant new churches which were self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. By the time he left Pakistan in 1972 there were 67 churches associated with FGA's denomination.<sup>381</sup>

One of the strengths of the movement since its initial phase is that the national churches were led by indigenous Pakistani pastors and evangelists without a significant financial back-up and almost no endowment. In this regard, B. Anderson claims that missionaries worked with the national pastors and evangelists to plant new churches. After the formation of local churches, the work was headed up by Pakistani nationals and the missionaries intervened in local churches only by invitation from local leaders.<sup>382</sup>

By the 1960s the mission expansion of Pentecostalism took the form of a spectrum of different initiatives rather than any single strategy. It started developing its

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<sup>379</sup> B. Anderson, *Swedish*, 32, 33

<sup>380</sup> K. Sjoberg, *Restoration A Direction for Prayer* Chichester: New Wine Press, p.121

<sup>381</sup> B. Anderson, *Swedish*, 46-50.

<sup>382</sup> B. Anderson, *Swedish*, 71

institutional structures. In the first 15 years of the Pentecostal movement missionaries were not involved in specific social work. However, by 1960s with the arrival of new missionaries FGA's commitment to social work got deeper. The projects included a dispensary bus, dispensaries, and a home for infant and school boys in Lyallpur (now Faisalabad), a girl's hostel and a school in Narowal. Other projects included the literature evangelism team, a radio ministry, a Bible Correspondence School, a primary school project, orphanages, and Adult Literacy Projects.<sup>383</sup> Unfortunately, in recent history, some of the projects have had to be closed down due to a lack of finances and staff. Which is a clear indication of lack of planning, resourcing and especially human resource development.

Currently, FGA is working with the following vision, 'The Full Gospel Assemblies exists to evangelize the people of Pakistan, to plant witnessing Churches and to become an instrument of the kingdom of God in Christ in Word and Deed.'<sup>384</sup>

In 2015, there are 210 churches with FGA affiliation all around Pakistan.<sup>385</sup> Most of the local churches are self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating for their local ministry. However, self-support is not a reality in most of the social projects of FGA on the denominational level. As a matter of fact, several development and humanitarian projects planted by the FGA over the last 40 years were, and are still, supported by the Swedish Pentecostal Relief organization PMU Inter-life.<sup>386</sup> The funds are solicited from the foreign churches for main projects in the Pakistani Church. It must be noted that the task of handing over the social welfare projects to the national Christians has been a lengthy process. Previously these projects were managed by the missionaries themselves. All the social and evangelistic ministries are under the control of national leadership governed by one board.

The present constitution was adopted by 1993. The denomination is led by the general assembly comprised of pastors and evangelists from within the denomination. The general assembly elects a board for a two-year period. It meets

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<sup>383</sup> B. Anderson, *Swedish*, 60-66, 77-84, 95-113

<sup>384</sup> Taken from the FGA's Headquarters at Bahar Colony, Kot Lakpath, Lahore

<sup>385</sup> Information taken from the FGA's Headquarters, Lahore. Apart from this number, most of the local churches have indigenous ministries or outreaches in their own local areas and communities. Some have a sister church, house church or branches of the local church. For example, in Sambrial (District Sialkot), FGA has had a main church since 1971, but presently, that church has 10 house churches in various villages around Sambrial, which are not included in the total number of 210 churches of FGA.

<sup>386</sup>E. Leghari, 'FGA Evaluation Report 2008', obtained from the FGA Headquarters Lahore, Pakistan

at least quarterly. There are two management teams under the board, one for evangelism and other for social work.<sup>387</sup>

### **3.7. Conclusions and Initial Comparison Based on Historical Developments**

In this comparative study, the CoP and FGA form an ideal study cohort since they share core similarities in facing the restrictions presented by the complexity of cultural, sociological, and economic contexts as defined in chapter 1.<sup>388</sup> On the other hand, their governance, theology and staff structures are distinctly different. Having reflected on the mission development of the churches based on interviews with key personnel and analyzing key documents and field observations the following tentative comparative conclusions can also be drawn.

#### *3.7.1. Mission Orientation*

Regarding mission engagement, Pervaiz Sultan has pointed out that ‘with honourable exceptions, mission mindedness has not been the hallmark of CoP.’<sup>389</sup> In contrast for FGA, Dr. Majeed Able and Freda Carey note that ‘Although in past, FGA has been working among Christians of other denominations, in recent years FGA’s vision has expanded to non-Christians as well and they have started working among them’.<sup>390</sup>

#### *3.7.2. Origin*

CoP is a united Church, which includes Anglicans, Scottish Presbyterians, Lutherans and Methodists. Historically speaking these churches are established in the region over a century. For example, the Lahore diocese, which is 138 years old, and the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection are amongst the oldest institutions in Lahore.<sup>391</sup> As noted above, all four denominations brought with their membership,

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<sup>387</sup> Constitution of FGA

<sup>388</sup> More on the context of Pakistan will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7

<sup>389</sup> P. Sultan ‘A United Church: High Calling, Spiritual Weakness’, *Transformation*, January 1, 2004;21(1):33-36, citing 34

<sup>390</sup> M. Abel and F. Carey, *History*, 164

<sup>391</sup> E. Massey, ‘Seize the Moment’ in E. Massey (ed.) *The Very Rev. Shahid Mehraj: Dean of Lahore, 25 years of Committed Pastoral Ministry*, Lahore: DoL, 2015, 7-13, citing 10

a rich traditional heritage of physical structures, liturgy (worship) ministry and their carefully crafted theology.

On the other hand, FGA as a latecomer with small numbers and developing theology played a minor role, with proselyting a major focus; it necessarily had a very humble beginning. As mentioned above, it started meeting in a rented hall, later moved to Forman Christian College campus as a house church but today it has 210 churches.

### *3.7.3. Different Organizational and Ecclesial Structures*

CoP has an episcopal polity (having bishops, presbyters and deacons as clergy). The organization of CoP is on a territorial basis. The unit of such territorial organization is the diocese with a 'parish' concept of mission identity, which are autonomous to do mission in their own geographical area. For example, they make their own budgets, raise funds and follow their own priorities for mission engagement. Therefore, its structure is more centralized, organized and well defined. With regard to the organization of the Church, the Synod is the highest representative body of the dioceses of CoP. It works as legislative, judicial and administrative organ of CoP.

The bishops of the CoP hold a lot of power in a diocese. Concerning this Sultan has pointed out that bishops power 'does not necessarily go in line with the Constitution of the Church of Pakistan. This has turned the Church of Pakistan from a serving community into a power-centred body.'<sup>392</sup>

By contrast, FGA has a congregational polity which is more fluid and flexible in nature without any defined boundaries for an individual or church to work in. Their polity is naturally supportive of indigenous principles of self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating. This ecclesial structure underlines the vitality and pragmatism in their efforts of engaging in mission nationwide.

It is worth noting that no discernible formal organization or structures appeared in Pentecostal missions until comparatively recently, and Pentecostal missions have been known for their 'creative chaos.'<sup>393</sup> However,

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<sup>392</sup> P. Sultan, *Church*, 313

<sup>393</sup> D. Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Thought*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996, 213-22

FGA's denominational structure aims to strike a balance between operational freedom and administrative accountability. Pastors of local churches and mission leaders have freedom to make decisions about how to run churches and mission projects in their local context. FGA board does not interfere with the local mission activity happening under the leadership of local pastors. However, as the local pastor is also part of a large family they have to subscribe to the ethical, moral and doctrinal convictions of the FGA board and denomination. A local pastor is primarily responsible to his congregation and the church committee consisting of elders and deacons.<sup>394</sup>

With this structure, FGA sometimes faces serious challenges of fragmentation and splits in the local settings. In such settings, often FGA's board remain helpless to implement decisions to resolve conflicts at local level.

#### 3.7.4. *Theological Foundations*

Overall, the CoP has the richness and diversity of four traditions as mentioned above. Consequently, there is a diversity of theological approaches even within CoP regarding the understanding of mission. For example, as seen above, Bishop Bashir Jiwan had an evangelistic approach, whereas Bishop Malik had more of a liberal or un-orthodox theology and approach.<sup>395</sup> However, the pioneers of union carefully crafted the constitution and highlighted the mission significance of the union. Although there have been different problems CoP celebrates its unity in diversity.

By comparison, FGA has an unwavering commitment to Pentecostal theology. Their significant strength is consistent theological reflection through their monthly publication of a magazine entitled *Satoon-e-Haq* (Pillar of Truth). Although, the reflection on mission theology is still in the teething process it has provided a consistent reflection on Pentecostal theology. This is a strength. CoP does not have a platform like FGA for consistent theological reflection. In contrast to this, the CoP constitution provides a very detailed administrative and theological foundation.<sup>396</sup> For example, it explains the doctrine of church (article 4), the worship of the church (article 5), the sacraments of the church (article 6), the priesthood of all believers (article 7), the laity (article 8), the ordained ministry (article 9), the polity of the church (article 10), etc.

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<sup>394</sup> Participant Identification code\_ TW\_3.9

<sup>395</sup> More discussion on diverse theological approaches will be drawn in the next chapter.

<sup>396</sup> Theological foundations are also well defined in The Book of Common Worship.

On the other hand, FGA's constitution provides clear guidelines for administrative matters, under the heading of theological foundations. Instead of working out her own Pentecostal conviction in its unique Pakistani context; 'the apostle's creed' is accepted and affirmed.<sup>397</sup>

### 3.7.5. Resources

The COP is a fairly rich denomination and it has both inherited and developed a huge endowment with its outstanding church buildings at main roads and vastly spread compounds and several inherited institutional properties. For example as mentioned above the annual budget of Lahore diocese is Rs. 370 million. Recently, Rs, 30 million was spent for renovation of Lahore Cathedral alone.<sup>398</sup> Moreover, 'the Lahore Diocesan Trust Association owns property throughout Pakistan: from Peshawar to Karachi, from Karachi to Quetta, from Quetta to Chaman and in the rest of Pakistan.'<sup>399</sup> Even in rural areas CoP buildings stand out due to their unique architecture, grand presence, well maintained properties, and pastor houses. CoP was approached for details on their net worth in terms of resources but the information was not made available. It is also noteworthy that the resources within CoP are not equally divided; dioceses such as Raiwind and Faisalabad are resource poor.

Compared to the above, FGA had no endowment; it owns a few institutional and church buildings mostly without pastor houses. The churches are located mainly in ghetto Christian communities, with relatively little financial worth. Moreover, many of the local congregations in villages and towns do not own any church building but meet in houses or rented places. In this way FGA, truly, proves that a movement can be sustained over six to seven decades with significant nationwide growth and presence through comparatively few resources. With these historical backgrounds and initial comparisons of both the denominations, the next chapter aims to evaluate the mission theology of both these churches.

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<sup>397</sup> Constitution of CoP, 4-20 and Constitution of FGA, 2

<sup>398</sup> E. Massey, 'The Footprints' citing, 10

<sup>399</sup> A. Malik 'Message for Rev. Shahid Mehraj' in E. Massey (ed.) '*The Very Rev. Shahid Mehraj*', 20-22 citing 22

## 4. Evaluation of the Mission Theology of Pakistani Churches

### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter seeks to evaluate the theologies of mission of CoP and FGA. It is divided into three major sections. First, it defines what the task of a theology of mission is. Second, it sets off on the challenging quest for how theological reflection and its forms work amongst Pakistani churches. It looks at their available major published theological resources to see what their self-reflections are and how do they determine the direction of their theologies of mission. Finally, the third section applies Christopher Wright's grid of biblical theology i.e. creation, fall, redemption in history and new creation to evaluate mission theology of Pakistani churches. It will explore the present shapes of the churches theologies in order to see what they should be reshaped to.

### 4.2. Defining the Task of a Theology of Mission

The Christian world is in the midst of a crucial debate about the relationship between theology and mission. Christopher Wright describes this dichotomy in these words,

Theology, after all, is all in the head-reflection, argument, teachings, creeds and confessions of faith . . . mission or missions, is doing-practical, dynamic, achieving results . . . not only do theology and mission not seem to have much in common in themselves, it is easy to get the impression that most of those interested in the one have little interest in the other . . . theology, it seems, is all about God. . . mission seems to be about helping God to get over those barriers of strange cultures and faraway places that he seems to have such difficulty crossing . . . so, in mutual suspicion, theologians may not relish their theories being muddied . . . by the messiness of practical mission. Practitioners of mission, in quick riposte, may not wish to see their urgent commitment to getting on with the job Christ entrusted to us delayed by indulgent navel-gazing about obscure long words ending in -ology. And so the dangerous result is that theology proceeds without missional input or output, while mission proceeds without theological guidance or evaluation.<sup>400</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 19



Given that the theology and mission are not to be seen as two separate entities then there are two basic questions, first what the theology of mission is? Second, what is the task of a theology of mission? Andrew Kirk defines theology of mission and its task in the following words,

The theology of mission is a disciplined study which deals with questions that arise when people of faith seek to understand and fulfil God's purposes in the world, as these are demonstrated in the ministry of Jesus Christ. It is a critical reflection on attitudes and actions adopted by Christians in pursuit of the missionary mandate. Its task is to validate, correct and establish on better foundations the entire practice of mission.<sup>401</sup>

Craig Ott describes the task of theology of mission in these words 'it examines the theological foundations, guidelines, and dimensions of mission in particular. It is a theological reflection on the *nature* and *task* of mission.'<sup>402</sup>

The above definitions imply that as a disciplined study and theological reflection the theology of mission, is primarily a theology because it fundamentally involves reflection about God. It seeks to deal with a number of questions regarding God's mission, intentions and purposes. In doing so, the Bible becomes the key source for building the theology of mission. Thus, the theology of mission provides biblical direction for the task of mission, accompanying and scrutinizing the foundations and practice of mission and holding forth the missionary dimension of the Gospel to the Church. Since the theology of mission is done in a particular context it becomes 'a dialogue between biblical text and missionary context.'<sup>403</sup> In other words it provides an essential link between reflection on and action in mission. This is how theology of mission touches real-life mission practice. Therefore, Christopher Wright insists that there should be 'no theology without missional impact; no mission without theological foundations.'<sup>404</sup>

The theology of mission is a multi- and inter-disciplinary enterprise.<sup>405</sup> It is a relatively new discipline, with its first text appearing in 1961, in a collection of

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<sup>401</sup> A. Kirk, *What is Mission*, 21

<sup>402</sup> C. Ott, et al (eds.) *Encountering Theology*, xix

<sup>403</sup> C. Ott, et al (eds.) *Encountering Theology*, xix

<sup>404</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 20

<sup>405</sup> C. Van Engen, 'What is Theology of Mission' *Teología y cultura*, año 1, vol. 1 agosto 2004, 1-10, citing 1

essays edited by Gerald Anderson, entitled, *The Theology of Christian Mission*.<sup>406</sup> One may raise a question as to whether it would be unfair to expect a theology of mission from a Pakistani church that struggles with many elements of 'survival issues'. For it is a marginalized minority, continually conscious of and working for its very survival in a context of religious extremism, terrorism, targeted persecution, poverty and illiteracy. In the light of the brief discussion above, however, for the sake of the mission engagement of the Pakistani Church a good and strong theology of mission is essential for providing direction for its practice and to validate, correct and examine the entire practice of its mission.

### **4.3. A Quest for Theological Reflection on Mission among Pakistani Churches - A Challenge**

#### *4.3.1. Issue of Orality and Little Indigenous Published Reflection on Theology of Mission*

Theology is a broad subject. There is no doubt that all around the world a variety of people are doing theology from many different angles and in many distinct forms. There are many different examples of indigenous theologies such as Black theology<sup>407</sup>, Minjung theology<sup>408</sup>, Dalit theology<sup>409</sup> and Liberation theology<sup>410</sup>. In this age of developing theologies, so far there is nothing like a specific Pakistani theology, which would offer theological reflection for engaging in mission in the context of the unique challenges and struggles that Pakistani Christians are facing.

The literature review in chapter 2 has identified that there is very little consistent academic reflection, if any, on theology of mission in the Pakistani churches. The key obstacle is that there is scant up to date literature. Written pieces of critical and

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<sup>406</sup> G. Anderson (ed.), *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, New York, Toronto, London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1961

<sup>407</sup> J. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, New York: Orbis Books, 1970

<sup>408</sup> Kim, Myung-Hyuk. "The Concept of God in Minjung Theology," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 14 (April, 1990): 126-149.

<sup>409</sup> J. Massey (ed.) *A Biblical Basis for Dalit Theology*, in *Indigenous People: Dalits*, Delhi: ISPCK, 1994

<sup>410</sup> G. Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, London: SCM Press, 2001, S. Escobar, 'Beyond Liberation Theology: A Review Article' *Themelios* 19.3, May 1994:15-17, G. Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, London: SCM Press, 2001

analytic discourse cannot be found very often. Some work has been done in journal publications such as *Nur-Afshan*, *Al-Mushir* and *Focus*.<sup>411</sup> Recently, Pervaiz Sultan has also done some work on theology of mission.<sup>412</sup> However, mission theology at large is still a marginal component of Pakistani church thinking. This is not to say that theology of mission is completely omitted or dead even if it has a relatively low profile. There is a strong possibility that most of the theology of mission in Pakistan is carried on in an oral form.

One central question is who does this theology? In other words, who are the theology makers? J. Parratt suggests 'In one sense, of course, all Christian believers 'do' theology in one way or another. All our worship, prayers, reflection on the Scriptures, even our informal conversation about Christian faith with each other, are doing theology.'<sup>413</sup> On similar lines a respondent from CoP said,

In my understanding, not only theologians are scholars because theology is about reflection but everyone is a theologian. People in the congregations have their own perceptions about how to carry out mission from a theological perspective. My job as a priest is to polish that understanding.<sup>414</sup>

In the light of this view, the congregations make daily decisions about the nature of their engagement with the world in which they exist. Embedded in these choices are different views of God. These views may be explicit and confessed or implicit and unreflective. Still, the practical life of a congregation bares and reveals beliefs about God's identity and mission purpose in and for the world. Theology making of this kind is in oral form available in abundance among Pakistani churches where one finds varying degrees of literacy inhibiting written argumentation.

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<sup>411</sup> *Nur Afshan*, an Urdu language journal has been published continuously from 1877 to 1944. It contributed some information regarding civil society encounters and minority voices that were under-represented in the research regarding this period. Over 3 decades, the Roman Catholic Pastoral Institute, Multan published a journal entitled *Focus* regarding ecumenism and interfaith. However, the journal is no longer publishing. *Al-Mushir* has been focusing on Christian-Muslim relations, dialogue, Christian theology and human rights.

<sup>412</sup> P. Sultan, *Small*, 2010; P. Sultan, *Concepts of Christian Mission*, Karachi: St. Thomas Theological College, 2009

<sup>413</sup> J. Parratt, *A Guide to Doing Theology*, London: SPCK, 1996, 8

<sup>414</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ DF\_2.3

It is notable that in the global arena of theological conversation and engagement, the voice from the Pakistani Church is almost entirely absent.<sup>415</sup> There are a few honorable exceptions. One of them is Michael Nazir-Ali a Pakistani-born British Anglican bishop who has written many books.<sup>416</sup> In his books on Islam, dialogue and mission he intensively refers to Pakistan, its context, culture and issues. However, he has not yet written any book specifically dealing with the theology of mission of the Pakistani church.

It wouldn't be wrong to state that if not all, most of the theology of mission in Pakistani churches exists largely in an oral form. However, it is difficult to measure how great the extent of oral theology within the Pakistani churches is for there is only limited recognition of oral theology. The immediate implication here is that anything that might be identified as a theology within the local communities of the Pakistan church will not take the form of an articulately written document. Thus, it will not be available to people outside the community.

No doubt, this non-written or oral theology is an important groundwork from which more structured, sophisticated and reflective theology may emerge. However, at the same time there is a need to be careful not to exaggerate the role of oral theology as a creative force. Usually, theology is understood as systematic reflection upon the meaning of Christian faith, rather than a spontaneous expression of that faith. When

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<sup>415</sup>Surprisingly, even publications that give attention to Third World theologies may omit contributions from or about Pakistan. Two examples are *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*, ed. V. Fabella and R. Sugirtharajah, Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 2000. This work makes available in one volume the breadth and richness of the theological contributions of the peoples of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Pacific, and the minority and indigenous peoples of the world. There are 150 contributions on theology but not one comes from Pakistan. Second is the example of J. Parratt, (ed.) *An Introduction to Third World Theologies*, Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004, This book gathers essays from experts on Latin America, India, East Asia, West and East Africa, Southern Africa and the Caribbean. The work analyzes the common context of the Third World theologies in their experience of colonialism and Western missions, and suggests that they provide different perspectives on what it means to be a Christian in today's world. Again Pakistan is left out in this work.

<sup>416</sup> *Triple Jeopardy for the West: Aggressive Secularism, Radical Islamism and Multiculturalism*, Bloomsbury, 2012, *The Unique & Universal Christ: Jesus in a Plural World*, Carlisle, Paternoster, 2008, *Conviction and Conflict: Islam, Christianity and World Order*, Continuum, 2005, *Understanding My Muslim Neighbour* [with Chris Stone], Canterbury Press, 2002, *Shapes of the Church to Come*, Kingsway, Eastbourne, 2001, *Citizens and Exiles: Christian Faith in a Plural Society*, SPCK, London, 1998; United Church Press, Cleveland, 1998, *The Mystery of Faith*, CFS, Lahore, 1995, *Mission and Dialogue: Proclaiming the Gospel Afresh in Every Age*, SPCK, London, 1995, *From Everywhere to Everywhere: A World View of Christian Mission*, Collins, London, 1990, *Frontiers in Christian-Muslim Encounter*, Regnum, Oxford, 1987, *Islam: A Christian Perspective*, Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1982; Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1983

one looks for theological reflection one expects to find 'theological treatises and tomes, systematically worked out' materials.<sup>417</sup>

One wonders why Pakistani churches have little systematic reflection and writing on mission. Majeed Abel, reflects on the issue in a historical perspective as he writes,

Undoubtedly, the present Christian community in Pakistan is indebted to the missionary activity that started around 1850s and culminated from 1873 to the 1920's in the form of mass movements. As a result of these movements the church was filled with large numbers from the lower caste, illiterate and poor community. For understanding their new faith, they relied on the knowledge of the missionaries. That early dependence on their missionary teachers for their reflection on the gospel message has a considerable influence on them. We have inherited the same theology that missionaries brought to us decades ago, we have adopted it with rigidity.<sup>418</sup>

To some extent, Abel's reflection on the crisis of theology is right. Yet one obvious error is that he neglects the theological contribution of ex-Muslim and high caste Hindu converts. On the other hand, Nazir-Ali points out the depth of scholarship displayed by the 'Muslim convert Padres' as Padri Muhammad Sultan Paul, Padre Abdul Haq, Mualvi Imadudin and Arch Deacon Barkat-ullah were known. He claims that 'their scholarship has hardly ever been equaled at least within the Indian sub-continent.'<sup>419</sup> Similarly, the contribution of high caste Hindu's and Sikhs is overlooked in Abel's critique on theology in Pakistan.<sup>420</sup> However, the question is: can the Pakistani Church merely rely on these historical contributions in the current challenging situations? In other words, how much are those resources still relevant for our present mission engagement?

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<sup>417</sup> J. Pobe, 'Oral Theology and Christian Oral Tradition: Challenge to Our Traditional Archival Concept,' *Mission Studies* 6, no. 1 1989: 87-93, It is worth noting that Pobe himself stresses the importance of oral theology by listing evangelization, conversion, sermons and preaching, hymns and songs, praying, and conversation as the media of oral theology (citing 89).

<sup>418</sup> M. Able, 'Theology in Context' in *Reader in Contextualization For Pakistan*, Lahore: OTS, 2013, 14-29, citing 18-19

<sup>419</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *Islam*, 146-147, Also see, A. Barkat, *History of Pakistani Church*, 378-380, 391

<sup>420</sup> For example Sadhu Sundar Singh wrote eight books between 1922 and 1929 including *At the Master's Feet*, London: Fleming H. Revell, 1922. His manuscripts were written in Urdu and later translated into English and other languages. Pandit Kharkh Singh a converted Sikh and Sanskrit scholar trained pastors and leaders wrote books such as *The Principles and Teachings of Arya Samaj*, Lahore: New Imperial Press, 1887. Bhai Bhkat Singh often regarded as one of the most well-known bible teachers and preachers and pioneers of the Indian Church movement had written several books including *Salt and Light* (1964) *David Recovered All* (1967), *Bethany* (1971). Bhkat had planted several churches in Pakistan and his books are easily available.

In agreement with Abel a Roman Catholic priest and theologian, Emmanuel Asi, underlines the issue of theology, as expressed in the seminaries and hierarchical church institutions, is 'foreign, dominating and imposed from outside; therefore it finds no rational basis in our community.'<sup>421</sup> Abel and Asi both question the universal validity of western theology but in doing so also note the lack of indigenous theology in Pakistan.<sup>422</sup> There is a felt need to de-westernize our theology, because it fails to answer the unique issues revolving around the church in Pakistan. Moreover, western theology lacks the modes of operation that pay attention to the contextual factors that inevitably shape the church's concrete engagement with the world. For instance, coming out of an individualistic and independent life style context, western theology may not be able to offer much to the immediate issues related to mission engagement in Pakistan. For example, how can the Church relate to a majority community that seeks to persecute it through targeted mob or terrorist attacks on Christian communities?

While taking Asi and Abel's observations on board one must not disregard and discredit the work the western church has done in the field of mission theology.<sup>423</sup> The overarching influence of the theology of mission by its western counter-parts on the Pakistani church is not to be blamed on western missionaries but on the lack of critical evaluation by the local church itself. The Pakistani system of education, which is largely based on rote memorization and not on critical analysis and evaluation, could be one of the major reasons for the lack of contextual theologizing. It is difficult to avoid the fact that Asi and Abel both have a western mindset and

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<sup>421</sup> E. Asi, 'Concept, Charism and Practice of the Prophetic in the Church in Pakistan' *Focus*, 8:3, 1988, 155-166, citing 165

<sup>422</sup> Bosch notes that prior to mid twentieth century, which he classifies as 'an era of non-contextualization', the Protestant and Catholic missions generally assumed that the theology was to be defined once and for all and then indigenized into the rest of the cultures without losing any of its essence. Therefore, Western theology as dominant theology was regarded to have universal validity (D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 1991, 427). However, this view has been challenged with the development of contextual theologies.

<sup>423</sup> For example A. Kirk, *What Is Mission? Theological Explorations 2000*; J. Blauw, *The Missionary Nature Of the Church*, 1962; D. Bosch, *Transforming Mission, Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 1991; D. Senior, and C. Stuhlmueeller. *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*, 1983; D. Burnett, *God's Mission: Healing the Nations*, 1986; G. Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Mission*, 1972; A. Moreau, (ed.) *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, 2000; W. Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament*, 2000; A. Köstenberger and P. O'Brien. *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission*, 2001; L. Newbigin, *The Open Secret: Sketches for a Missionary Theology*, 1979; J. Corrie, (ed.) *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations*, 2007. A. Moreau, *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, 2000. C. Van Engen, *Mission on the Way: Issues in Mission Theology*, 1996; C. Wright. *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* 2006

influences that critically accompany them because of their higher education in the west. Critical thinking definitely is the hallmark of western education. Probably that has contributed to their questioning of the existing thought patterns, traditions and concept of the Pakistani Church.

While there are legitimate concerns about the place of the theology of mission, the solution probably lies not in abandoning the western mission theology but acknowledging and being informed by it while at the same time critically analyzing and adapting it to Pakistan's unique context thus endeavoring to build a worthwhile and lasting influence. Moreover, the Pakistani Church should and can benefit from all that is available in the reflection, action and traditions of the worldwide church. Today there is a rich diversity of theologies, notably from very different contexts in the non-western world, and it is vital that the Pakistani church listens to how others do theology in their own contexts and allow that to challenge their own very narrow horizons. Is it not possible that different contexts will throw up different perspectives on a text, all of which may complement one another? This is how Rene Padilla puts it: 'my thesis is rather that every culture makes possible a certain approach to the gospel that brings to light certain of its aspects that in other cultures may remain less visible or even hidden.'<sup>424</sup>

#### *4.3.2. Major Theological Resources Available and Some Key Findings of the Field Research*

In the following section, there is an examination of the theological resources available to CoP and FGA that support a theological reflection. This is for gaining a better understanding of the churches self-reflection and direction in their mission theology positions. In this regard, three theological approaches or positions will be identified i.e. ecumenical, evangelical and Pentecostal. Admittedly these theological divisions are also represented organizationally, in addition, some leaders have publically acknowledged their theological positions. However, it is also true that at times it is difficult to characterize the churches or leaders in one single approach due to the complexity or blend of their theological positions.

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<sup>424</sup> R. Padilla, *Mission Between the Times*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 109

#### 4.3.3. *Theology of Mission of CoP: Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses*

Since, its origin, the CoP, as a united Church, has had a diversity of theological approaches with different convictions, interests and historical heritages. One respondent has looked at the theological diversity in this way,

Drawing on Anglican (evangelical and Catholic traditions), Scottish Presbyterianism, Methodism and evangelical Lutheranism it has some things in common and an acceptance of some differences. Seeing a responsibility for the whole of society and having geographically defined areas of responsibility have helped the mission of the church.<sup>425</sup>

What is the role of a bishop in creating the ‘theological diversity’ within the diocese of CoP? An important factor to be noted in the midst of the diversity is that different bishops have been leading their dioceses with different theological approaches. Sultan notes,

... Because of the cultural set up, it greatly depends on the diocesan bishops’ theology and adopted discourse how they lead their dioceses and in which direction. The Bishop of Multan, Rt. Rev. John Victor Samuel led his diocese from 1968-1990 with a declared position of ecumenical discourse in terms of mission and ministry. During all those years the diocese visibly manifested what the WCC believed and projected at international level ... with the leaving of Bishop Samuel in 1990, there was an abrupt disruption to this discourse as his successor neither understood nor subscribed to ecumenical discourse ... the bishops of Lahore and Raiwind dioceses, Alexander Malik and Michael Nazir-Ali and his successor Samuel Robert Azariah provided a level of commitment to ecumenism but not as the sole driving force of their dioceses ...<sup>426</sup>

CoP has shown great appreciation of both ecumenical and evangelical discourses, but where is this theological diversity leading her? During the field research most of the clergy interviewed agreed that the diocesan structure is very helpful to facilitate mission engagement. It is mainly due to the sober fact that the dioceses are autonomous to plan their own mission activities, which also requires them to reflect theologically on their own capacities. However, a serious concern is that there is no evidence yet of anywhere the dioceses have cooperated to share their resources for the reflection on mission. It is the opposite to what the pioneers of the union dreamt of. Acknowledging the theological diversity, Anwar Barkat clearly pointed out at the beginning of the union that,

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<sup>425</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ JH\_2.2

<sup>426</sup> P. Sultan, ‘Historical Dimension of Ecumenism’, *Al Mushir*, Vol. 55, 2014, No 4. 162-175, citing 171



[The CoP] has to express this universality of the Gospel in terms of her own experience, historical background, and theological maturity. We want to give and receive. We want to accept and be accepted. We want Mission both within the household of faith and outside the household of faith. This urge to contribute our experience, thinking, planning and our very selves arises out of the consciousness of our *oneness* in the world . . . <sup>427</sup>

Despite that, for the current situation, Bishop Malik responded rather regretfully,

The unification of ministries was formed, so that, the churches will be better equipped for the purpose of mission but that part of the union has not been proved yet. In 45 years of union, the synod could not organize even a single meeting for reflection on mission. There is no committee on mission and the dioceses have never gathered for the cause of mission engagement in Pakistan.<sup>428</sup>

Concerning mission, Pervaiz Sultan has made a similar observation: that the CoP has struggled to maintain the union ‘there are some positive achievements but also many failures to project, maintain and enhance Christian unity in the dioceses of the Church of Pakistan.’<sup>429</sup> Various respondents shared their experience that the context of Hyderabad is much more open to the gospel and there are various opportunities in Sindh.<sup>430</sup> So, many were asked if the other dioceses help, or have helped, Hyderabad diocese with some kind of support or resource sharing to reach out to the tribal. While pointing to the unequal distribution of resources, Bishop Kaleem said that

There is nothing like that, till to date no system has been established through which we would share any kind of resources. Every diocese is autonomous and busy with their own work. The rich dioceses like Lahore and Karachi have strong institutions and they are sustainable. Poor dioceses like Hyderabad, Faisalabad and Multan are struggling.<sup>431</sup>

Referring to the CoP’s union one respondent said,

Our unity is of structure, not of mind or purpose.<sup>432</sup>

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<sup>427</sup> A. Barkat, ‘Introduction’ in A. Barkat (ed.), *Struggle*, 1-10, citing 5

<sup>428</sup> An interview at his house Azmheer Colony, Lahore, 24 April, 2015

<sup>429</sup> P. Sultan, ‘A United Churches’, citing 33

<sup>430</sup> Participant Identification Codes\_ KJ\_2.1, DF\_2.3, AG 3.3, MB\_2.8, I. Gill ‘ *A Survey of Problems and Possibilities for Mission and Evangelism in Sindh*’ (Gujranwala theological Seminary 1995). Gill also contributes on possibilities to do mission in Sindh.

<sup>431</sup> In an interview with Bishop Kaleem John at Bishop’s House, Hyderabad, 12 April, 2015

<sup>432</sup> Participant Identification Code\_IG\_1.8

Another said,

To some extent, the unification of missions in the COP has reduced competitiveness. It has wanted the trappings of a strong church without the co-operation of resources (financial and academic theologians) to deliver.<sup>433</sup>

Another respondent, who has worked in different capacities and is a member of Synod as well, regretfully admitted that he has witnessed that,

The people from two dioceses will come together to create trouble in a third diocese. They will even spend their own money, time and other resource for that cause. Unfortunately, the strangest phenomenon is they have not gathered for the cause of mission yet.<sup>434</sup>

Such a situation not only calls for the CoP to re-assess her direction in mission but also urges her to theological self-reflection. Recognizing that this union is incomplete at the moment in regard to what the pioneers had in their minds in terms of sharing experience, thinking, planning for the task of mission there is a need to raise questions. What kind of union is desired for the future? How can the theological diversity within CoP benefit all the dioceses and other Pakistani churches across the denominations? What can be learnt from other dioceses who may have different goals and methods of doing mission? Is CoP willing to ask awkward questions about what is really going on?

In its 138 years of history, the Lahore diocese's three mission consultations (2000, 2002, and 2010) are significant work and it would be worthwhile to trace how its theology has developed through the course of time. During his interview for the current research Bishop Malik enthusiastically referred to the publications arising from these consultations as a key resource for Lahore diocese's mission theology articulation.<sup>435</sup> I did not participate in any of its consultations so my reading of the theological work reflects more the final form of these works rather than how they were produced. While acknowledging what these consultations have achieved in terms of mission theology there is a need to cast a critical eye upon its developments.

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<sup>433</sup> Participant Identification Code\_JH\_1.2

<sup>434</sup> Participant Identification Code\_SM\_1.6

<sup>435</sup> An interview at his house Azmeer Colony, Lahore, 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2015

A critical review of these works has identified that the whole agenda needed to be examined in the local Pakistani context.

With the proceedings of the consultations as the frame for Lahore diocese, it is quite evident that these documents speak more to the participants than to the external publics in the parishes. These documents are aimed at their self-understanding and self-motivation for mission. Against this expectation, two key sections of the book produced after the 2002 consultation deal with *'Pluralism: The Challenge for Evangelism'*<sup>436</sup> and *'Modernity, Post-Modernity and the Challenge of Evangelism.'*<sup>437</sup> This was an attempt to go after fads that led nowhere, or to follow fashions in missiological thinking for this work could not be grasped, understood, owned and carried on by the rural clergy of the Lahore diocese. Furthermore, not even a single respondent of Lahore diocese, in the field research mentioned pluralism (admittedly, it is a challenge for Hyderabad diocese due to its Hindu tribal context) or modernity and post-modernity as a challenge or restriction for mission engagement. This clearly suggests that these are not the challenges that the Pakistani church is facing, or at least that they are not what has been perceived.

Another key development and strength of the Lahore diocese is its engagement and role in the interfaith dialogue. The diocese held an important international consultation on inter-faith dialogue in 2009.<sup>438</sup> The title of the consultation was 'The Role of Interfaith Dialogue in Healing the Brokenness of the World.'<sup>439</sup> The diocese's role under Bishop Malik's leadership in dialogue is recognized on national and international levels. The messages of appreciation from former president of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari and other important government officials, the worldwide Anglican community, the Ulema and national Christian leaders across the denominations are strong evidence of that.<sup>440</sup> These works do provide some of the key insights into the mission theology of the diocese.

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<sup>436</sup> C. Walker, *Pluralism: 'The Challenge for Evangelism'* in *Consultation on Mission and Evangelism*, 2002, 27-42

<sup>437</sup> F. Carey, *'Modernity, Post-Modernity and the Challenge of Evangelism'* *Consultation on Mission and Evangelism*, 2002, 43-70

<sup>438</sup> Information and papers gathered from the Bishop's office at Lahore

<sup>439</sup> A number of key topics were covered which includes *'Restoring Humanity's Wholeness'*, *'Interfaith Dialogue and Evangelism'*, *'Concepts of Uniqueness and Finality as Potential Hindrances towards Interfaith Dialogue'* and *'Wholeness: An Anglican Perspective'*

<sup>440</sup> E. Massey (ed.) *Bishop Alexander*, 17-21, 28, 30, 33, 36, 38-39, 46-47, 50

Yet evident challenges remain. A major problem with these theological reflections of the Lahore diocese is that they are not readily reduced to the language of informal theology. Therefore, they could not be related to the fringes of church life. In this task, the linguistic barrier is a significant component. Some of the work is still unpublished, and the already published work is produced in the English language. This hinders the integration of consultations into the grass roots level in parishes as both laity and lay leadership would in many cases not be able to understand and own the mission reflection published by the diocese. As mentioned earlier, the diocese is composed of both rural and urban areas and the literacy rate varies within the diocese.

Moreover, the attempted integration struggled with the practical reality that the clergy do not understand what it is about mission theology that they are expected to incorporate, because the reflections were in the form of events, rather than a process. A significant gap identified by the research is that there is no forum, journal or magazine for theological reflection where theological insights could be welcomed and encouraged by the parishes. Therefore, it is not a mistake to conclude that the most of the diocese's theological reflection on mission is in inconsistent form. There is a need for the clergy and laity to find a channel to exchange their views on a continuous basis so that they can reflect on their mission principles and reassess priorities for effective engagement with the society at large.

Bishop Malik has been liberal in his theological approach and has provided a level of commitment to ecumenism<sup>441</sup> as mentioned above. In his inaugural address at the Mission and Evangelism consultation in 2000, he defined mission in terms of diaconial ministries or as social responsibility and action. Then he asserted 'it is not right to divide 'Mission' and 'Evangelism' in a way to give primacy or priority to either one over against the other. As a matter of fact both belong to each other.'<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>441</sup> P. Sultan, 'Historical Dimension of Ecumenism', *Al Mushir*, Vol. 55, 2014, No 4. 162-175, citing 171. It must be noted that Bishop Malik has publically characterize his theological position as liberal and ecumenical. He also confirmed his theological approach in an interview at his house Azmheer Colony, Lahore, 24 April, 2015 for the current research

<sup>442</sup> A. Malik 'Mission and Evangelism in the Present Day World' in *Mission and Evangelism: International Conference 2000*, 13-26 citing 16

While pointing out the distinctive theological approaches of Malik and Jamil's one of the respondents said that

Bishop Jamil is keener to work among the local churches and para-church organizations. He is more interested to work among the youth, as he has a background of working in a parachurch ministry (Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students) for 17 years as General Secretary. Whereas, Bishop Malik was more engaged on the governmental level. He was keener to raise his voice for the Christian community in the media and he played a key role in developing interfaith dialogue and harmony.<sup>443</sup>

The diocese has been run by Bishop Malik for 32 years who is more influenced by the liberal or ecumenical approach. He considered evangelism and social action to be equally important. However, the current Bishop Jamil is known for his evangelical theological approach.

On the other hand, the diocese of Hyderabad the first bishop of the diocese, Bashir Jiwan had been passionately committed to an evangelical approach, which includes evangelistic spiritual outreach characterized by the Lausanne Covenant.<sup>444</sup> Bishop Jiwan spoke passionately of reaching out to the lost on various occasions. As a matter of fact he was foremost in establishing the Pakistan Evangelical Alliance for Christian Evangelism (PEACE), for the purpose of stimulating active participation by Pakistanis in cross-cultural evangelism.<sup>445</sup>

One key respondent who has worked with all three bishops of Hyderabad diocese commented on their distinctive theological approaches. Out of his 40 years' experience he said,

Bishop Jiwan was mission minded. In his era, the churches grew. Evangelistic work that Bishop Chandu Ray eagerly started was later carried on by Bishop Jiwan. After his retirement, the mission work suffered for next Bishop Dass was not theologically trained. As a trained clergyman, I used to assist him on theological matters. Anyhow, he successfully completed his term. In Bishop Rafique's time, the mission work suffered even more. I would not say that mission work was 100% dead. However, focused attention was not given to it. Most people who were engaged in mission were doing it on their own as there was no encouragement and facilitation from both the bishops like Bishop Jiwan's time.<sup>446</sup>

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<sup>443</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ QN\_1.11

<sup>444</sup> P. Sultan, *Church*, 199

<sup>445</sup> F. Stock, *Sowing the Seed*, 5

<sup>446</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ DF\_2.3

Here, it becomes difficult to speak clearly of theological approaches adopted by Bishops Dass and Rafique, mainly due to the loss of clear direction in mission focus and practice. There are some reports that sometime mission seminars and trainings were conducted in the diocese.<sup>447</sup> However, it is also clear through field studies that the diocese have not published any key document that would clearly articulate its theology of mission.<sup>448</sup> Therefore, it is logical to conclude that from 1997-2012, the theological reflection of the diocese has been rather inconsistent, if not completely dead.

The present Bishop Kaleem John is more of an evangelical in his approach to mission for he claims that in his leadership, evangelism is the 'hallmark of the diocese'.<sup>449</sup> Due to his background in Bible teaching, Bishop Kaleem has provided comparatively more opportunities for education, training and developmental programs such as seminars, workshops and conferences for the purpose of mission.<sup>450</sup> One example is an integral mission program; the diocese took an initiative in 2012 with the support of Tearfund UK to help promote understanding of integral mission among local communities and develop small groups of practitioners to proclaim the gospel both in word and deed. Initially 50 churches were planned for the promotion and to develop an understanding of the principles and approaches of integral mission but only 16 churches could be effectively established. Different techniques were used to increase the understanding of integral mission. That included workshops, Bible studies, practical exposure and follow-up visits. It is a distinction of Hyderabad diocese that it launched such a kind of program that is helping towards theological reflection on the grassroots level. These local churches are beginning to recognize the biblical mandate and have started to witness both in word and deed.<sup>451</sup> However, the process of this change is in its initial stages and there is a lot that needs to be done to have an impact on a larger scale.

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<sup>447</sup> Bishop Annual Report for Diocesan Council Meeting, in April 2008,

<sup>448</sup> This fact was confirmed from the diocesan office at Hyderabad and key leadership during the field research.

<sup>449</sup> K. John Boucher: *Plans for the Future*, published at the consecration of Bishop Kaleem John in 2012. He also confirmed that during his interview for this research.

<sup>450</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ DF\_2.3

<sup>451</sup> H. Gull. S. Silas and A. Shahzad, *Integral Mission: Diocese of Hyderabad, COP: Evaluation Report*, Feb 2015

The diocese of Hyderabad is one of the strongest voices in forming contextual theology in Pakistan. The diocese has developed culturally relevant audio, visual and written resources to be used by local believers for outreach and discipleship.<sup>452</sup> Many of the resources, for instance, the Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments and Apostle's Creed, are produced in various tribal languages as well. Along with those the Audio Visual Centre of the diocese has also prepared various song books for different occasions like births, naming ceremonies, marriages and funeral services. These resources are available in more than ten indigenous tribal languages.<sup>453</sup> Obviously, all these resources are the product of an intense theological reflection on the task and practice of mission.

Returning to the original assertion of this chapter on the task of the theology of mission, it was made clear that the theology of mission is done in a particular context. Which means that the theology of mission is a theology of context. Therefore, it cannot be allowed to restrict itself to reflection only. A good theology of mission, then, must eventuate in contextually-appropriate mission action. Its clear implication for Hyderabad diocese is that the theology of mission of Hyderabad diocese is well thought out and is contextually appropriate. It is well integrated in mission practice as shown above with the examples of contextualization

These achievements are substantial in a period of over three decades for a fairly new diocese, but there are also problems. All the mission thinking brought together, most of the reflection on mission is in oral form, and the diocese has not published any of the theological discourses. Therefore, the reflection is not available outside its own community. Second and probably most important is the open question where the next generation is going to refer to or learn from as they face new or similar challenges of engaging in mission among the nomadic. Therefore, the diocese must make an effort to publish its own theological reflection on a consistent basis.

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<sup>452</sup> Information gathered from Audio Visual Centre of the diocese at Mirpurkas, Hyderabad in April 2015.

<sup>453</sup> In interview with Rev. Shamoo (a pastor from a tribal background also director of AVC)

#### 4.3.4. *Theology of Mission of FGA*

The best access to the Pentecostal theology of FGA is through a magazine that it is publishing every month entitled *Satoon-e-Haq* (Pillar of Truth). This magazine was started back in the early 1960s as a pamphlet with a name '*Humrah Dost*' (Our Friend). Out of this modest beginning the magazine concept developed, which started with a new name '*Ab-e-Hayiat*' Living Water. In the 1970s the name was changed to *Satoon-e-Haq* because another magazine took the same name. So, beginning from 1960s for the last 55 years, FGA has been consistently producing theological materials.<sup>454</sup> It is a remarkable strength of FGA in comparison to CoP. Today the readership of the magazine is about 1500, and its primary objective is to spread the teachings of the Bible to encourage the spiritual maturity of the congregants.

Many of the articles in *Satoon-e-Haq* come from local pastors and Bible School teachers who give insights into the issues and directions of theology. However, the articles are not usually intended for an academic audience. They generally focus on news or topics of popular interest rather than research. Therefore, they are not scholarly or peer-reviewed for accuracy, honesty, reliability and currency.

Beside that, intense theological activity is going on in the FGA Bible College, in the form of regular classes, various discussions, training courses, workshops and prayer meetings. The Bible College itself has become a forum for the interaction of various mission activities and a center for interacting with worldwide Pentecostal theologies as various visiting faculty and preachers regularly come to the college every year from Asia, Europe, America and Africa.

A problematic issue is that when one takes stock of the state of theological reflection in *Satoon-e-Haq*, there is not much available on the theology of mission. Most of the work published till recently has been generally of a devotional nature and focused on Pentecostal theology which includes themes such pneumatology, eschatology,

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<sup>454</sup> Information taken from *Satoon-e-Haq's* editor, Griffen Barkat, from the magazine's office at Lahore.



suffering, baptism in the Holy Spirit, prayer, prophecy etc.<sup>455</sup> It was left to later generations of Pentecostals to formulate a theology of mission.

Yet some little work has been accomplished. There is one theological trend, which is emerging, some are working today on a theology of mission that retains the missionary call of the church. In recent publications, the issue clearly seems to be firmly on the agenda of FGA though it evidently suggests that their theology of mission is still in the beginning stages. An example is Azeem Rehmat, FGA Bible College teacher, who has built his articles on a critical appreciation of the work of Kairos, an international mission mobilization course, which he himself attended a couple of years ago conducted by a church other than FGA.<sup>456</sup>

Azeem seeks a Pentecostal way of focusing on the role of the Church in mission. By grounding his theology in the authority of Scriptures, he mainly deals with the meaning and purpose of mission.<sup>457</sup> Moreover, he writes on the biblical basis of mission, the significance of the cross in mission and the mission of God. Yet, he does not go in depth into the theology of mission and its source in the Bible other than focusing on Abraham<sup>458</sup> and the OT narratives of Exodus, David and Solomon.<sup>459</sup> His selective use of material leaves Azeem ill equipped to assess the over-all place of mission in the Bible so that his claim that the Bible is a missionary document ends up being asserted rather than actually demonstrated. Azeem hopes to develop a better approach among the local FGA churches to taking mission seriously on board. However, he does not allow himself to deal with the question of culturally appropriate mission engagement in the Pentecostal context. One of the major strengths of his work is that he engages at grass-roots level with local churches and he tries to fill in the gap of the lack of theology of mission in FGA.

FGA aligned themselves with Evangelicals, since the mainline ecumenical movement seem too liberal both theologically and in its mission agenda. However, while doing

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<sup>455</sup> For example see *Satoon-e-Haq* May, 2009, 21:5, Aug 2013, 25:8, June 2011 23:6, Nov, 2007 19:11

<sup>456</sup> The information for the course is available at <http://www.kairoscourse.org/about-kairos> accessed 16 July 2015

<sup>457</sup> A. Rehmat, 'Is my Church a Missionary Church?' Part 4, *Satoon-e-Haq*, Nov, 2013, 25:11, 15-17

<sup>458</sup> A. Rehmat, 'Is my Church a Missionary Church?' Part 3, *Satoon-e-Haq*, Oct 2013, 25: 10, 16-18, citing 16

<sup>459</sup> A. Rehmat, 'Is my Church a Missionary Church?' Part 2, *Satoon-e-Haq*, Aug 2013, 25:8, 16-18

so, FGA maintains its Pentecostal distinctions of prophecy, healing and speaking in tongues. For example, one of their pioneer, Kjell Sojberg was influenced by Donald McGavran Church Growth theory to plant new churches which were self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating.<sup>460</sup> Recently, in FGA there is a heightened interest in reaching the unreached,<sup>461</sup> a challenge initially made by Ralph Winter to the delegates at Lausanne Conference on Evangelization in 1974.<sup>462</sup>

Overall, in comparison with CoP, it is FGA's strength that it has remained consistent in its theological reflection for more than five decades. However, there is limited literature available for its theology of mission. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that Pentecostal theology is still in the making. In one way FGA is in a better position than others because it has a legacy of ongoing theological reflection and a good starting platform, which provides equal opportunities for pastors and lay people to interact, write and reflect theologically.

With the above discussion it is logical to conclude here that in Pakistan most of the theological reflection on mission is in oral form. However, there are some resources available that give insight to the theological self-reflection and direction of the churches under study. FGA's distinctive strength is that it has consistently published its own theological reflections for more than 50 years. Admittedly, that theology of mission is a marginalized component in its total theology. By comparison with its longer history and comparatively greater resources, CoP has failed to do theological reflection on a consistent basis. It suggests that CoP needs to do much more theological reflection on mission on a consistent basis for effective mission engagement.

In their direction in mission theology, it wouldn't be wrong to conclude that Lahore diocese has a blend of theological approaches as it has been influenced by both the ecumenical and evangelical approaches. Bishop Malik's has provided a level of commitment to ecumenism but not as the sole driving force of the diocese. Currently

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<sup>460</sup> B. Anderson, *Swedish*, 46-50.

<sup>461</sup> T. Waris, 'The Biggest Challenges Faced by the Church in 21<sup>st</sup> Century', *Satoon-e-Haq*, Aug 2013, 27:6, 9-13, citing 9

<sup>462</sup> Lausanne covenant's section 9 'The Urgency of the Evangelistic Task' highlights the urgent need for reaching to the unreached (R. Hedlund, *Roots of the Great Debate in Mission: Mission in Historical and Theological Perspective*, Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 1993, 307).

Bishop Jamil is more influenced with evangelical approach to mission. Conversely, the Hyderabad diocese has been mostly evangelical since its origin. FGA strictly maintains its Pentecostal distinctions but it doesn't hesitate to follow the paths explored by evangelicals on theology of mission.

#### **4.4. Applying Christopher Wright's Biblical Theology to the Evaluation of Pakistani Theologies of Mission**

For the Pakistani Church with its scant and inconsistent published theological reflection on mission, Wright's narrative approach is certainly legitimate and relevant to be used to evaluate their mission theology. The following section seeks to apply Wright's grid of biblical theology as identified by him and the criteria constructed in Chapter 2.

- Scriptural Unity : Seeing the Bible as a whole
- Creation: Redemption of the whole creation and earth care
- Fall and Redemption: Understanding of mission, partnership between evangelism and social action and the transforming power of Holy Spirit
- New Creation: redemption, judgement and the nations

##### *4.4.1. Scriptural Unity: Assessing the Place of the OT in the Theology of Mission of Pakistani Churches*

Wright claims that mission is 'what the Bible is all about; we could as meaningfully talk of missional basis of the Bible as of the biblical basis of mission.'<sup>463</sup> He argues that mission should be seen in the light of the whole biblical story including the OT.

As cited in chapter 2, he laments,

Tragically, even among Christians with great enthusiasm for world mission, there is often not only profound ignorance of great vistas of biblical revelation, but even impatience with the prolonged effort that is needed to soak ourselves in these texts until our whole thinking and behavior are shaped by the story. . .<sup>464</sup>

In Wright's view the OT is fundamental for two reasons.

First, it presents the mission and purpose of God with great power and clarity and with universal implications for all humanity. Second, the Old Testament shaped the very nature

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<sup>463</sup> C. Wright, *Mission of God*, 29

<sup>464</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 39

of the mission of the New Testament church, which, indeed, felt compelled to justify its mission practice from the Scriptures we now call the Old Testament.<sup>465</sup>

Wright points to Jesus' encounter with two of his disciples on the road of Emmaus. Jesus went through the whole canon of the OT (Moses and all the prophets) to explain how the Messiah's death and resurrection were in fact the way God had kept his promise to Israel. Wright quotes Jesus' words from Luke 24:46-48, 'This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.'<sup>466</sup> Wright reasons that for Jesus OT Scriptures 'governed not only the messianic meaning of the Scriptures, but also their *missional* significance. The Old Testament tells the story that not only leads up to Jesus but one that also leads on to mission to the nations.'<sup>467</sup> Thus, Wright does not connect the church's mission with the command of Christ but with the OT Scriptures.

This raises two questions, how does the Pakistani Church view the biblical story? Do they take the story as a whole? Or do they neglect the OT as irrelevant. Therefore, to evaluate their mission theology, participants in the quantitative research were asked: is there a strong and clear foundation for mission in OT Scripture? The findings of the quantitative research are shown in the following table.

*Table 1: Mission Foundations in the OT Scriptures*

Denominations	There is a strong and clear mission foundation in the OT Scripture.					Total
	strongly agree	agree	not certain	disagree	strongly disagree	
CoP (Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses)	110	84	45	15	5	259
FGA	124	82	39	12	2	259
Total	234	166	84	27	7	518

<sup>465</sup> C. Wright, 'Old Testament Theology of Mission', in A. Moreau et al, *EDWM*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000, 706-709, citing 706

<sup>466</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 38

<sup>467</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 38

The results above have shown that nearly 70% of the sample population is aware that there is a strong foundation for mission in the OT. Apparently this proves Wright's supposition wrong - at least for the Pakistani church – when he says that there is a 'profound ignorance of great vistas of biblical revelation.'<sup>468</sup>

In the qualitative research the participants were asked the following questions.

- What are the biblical bases for your mission work?
- How relevant is the OT Scripture for your church's mission? Which of the OT texts hold foundational places in your mission theology?

The data gathered from the focus groups and interviews suggests that, the OT has a marginal place in the mission theology of CoP and FGA. This finding was further verified by observation and interaction with the key leaders of both denominations.<sup>469</sup> Most of the participants, regardless of their denominational affiliation, generally only mentioned NT texts as the sole basis for mission. The following comments are from both the CoP and FGA. Out of his 50 years of ministry experience a respondent from CoP said,

We are all in the same boat. I mean to say that all the denominations in Pakistan, we don't read OT enough and therefore neglect reflection on it for mission work.<sup>470</sup>

Another key leader said,

I don't think we can draw any implications for mission from the OT, nothing else is in my mind at the moment, neither have I ever thought of it. I don't think that for evangelism or mission we can draw something from OT. To me, the Great Commission provides the basis for evangelism and mission.<sup>471</sup>

It was observed that the situation is not much different with FGA. Most of the respondents mentioned NT as the sole basis for mission without any delay.

Fulfillment of the Great Commission is mission.<sup>472</sup>

In our reflection of mission in our church, we mainly use the New Testament. Life of Paul, his methods and persecution are focused more. This is how the Word of God encourages us to get engaged in mission.<sup>473</sup>

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<sup>468</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 39

<sup>469</sup> Participant Identification Codes\_ AJM\_1.2, IJ\_ 1.1, KJ\_2.1, LQ\_ 3.1, SS\_3.2

<sup>470</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ DF\_2.3

<sup>471</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ KJ\_2.1

<sup>472</sup> Focus Group No 1\_ Q2\_A6

<sup>473</sup> Focus Group No 3\_ Q4\_A2

I think there are no bases in the OT for mission. So, in our church we don't emphasize the OT for mission teaching. Actually we get a mandate for mission in NT only.<sup>474</sup>

As a matter of fact, in the field research a very limited number of people referred to the OT as the foundation for mission. A respondent said,

People quickly jump to the Great Commission and they get frustrated. There is great frustration in Pakistani church in general and in CoP because mission is seen only in terms of evangelism. However, there is broader understanding of mission and mission theology should be developed on those lines. No exclusive text should be taken. There is very little use of OT and it is a contemporary reality.<sup>475</sup>

Nevertheless, it is also noted that the OT is being used by the churches for teaching, preaching and exegesis purposes but not necessarily used missiologically as suggested by Wright. In their mission theology the OT has a marginal place, which means, the churches under study do not take the story as a whole but only half of it, which definitely leaves their known biblical story as a fragmented story.

This, then, suggest that CoP and FGA both need to bring all mission thinking and practice under the authority of Scripture, which includes both OT and NT. This challenges the churches under study to acquire a fully biblical understanding and to grasp that, as Wright suggests, the 'missionary mandate of the NT had its roots in the OT scriptures. This task requires careful attention to the rich texture of OT themes and texts that shaped, justified and motivated that NT mission through Israel's self-understanding of their own mission as the elect people of God in the midst of the nations.'<sup>476</sup>

#### 4.4.2. *Creation: Redemption of Whole Creation and Earth*

Wright persuasively suggests that 'the Bible does not begin at Genesis 3 (or end at Revelation 20) . . . the Bible is not just about the solution to our sin problem and how to survive the day of judgment. It begins with creation and ends with new creation. So our biblical theology of mission needs to take this great beginning and ending seriously.'<sup>477</sup> He says,

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<sup>474</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ GT\_ 3.5

<sup>475</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ PS\_ 2.2

<sup>476</sup> C. Wright, *Christian Mission and the Old Testament: Matrix or Mismatch?* (<http://131.111.227.198/ColdTest.htm> accessed 27 July 2011)

<sup>477</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 40

We have tended to separate the individual from the cosmic and corporate dimensions of the gospel, and then we tend to prioritize the first. That is, we put individual salvation and personal evangelism at the centre of all our efforts (and, of course, personal evangelism *is* an essential part of our commitment). But Paul's order of the gospel message in Ephesians and in Colossians 1:15 – 26 is *creation* (all things in heaven and earth, created by Christ, sustained by Christ and redeemed by Christ); then, *church* (with Christ as head); and then individual Gentile *believers* . . .<sup>478</sup>

With this Wright has provided a biblical theology of creation, starting from the beginning of Genesis and going until the end of Revelation to set out some reasons why Christians ought to be in the forefront of caring for the creation. Wright convincingly argues from Genesis 1-2 that human beings created in God's image are people with a mission. Referring to Genesis 1:26-28 and 2:15, he argues, 'the first dimension of our mission as God's people is the mission that we share with the rest of humanity, to rule over creation, as God intended, by serving and caring for it.'<sup>479</sup> Thus, this ruling refers to exercising God given authority as stewards.

In his survey of the OT for what should be the the church's concern for ecological mission he identifies three emphases. First, God's glory is the goal of creation, humanity and creatures are summoned again and again to praise God! (Psalms 148, 150:6, 145:10, 21; 104:27-28). So, 'when we care for creation, we share in its great purpose of giving glory to God. Conversely, of course, when we fail to do so, or when we participate in the destruction, pollution and wasting of creation, we are reducing even further creation's capacity to give glory to God.'<sup>480</sup>

Second, human life and creation are integrally bound together in two ways. The earth provides for humans; it is not only humans who have to take care of the environment '*It is the environment that cares for us, silently ministering the generous grace of God to us every day we live on the planet, as Psalm 65: 9-13 cheerfully remembers with gratitude*'.<sup>481</sup>

Then the OT insists on a strong moral link between humans and earth - human wickedness produces ecological stress. Highlighting Hosea 4:1-3 and Deuteronomy 28, he shows 'how the obedience or disobedience of people will have effects, in human blessing or curse, that operate within the natural order.'<sup>482</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 273

<sup>479</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 48-52, citing 52

<sup>480</sup><sup>480</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 54

<sup>481</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 54

<sup>482</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 55

Thirdly, God's redemption includes creation. Expounding on Psalms 96:10-13; 98:7-9, Isaiah 35, 65 and 66, Wright upholds that, 'however, the climax of the Old Testament future vision regarding creation is found in Isaiah 65 – 66. The words, "Behold, I am creating new heavens and a new earth" (Isa. 65:17 – the opening word is a participle) suggest it is something God is already actively doing, not merely a future intention.'<sup>483</sup>

In the NT, examining mission as Christ-centered, Wright supports his argument by expounding on various texts such as Colossians 1:15-23, Ephesians 2:12,13, Romans 8:19-23. He states that ,

Paul connects the redemption of creation with the redemption and resurrection of our bodies in Romans 8 – a highly significant passage. The creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption, the redemption of our bodies (Rom. 8:19 – 23).<sup>484</sup>

Wright has convincingly argued that God's redemptive mission includes creation and the church's mission involves participating in that redemptive work as the agent of good news to creation, as well as to people.<sup>485</sup>

So, this discussion on the biblical theology of creation raises questions about the Pakistani Church's mission in terms of its scope on earth? Especially, what does it imply for its treatment of the part of creation entrusted to human beings? If all things are reconciled by the cross and 'the cross of Christ is good news for the whole creation'<sup>486</sup> how is the Pakistani Church including this dimension in her mission? Is this a matter that should be on the agenda of the Pakistani church? To explore the beliefs and attitudes of participants in this regard, in the quantitative research they were asked to respond to the following statements on a scale of agree strongly, agree, not certain, disagree and strongly disagree.

- The purpose of mission is the redemption of the whole creation.
- Earth care is an essential part of mission.

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<sup>483</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 57

<sup>484</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 61

<sup>485</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 61

<sup>486</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 60

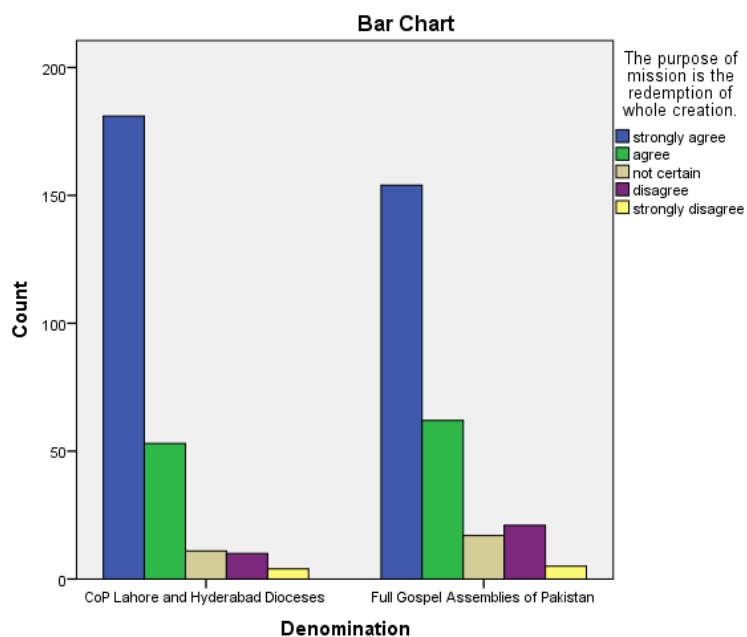


The participants were asked in the qualitative research;

- How is your church engaged in environmental care or improvement?

The findings of the field research are as follows;

*Figure 1: Mission and the Redemption of Whole Creation*



*Table 2: Earth Care and Mission*

Denominations	Earth (Environmental) care is an essential part of mission.					Total
	strongly agree	agree	not certain	disagree	strongly disagree	
CoP (Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses)	93	79	21	52	13	259
FGA	56	119	34	35	15	259
Total	149	198	55	87	28	518

As shown in the above graph and table the quantitative research suggests that both CoP and FGA have an awareness of earth care as an essential part of mission. And

their scope of mission does include redemption of the whole creation. Yet, on the contrary, in the qualitative research no reflection or resources could be found to validate the quantitative finding. Moreover, some of the key leaders of both denominations agreed that they do realize that it should be taken on the church's mission agenda but they do not focus on the care of creation or on ecological issues in their churches.<sup>487</sup>

Then there was another category of leaders in both denominations who found it hard to connect their understanding of Christian mission with creation and earth care. Some of them were astonished with the question; how is your church engaged in environmental care or improvement? It was evident that for them ecological concern and action are not a fully legitimate part of the mission of the church. For example, one key leader of Hyderabad was rather frustrated with the question, when he said,

Oh! we are a diocese not an NGO that we should be taking care of the environment; of course, we should be careful about creation because God created it and gave it to us. However, we have many other issues to take care of. We have to make sure that every Sunday there is a service in every parish of the diocese. We have to make sure that this month we would be able to give salaries to the diocesan priests and their assistants. We have to continually think of their personal needs of housing, childcare and transportation. There are so many administrative issues. Taking care of the environment and related issues is a job of NGOs for mostly they have a single agenda to follow. We are a Church and as a Church, we cannot do everything.<sup>488</sup>

This suggests that CoP and FGA's theologies of mission are largely anthropocentric; they focus on humankind as the central or most important entity of existence, especially as opposed to animals and environment. Thus, there is a tendency to reduce mission to the gospel as a solution to human sin. That underestimates God's intention to redeem the whole creation in Christ.

For, if the Bible's story runs from creation to new creation, one of the key concerns for CoP and FGA should be to consider the interaction between God's universal plan of salvation and the redemption of the whole creation. Then, as a result of the perspective that will give, the churches should reflect on certain aspects of behavior as stewards that can lead to establish ecological concern and action as a legitimate dimension of biblical mission. A few practical steps such as theological education,

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<sup>487</sup> Participant Identification Codes\_IJ\_1.1, AM\_1.2, SM\_1.6 & LQ\_3.1, SS\_3.2, SS 3.2, TW\_3.9

<sup>488</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ KJ\_2.1

environment and health projects and recycling, can serve towards enlarging the scope of mission theology in Pakistan.

#### 4.4.3. *Fall and Redemption: Understanding of Mission*

Next Wright deals with the fall and redemption in history, which constitute the major section of the biblical story line. Pointing to Genesis 3 – 11, he writes that human disobedience and rebellion against the Creator God brought disastrous results into every aspect of God's creation and life on earth and into every dimension (physical, intellectual, social and spiritual) of human personhood.<sup>489</sup> Sin and evil constitute bad news in every area of life, therefore Wright stresses a need for a 'holistic gospel' to deal with that 'holistic mess'.<sup>490</sup>

In his section on redemption in history Wright considers both OT and NT highlight God's intention not to abandon or destroy his creation but to redeem it. According to his argument, exodus provided a prime holistic model of God's first act of redemption in political, economic, social and spiritual dimensions for Israel.<sup>491</sup> Wright continues, 'At Sinai, God entered into covenant with Israel, calling them to be his representatives (priestly) and to be distinctive (holy) still with the rest of the nations in view.'<sup>492</sup> God wanted to shape his redeemed people as his model people in being a light to the nations. To which challenge Israel proved to be unfaithful.

In the NT the story line of the Bible moves on. The incarnation of God in Christ brings two new factors into the theology of mission, the inaugurated presence of the kingdom of God and the incarnational model and principle itself. 'The dynamic action of the kingdom of God in the words and deeds of Jesus and the mission of his disciples changed lives, values and priorities, and presented a radical challenge to the fallen structures of power in society.'<sup>493</sup> Through incarnation God inaugurated his reign in humble ways coping with all the limitations and frustrations of human life. Wright refers to the cross and resurrection of Jesus as the unavoidable 'central point of the whole line of redemption in history'<sup>494</sup> in which every dimension of sin

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<sup>489</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 40

<sup>490</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 110

<sup>491</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 41, 99-102 & *The Mission of God*, 265-288

<sup>492</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 41

<sup>493</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 42

<sup>494</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 43, 109-111 & *Mission of God*, 312-323

and evil in the cosmos is dealt with. All Christian mission flows from the cross, thus in Wright's passionate conviction, holistic mission must have a holistic theology of the cross which includes the conviction that cross is as central to social action as it is evangelism.<sup>495</sup>

In Wright's biblical theology of redemption, God is portrayed as divine redeemer and the church as a redeemed community. He asserts 'as the exodus redemption led to the creation of the covenant people of Old Testament Israel, so the Easter redemption led to the eschatological gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the birth of the church . . . its roots go back, of course, to the people of God since Abraham.'<sup>496</sup> Wright concludes his section on redemption in the bible story line with these implications.

Two realities from this part of the line inform our theology of mission: first, the presence of the Holy Spirit, making available to the people of God the same transforming power that energized the life and ministry of Jesus and raised him from the dead; and second, the existence of the church itself as the missional community of those who have responded to, and entered, the kingdom of God by repentance and faith in Christ, and who now seek to live as a transformed and transforming community of reconciliation and blessing in the world.<sup>497</sup>

These implications clearly lead to the need to explore our understanding of the Pakistani Church, as a transformed and transforming community. How does it seek to demonstrate God's reconciliation? What is its understanding of mission? If the cross of Jesus is the central point of redemption to deal with every dimension of sin in cosmos, do the churches have any conviction that the cross is as central to social action as it is to evangelism. Is the partnership between evangelism and social responsibility equal or unequal? Are they of identical importance or does one take precedence over the other. If the Holy Spirit was the transforming power that energized the ministry of Jesus, how do the churches perceive the presence or absence of the Holy Spirit in their individual and corporate lives in relation to mission? Therefore, the participants were asked the following questions in the qualitative research;

- How would you define and describe mission?

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<sup>495</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 314-315

<sup>496</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 43

<sup>497</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 43

- What comes into your mind when you hear the word ‘mission’? (You can share words or images.)

The quantitative research added the following statements to gather responses on a scale of agree strongly, agree, not certain, disagree and strongly disagree.

- Our social action is a means to express the love of God and to reconcile people to God.
- Social action should be separate from the mission of the church.
- Lack of missionary zeal is a sign of the absence of the Holy Spirit in an individual’s life.

#### 4.4.4. *Understanding of Mission: Partnership between Evangelism and Social Action*

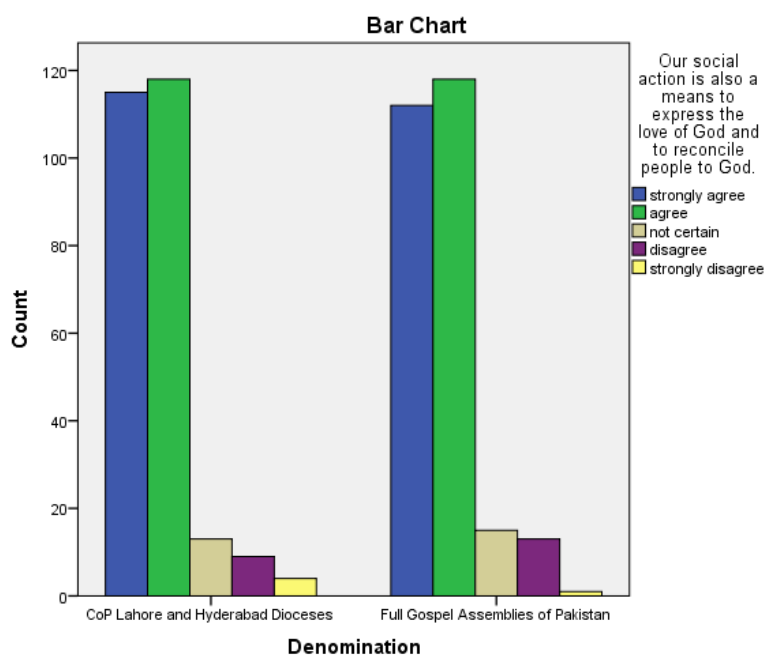
Chapter 1 has already seen the widespread confusion that surrounds the meaning of the term mission. Some respondents acknowledged recognition of such confusion surrounding present day ideas of mission in Pakistan. For example one respondent said that mission can be defined in two ways, first as an institution and secondly as spreading the Word of God. So, if someone wants to ask a question such as ‘*what denomination are you from?*’ He might simply say ‘*what mission are you from?*’<sup>498</sup> Some other respondents in the focus group also showed that historically the word mission is likely to mislead as it is interchangeably used for a denomination. This implies, that the word ‘mission’ is referred to as something static in the form of a structure or a religious organization rather than a dynamic activity.

The results of the quantitative research are as below;

*Figure 2: Social Action as a means to express the Love of God*

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<sup>498</sup> Focus Group at Hyderabad Diocese with clergy of Hyderabad Region at Diocesan office on 10th April 2015, Participant Identification Code\_MA\_1.13, Participant Identification Code\_LQ\_2.1



*Table 3: Social action and Mission of the Church*

Denomination	Social action of the church should be separate from the mission of the church.					Total
	strongly agree	agree	not certain	disagree	strongly disagree	
CoP (Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses)	49	41	24	115	30	259
FGA	36	84	22	91	26	259
Total	85	125	46	206	56	518

In total in CoP and FGA 463 participants, which is 89% of the sample population, agreed that social action is a means to express the love of God and to reconcile people to God. Whereas approximately 50% of the sample population disagreed, 40 % agreed and 10% are not certain that social action of the church should be separate from the mission of the church. The above results show CoP's understanding is slightly better than FGA's. This gives a complicated picture of the church's understanding, as though in the first place the Pakistani Church strongly agrees that

social action can demonstrate both God's love and reconciliation, conversely almost half of the participants are not convinced social action should be part of church's mission!

In consultations on Mission and Evangelism in 2000, Bishop Malik defined mission and evangelism in these words 'normally the diaconal ministries of the Church . . . are considered to be mission . . . What is commonly known as "social action" . . . Whereas evangelism is more verbal communication of the "Good News". Thus, mission is considered to be more in actions and evangelism in words'<sup>499</sup> Further Bishop Malik says 'it is not right to divide "mission" and "evangelism" in a way to give primacy or priority to either one over against the other.'<sup>500</sup> In his thinking they belong to each other as two sides of a coin, covering all the aspects of human life, i.e. social, political, economic and spiritual.<sup>501</sup>

This approach was also evident during the field research among the Lahore diocese. One key respondent defined mission in a broad way, as follows,

Mission is not only preaching. Our mission work includes development work, dealing with community needs and raising awareness of the problems that the community faces. It includes literacy projects and seminars to create awareness for women, children and youth issues on women and health issues.<sup>502</sup>

Another respondent emphasized that,

Doing good works and sharing God's love regardless of limiting it to any creed, group or religion.<sup>503</sup>

Assessing the partnership of evangelism and social action, both leaders did not show any particular commitment to evangelism by focusing on reaching out to the 'unsaved' or unreached peoples of this world. So, their focus has been more on redeeming others through social action. Conversely, some were more evangelical in their approach to mission. For example, one key informant of the Lahore diocese said,

The basic mission of the Church is to take the work that Jesus and the disciples did, that is, the message of love, mercy and redemption to other people. What is the basic purpose of this

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<sup>499</sup> A. Malik 'Mission' citing, 15

<sup>500</sup> A. Malik 'Mission', citing, 16

<sup>501</sup> A. Malik 'Mission', citing, 16

<sup>502</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ AG\_1.8

<sup>503</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ SM\_1.6

mission? The reason we preach the gospel is to win people's souls for Jesus Christ because without Jesus people will die and go to hell.<sup>504</sup>

In conclusion, for Lahore diocese in the partnership between evangelism and social responsibility neither has priority over other. This understanding of the missionary mandate is too broad and can inevitably lead to confusion regarding the priorities. Nothing is wrong with activities such as development work, literacy projects, and activities of awareness but if they take the place of evangelism, disciple making and church planting then mission can be swallowed up by a host of activities rather than dealing with the separation of humans from God.

In Hyderabad diocese, some respondents simply listed words to define mission, such as:

Purpose, apostolate, holistic ministry, demonstration of Kingdom of God, spiritual teaching, spreading the Gospel, spreading the message of Jesus' redemption and fulfilling the Great Commission.<sup>505</sup>

Another group at Hyderabad diocese mentioned the following phrases.<sup>506</sup>

Obedying the Great Commission is mission, spreading the Good News, reaching out with redemption for everyone.

Bishop Kaleem in his interview stressed that,

Christ gave us Great Commission and we are following that, we are doing our social projects in addition to preaching. Christ has not said in the Great Commission that go and open schools and give education. Our primary objective is so save the souls and our social action is complementing our first objective. So, if we are not able to open schools and do development work, it would not make any difference but we are committed to evangelize.<sup>507</sup>

Bishop Kaleem's approach is not any different from what Bishop Jiwan strongly believed, 'it is true that Christ has a great concern for the physical needs of man, but his main concern is a spiritual one . . . the Mission of the Church or the proclamation of the gospel leads to church development.'<sup>508</sup> This suggests that in its theological

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<sup>504</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ SS\_1.7

<sup>505</sup> Focus Group at Hyderabad Diocese with clergy of Hyderabad Region at Diocesan office on 10th April 2015

<sup>506</sup> Focus Group at Mirpur Khas with clergy and catechists of Mirpur Khas region of Hyderabad Diocese at St. Thomas' Church on 11th April 2015

<sup>507</sup> In interview with Bishop Kaleem at Bishop's house at Hyderabad on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2015

<sup>508</sup> B. Jiwan, 'Mission and Selfhood', citing 19 & 21



approach to mission the Hyderabad diocese gives priority to evangelism over social action, which signifies that the human's separation from God is more important than other dimensions.

In FGA, for defining mission some of the responses were as follows: <sup>509</sup>

Fulfillment of the Great Commission by reaching out to various people groups - so evangelism and church planting are mission.

In my opinion not only evangelism but social action by meeting needs of people is also part of mission.

God's plan is redemption of all nations. Therefore bringing people into God's kingdom is mission.

Preaching . . . Relief work, church planting and church growth is mission.

Mission means reaching the unreached.

Fulfillment of the Great Commission is mission.

In my understanding evangelism and charity are parallel. When people come to Christ we should also meet their needs. When people came to Jesus he met their needs as well.

We have learned that the Great Commission is a double edged sword. On one side we have to take gospel to the unreached and on the other side we have to grow and get mature. So, fulfillment of the Great Commission is the mission.

The above statements and interactions with key informants in FGA show that mission is defined basically as reaching the unreached with the Gospel. Evangelism becomes the most important dimension with social action to accompany it where necessary. In contrast to Lahore diocese, mission here is understood more restrictively as the church's action in terms of evangelism and church growth.

#### *4.4.5. The Role of the Holy Spirit as Transforming Power*

Wright emphasizes, 'The Holy Spirit in the church provides the guidance and the power to expect real change in lives and societies, while keeping our eyes on the corporate, not merely individual, dimensions of Christian mission.'<sup>510</sup> He also describes the presence of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' life as the transforming power that energized the ministry of Jesus and raised him from the dead. This section attempts

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<sup>509</sup> Focus Group at FGA Bible College with the College Students, 27-29 Jan 2015

<sup>510</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 45

to explore how CoP and FGA perceive the presence or absence of Holy Spirit in their individual and corporate lives?

CoP has not published any particular material on the Holy Spirit in relation to mission. In the 2000 International Mission Consultation, Bishop Irfan Jamil, who was then a vicar of St. Andrews, led a detailed study on the book of Acts in five sessions. He dealt with methods of evangelism, Paul's missionary journeys, important personalities in Acts, the Antioch missionary centre, qualities required for evangelism and the enemy of mission.<sup>511</sup> In evaluating Jamil's work and in seeking to determine the place of the Holy Spirit in the mission of CoP, it is quite evident that he dealt with a variety of subjects while bypassing the most important subject of Acts. His work has rather scanty space devoted to the work of the Holy Spirit in Acts.

However, Bashir Jiwan briefly but strongly addressed the role of the Holy Spirit in mission in his address at the first international consultation. To quote his words,

The author of Acts of the Apostles must be regarded as the foremost interpreter of the work of the Holy Spirit in Christian Mission. The keynote of the book of Acts is the expansion of the Church through the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>512</sup>

On the role of the Holy Spirit in mission, one informant of CoP stated,

As human beings we have different talents and qualities but the Holy Spirit empowers us, he enables us to preach the gospel with full confidence and without fear. The Holy Spirit convicts the people for repentance and for acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>513</sup>

Another said,

Without the Holy Spirit, the experience of the new birth is not possible.<sup>514</sup>

It was also discovered that some of the clergy in CoP (both in Lahore and Hyderabad dioceses) are quite charismatic in their beliefs. Some of them mentioned words like 'call, burden, power and transformation'.<sup>515</sup> One respondent of CoP called it 'maintaining the balance.'<sup>516</sup> In conclusion, overall in CoP the role of the Holy Spirit is seen more as empowering, energizing, convicting and transforming for an individual's mission work, and not necessarily for bringing real change in societies

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<sup>511</sup> I. Jamil, 'Bible Exposition on the Book of Acts: Outline of the Study', in *Mission*, 27-34

<sup>512</sup> B. Jiwan, 'Mission and Selfhood', citing 21

<sup>513</sup> Participant Identification Code\_SS\_1.7

<sup>514</sup> Participant Identification Code\_IJ\_1.1

<sup>515</sup> Participant Identification code\_FG1\_DOH

<sup>516</sup> Participant Identification Code\_IJ\_1.1

or on the corporate level. Moreover, none of the participant in the focus groups or individual interview mentioned the Holy Spirit's role in guidance.

Among the FGA many of the informants shared how a vision or prophecy has been a key motivating or determining factor for them to work among specific people or at a certain place. Such visions and prophecy have been seen as guidance. One informant shared,

When we came to this city . . . We rented a house which is very difficult to find here as Christians. We were thrown out of the first rented house as we work among people of other faith. When we used to meet for worship people used to throw stones at the house and also they threw garbage bags into our house church. This is a very tough area to begin church work. People know many details about us even though we don't know who they are and they also threaten us. We are only able to stay here because of God's grace and power. God called me for this place, even before I went to the Bible College, God gave me vision for this place.<sup>517</sup>

The Holy Spirit is also seen as the helper and as an empowering force in mission work. A respondent said,

FGA's distinctive is its emphasis on the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Father has a passionate heart and he sends the Son and the Holy Spirit as our helpers in the mission work.<sup>518</sup>

We stress that God has given his Holy Spirit to Christians so that they experience his love and power in their spiritual life and mission activity. The Holy Spirit convicts us so that we become converted from spiritual death to a living relationship with God in Christ. The Holy Spirit empowers us so that we can continue the mission of God for the glory of his name and Christ.<sup>519</sup>

I believe we have to move in the same power of the Holy Spirit as the early church did, otherwise we can't do mission work.<sup>520</sup>

So, for FGA, the link between the Holy Spirit and mission is quite strong, Mission is often initiated with the guidance of the Holy Spirit (spiritual revelation through a prophecy, a dream or a vision). The empowering and transforming dimensions are also key components of FGA's mission theology on the role of the Holy Spirit.

However, in its publications, like CoP, FGA has also devoted scant space to exploring the link between the Holy Spirit and Mission. Admittedly, FGA has been consistently

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<sup>517</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ LS\_3.6

<sup>518</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ SS\_3.2

<sup>519</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ TW\_3.9

<sup>520</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ FGA\_FG1\_Q7\_A5

producing some contributions to the topic from the beginning of its magazine publications, both in *Ab-e-Hayiat* and in *Satoon-e-Haq*.<sup>521</sup> However, the articles leave some loose ends. The survey of the material has made it evident that most of the articles deal with the subject of the Holy Spirit in the context of personal growth and not yet as transforming the fallen structures of power in society.

In conclusion, in the section on redemption understanding of the word mission, relationships between social action and evangelism and the role of the Holy Spirit in mission are explored. It is identified that the CoP and FGA strongly agree that social action can be the means to demonstrate God's redemption. However, the matter of social action being part of mission has been controversial, as half of the sample population is not agreed that social action should be part of the church's mission. In qualitative research, it has been identified that partnership between evangelism and social responsibility is equal in Lahore diocese whereas in Hyderabad diocese and FGA it is unequal. That is to say, in the former both give precedence to evangelism over the social action while the others do not.

Further, it is found that in both CoP and FGA publications, the role of the Holy Spirit in the church's mission has not received the place that it deserve. The conviction of the Holy Spirit's transforming and empowering at the individual level is quite clear in both the churches. However, the power to expect real change in fallen structures of corporate societies or communities is not fully realized.

In my understanding, one of the possible reasons for such a neglect is that the Pakistani Church sees itself as a minority, mostly surrounded with poverty, living on the margins of society. Therefore, she is more concerned about her own survival than seeking to transform the fallen structures on corporate level.

So, in the light of this the Pakistani church identifies more closely to the oppressed Israelite community in Egypt than the redeemed community of Exodus. Therefore,

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<sup>521</sup> B. Bhatti, 'Teaching About the Holy Spirit in the Bible' *Ab-e-Hayiat*, 1973, 8-9; E. Luther, Baptism of the Holy Spirit, *Ab-e-Hayiat*, 1970s(?), 6-7, A. Rehmat, 'Speaking In Tongues: A Sign of Baptism of the Holy Spirit, *Satoon-e-Haq*, 26:9, 2014, 20-22; A. Khan, 'Anointing of the Holy Spirit, *Satoon-e-Haq*, 26:11, 2014; L. Qaiser, 'The Holy Spirit will be Poured on You' 19:12, 2007, 3-8; L. Qaiser, 'Features of Pentecostal Preaching' *Satoon-e-Haq*, 18:7, 2006, 3-9; A. Rehmat, 'Am I filled with the Holy Spirit?' *Satoon-e-Haq*, 23:6, 2011, 15-17

CoP and FGA need to re-explore the role of redemption through the whole of the Scriptural canon to understand better what it means to be a redeemed community in the vulnerable context of Pakistan. Wright's models of redemption 'redemption through the centrality of cross' (to deal with every dimension of sin in cosmos),<sup>522</sup> 'the Exodus as redemptive model (with political, economic, social and spiritual dimensions)<sup>523</sup> and 'the Jubilee as God's model of restoration (in social, economic, theological and practical angles)<sup>524</sup> have much to offer the Pakistani Church for its reflection on becoming a redeemed community and demonstrating God's redemption in Pakistan holistically.

#### 4.4.6. *New Creation: Good and Bad News and the Nations*

Finally Wright emphasizes the conclusion of the Bible's own story line with the new creation. He says "The return of Christ will not only bring to its grand finale that section of the Bible story line that we have called redemption in history, it will also inaugurate the ultimate fulfillment of the whole point of the story – namely, the redemption and renewal of God's whole creation."<sup>525</sup> He includes the climactic part of the story line: the reality of judgment that the Bible warns about. He sees the judgment at two levels, first as the good news that evil will ultimately be destroyed by God and on another level as 'the bad news about the wrath of God that makes the gospel such eternally good news for our fallen world.'<sup>526</sup>

The Bible does not end with the day of judgment; beyond the wrath and the destruction of evil that are opposed to God's good purpose, there lie the new heavens and new earth, in which the great song of God's salvation is sung by 'a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language' (Revelation 7:9-10). Referring to Revelations 21:24 – 27, Wright says,

[The nations] have already been pictured as bringing their splendour, glory and honour into the city of God – redeemed and purified of all sin and evil. But the final picture of the nations that we have in the Bible is *healing*: "The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations." Nations that have been fundamentally sick since Genesis 3 – 11 will at last experience that international healing that the world longs for. The blessing of Abraham will bring all nations into the *shalom* of Christ, the redeemer, saviour and healer of all.

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<sup>522</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 103-109 & C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 312-323

<sup>523</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 265-288

<sup>524</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 289-323

<sup>525</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 44

<sup>526</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 44

In developing a sound biblical theology of the church's mission, Wright raises the question "Who are we and what are we here for?" Rather than finding the answer in the book of Acts, he goes back to Abraham, where God launched his great redemptive, restorative project – to resolve the bleak situation presented in Genesis 3 – 11.

In the context of the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:1-3) he has explored the meaning of the word "blessing" and has defined it in terms of 'fruitfulness, multiplication, spreading, filling and abundance.'<sup>527</sup> He continues, 'God's blessing was not for Abraham and his family only. He would be the father of a particular nation through whom blessing would come universally to all nations. "We", then, if we are in Christ, are part of that family of Abraham, no matter what nation we come from'.<sup>528</sup>

Wright draws from viewing Abraham as a model relevance for the church's mission practice. But if, in Christ, we inherit the privilege of Abraham's blessing then we also inherit the responsibility of being a blessing to the nations,<sup>529</sup> which he defines in terms of 'participating in God's promised mission of bringing people from all nations on earth into the sphere of God's redemptive blessing through Christ.'<sup>530</sup>

So, Wright's biblical story line on new creation, raises a set of questions for the final judgment: how do Pakistani churches seek to reach out to the unreached nations around them to save them from the bad news of the wrath of God by taking the good news to them? How are the churches striving to make real the vision of 'a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language' (Revelation 7:9-10)? What does the Abrahamic blessing mean for the Pakistani Church? Do they think that they have taken responsibility for being a blessing to the nations by bringing people from all nations on earth into the sphere of God's redemptive blessing through Christ?'<sup>531</sup>

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<sup>527</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 67

<sup>528</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 81

<sup>529</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 77

<sup>530</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 81

<sup>531</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 81

To gain understanding of the above, the participants were asked the following questions;

- How is your church finding ways to reach out to others?
- How does your church equip, empower and mobilize its congregations to be engaged in God’s mission purpose in the host community and in the broader world beyond?

The quantitative research added the following statements to gather responses on a scale of agree strongly, agree, not certain, disagree and strongly disagree.

- Reaching the people groups within Pakistani is the responsibility of the Pakistani church.
- The responsibility for world evangelization primarily rests with the foreign church in the economically developed countries.
- The Pakistani church has taken responsibility for evangelizing its own people.

The findings of the quantitative research are as follows;

*Figure 3 Responsibility for World Evangelization*

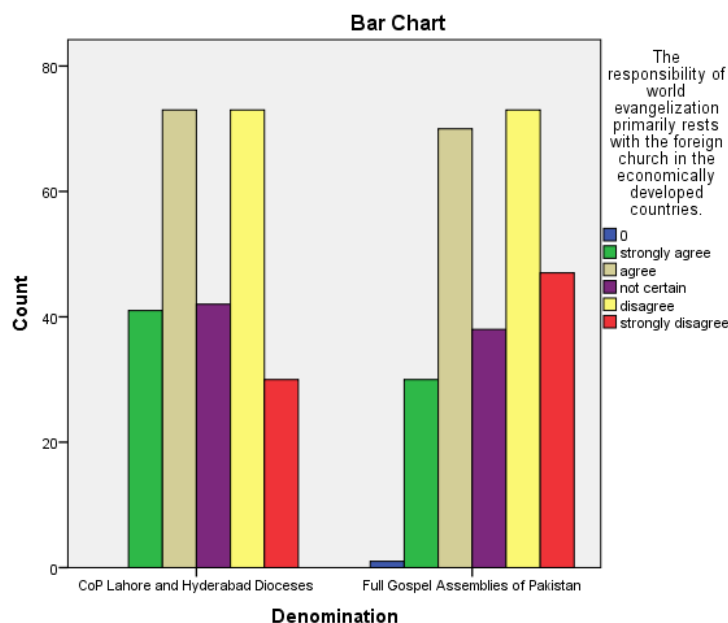


Table 4: Pakistani Church and the Responsibility of Evangelizing

Denomination	Pakistani church has taken responsibility of evangelizing its own people.					Total
	strongly agree	agree	not certain	disagree	strongly disagree	
CoP (Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses)	61	82	31	78	7	259
FGA	39	107	29	64	20	259
Total	100	189	60	142	27	518

The table above shows that 55% have agreed, 32% have disagreed and 11 % are uncertain whether the Pakistani church has taken the responsibility of evangelizing its own people. However the qualitative research has identified that the church’s mission is largely confined within Christian boundaries mainly among the nominal Christians within this country.

Where does the missionary work of Pakistani churches begin and end? Traditionally, the word ‘mission’ is connected with the words ‘the mission field’ which normally meant foreign countries but not at home. This has been the western way of looking at the rest of the world. In one sense, the Pakistani Church has always considered itself a mission field rather than a mission force. What is the understanding of the Pakistani Church for reaching out to the ends of the world?

One of the key informants of Lahore diocese said,

We don’t have work among people groups or tribes. If someone asks me whether we go to the unreached people? I ask them back that you tell me how many people are saved within the churches? People are not saved within the churches, they are religious but not spiritual. They all know the catechism, they have learnt theology by heart but they . . . don’t have experience of life of Christ. Now if we don’t go among nominal Christians in *Bastis* (slum areas) then we are more convicted of sin. For, tell me who does more witch crafting? . . . Where do you find more cases of evil spirits? Our people still don’t understand the truth . . . So, in my understanding if we reach to a nominal Christian then many can be drawn to Christ. In short, we don’t go to the unreached people groups but our focus is nominal Christians.<sup>532</sup>

<sup>532</sup> Participant Identification Codes\_ IJ\_1.1



This signifies that the Lahore diocese has an inward looking mission theology. Moreover, there is no specific theology for equipping, empowering and mobilizing its parishes to be engaged with the nations. It is worth mentioning that that is not the whole history of all Lahore diocese. For example, St, Andrews Sending Fellowship has been quite effective for a certain period to reach out to the unreached communities.

Hyderabad diocese is an exception in CoP because since its origin it has been, and still is, very committed to the nomadic people groups. However, a very crucial question is: would the diocese be engaged with the same passion to people other than the nomadic? When asked, a key informant asserted that,

80% of our mission engagement is among the Hindu communities, however, we work among them because they are our context. Imagine if they are not in our jurisdiction according to CoP's structure, would we work here? We don't work among Muslims because it has become really difficult to reach them. Although, some people distribute literature on roads and in markets. I think they are following a certain kind of evangelism or mission fashion. If we do that we can also gain funding. In reality, it is even becoming very difficult to reach to Muslims.<sup>533</sup>

In a focus group at Hyderabad, a group of clergy agreed that,

We can't reach Muslims in the same way as we reach to Hindus in Sindh and we don't have any specific strategy to reach out to them. The Church is also fearful because we are in a great danger of persecution, threat or even killings.<sup>534</sup>

Another respondent from Muslim background shared that,

If a Muslim accepts Christ, the Church is scared to accept that, there are some stories of the people who have harmed the Church with fake conversion. Church is also stiff necked, do not want to change its tradition to accept Muslims because they can think, act or practice the faith other than what the Christians do.<sup>535</sup>

This implies that in the Hyderabad diocese the main focus is the Hindu communities. As seen above some think that this engagement is solely on the basis that they are in Hyderabad's jurisdiction. There is no specific evidences of developing any theology for nations other than Hindus and sharing God's redemptive blessing with those nations.

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<sup>533</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ KJ\_2.1

<sup>534</sup> A Focus Group in Hyderabad Diocese, at the diocesan office, April, 2015

<sup>535</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ DF\_2.3

Similarly, the situation is not much different with FGA. One main member and leader of FGA said that,

Our main target of evangelism and mission is nominal Christians.<sup>536</sup>

While reflecting on FGA's practice in the context of FGA's mission to unreached people groups, Azeem Rehmat says, 'we just like to work among our own people. We just want to spread the gospel among our own Christians. We don't want to go to the places where the gospel has not been heard before.'<sup>537</sup> However, it must be acknowledged that there are some exceptions. In qualitative research, a few people shared their stories of reaching out to the Hindu communities and to restricted areas of North Pakistan. Even bringing together all the publications of the last 50 years, and the church planting and evangelism courses taught at FGA Bible College there is no evidence of theological reflection on reaching to the nations or any theology of equipping, empowering and mobilizing its congregations to bring nations into reconciliation with God.

So, in the light of the final section of the story line, the responses from the participants indicate legitimate concerns as it is clear that by restricting the good news to the soft targets based on their convenience the Pakistani Church is not facilitating the vision of 'a great multitude, from every nation, tribe, people and language worshipping before the throne of God.' (Revelation 7:9-10). The church has inherited only the Abrahamic blessing but not accepted the responsibility attached to it of being a blessing to the nations by bringing people from all nations on earth into the sphere of God's redemptive blessing through Christ.

A greater level of obedience and faith is required from the Pakistani Church. For the '*glorious gospel* of the Abrahamic covenant is that God's mission is ultimately to bless all the nations. The *enduring challenge* of the Abrahamic covenant is that God planned to do that "through you and your descendants'. The faith and obedience of Abraham, therefore, are not merely models for *personal* piety and ethics. They are

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<sup>536</sup> Participant Identification Code\_ LQ\_3.1

<sup>537</sup> A. Rehmat, 'Is my Church a Missionary Church?' Part 1, *Satoon-e-Haq*, July 2013, 25:7, 14-16, citing 15

also the essential credentials for effective participation in all that is meant by the command, “Be a blessing”.<sup>538</sup>

## **4.5. Conclusions and Implications**

This chapter has evaluated the theology of mission of Pakistani churches. It has been discovered that most, if not all, of the theological reflection is in oral form. An interrogation into the CoP and FGA’s theological resources has shown that most of their theological reflection on mission is inconsistent. Based on Christopher Wright’s grid of biblical theology and the criteria constructed in chapter 2, an evaluation of mission theology of CoP and FGA was conducted in four major areas i.e. scriptural unity, creation, fall and redemption in history and new creation. The main conclusions follow:

### *5.1.1. Scriptural Unity*

It has been discovered that CoP and FGA’s mission theology is based largely on the NT and the OT has a marginal place in that. This implies, the churches under study do not take the story as a whole but only half, which definitely leaves their understanding of the biblical story as a fragmented story. Thus, there is a need to bring all the mission thinking under the authority of the whole Scriptural canon.

### *5.1.2. Creation*

It has been seen that the Bible’s story runs from creation to new creation. However, both for Cop and FGA ecological concerns and action are not considered to be fully legitimate parts of the mission of the church. Therefore, CoP and FGA’s theology of mission is largely anthropocentric and not cosmic. It focuses on humankind as the central or most important entity of existence, especially as opposed to animals and environment. One of the key concerns for CoP and FGA, therefore, should be to consider the interaction between God's universal plan of salvation and the redemption of whole creation.

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<sup>538</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 80

### 5.1.3. *Fall and Redemption in History*

In the section on redemption, the understanding of mission, the relationship between social action and evangelism and the role of the Holy Spirit in mission are explored. It has been identified that partnership between evangelism and social responsibility is roughly equal in Lahore diocese whereas in Hyderabad diocese and FGA it is unequal as both churches give precedence to evangelism over the social action.

Further, it is found that both in CoP and FGA's publications, the role of the Holy Spirit in the church's mission is neglected. The conviction of the Holy Spirit's redemptive transformation and empowerment for the individual level is quite clear in both churches. However, expectation to experience power for real redemption in fallen structures of societies or communities on the corporate level is not fully realized as yet. There is a need to re-discover how redemption worked through the whole Scriptural canon to understand the potential of what it means to be the redeemed community in the vulnerable context of Pakistan.

### 5.1.4. *The New Creation*

It is clear that by restricting the good news to soft targets the Pakistani Church is not facilitating the vision of a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language (Revelation 7:9-10). In Christ, the Abrahamic blessing is sought but there is no evidence that anywhere churches have actually taken Abrahamic responsibility by doing theology on how and why to reach the nations. Thus, a greater level of obedience and faith is required from the Pakistani Church if it is to be a blessing to the nations by reflecting on how to bring people from all the nations on earth into the sphere of God's redemptive blessing through Christ.

With the above findings, it is legitimate to conclude, that due to its fragmented understanding of the biblical story, anthropocentric focus, neglect of the cosmic redemption and the exclusion of the Abrahamic responsibility of being a blessing to the nations, the mission theology of Pakistani churches is inconsistent and incomplete. Thus, for the sake of the mission engagement of the Pakistani churches,

a good and strong theology of mission is essential that will understand and use the biblical story as a whole. Only then will their mission theology qualify to examine the churches mission practice by providing direction, validation and correction. With this the next chapter seeks to evaluate the mission practice of the Pakistani churches.

# 5. Evaluation of Mission Practice of Pakistani Churches

## 5.1. Introduction

This chapter intends to evaluate the mission practice of the Pakistani churches by using a mission grid given by Michael Nazir-Ali. He argues that the Church exercises her missionary vocation in a number of different ways - through presence, identification, dialogue, service, and evangelism.<sup>539</sup> In his view, these are essential features of missionary obligation. Admittedly they are 'not exhaustive by any means but if the Church were not committed to nurture some of these qualities, however, it would remain deficient in its understanding of mission and in discharge of its missionary duties.'<sup>540</sup> This grid is used as a framework to limit the scope of evaluation and as a tool to assess the mission engagement of Pakistani churches. An evaluation and critique of the churches is conducted in the light of the criteria and questions raised in chapter 2. However, additional questions are also dealt with in the light of filed research findings.

## 5.2. Mission as Presence

Reflecting on Paul's church-planting in the Gentile world Nazir-Ali stresses that

One of the objectives of Christian mission, then, must be the emergence of Christian communities in every locality so that effective Christian witness and service may be established among the people in each city, town or village. Such a commitment to *presence* is what lies behind the importance given in Christian history to territory. Churches in the New Testament are usually identified with the place in which they are located, whether Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth or Rome.<sup>541</sup>

First, identifying mission as presence, church planting is considered essential for effective Christian witness. Nazir-Ali goes on to distinguish between two modes of presence. First, there is witness of life and worship, which does not entail verbal proclamation of the gospel. For example, he says that the churches in Islamic lands have been in situations in which only the first mode, that is, presence has been

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<sup>539</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 104-125; M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 139-193

<sup>540</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 105

<sup>541</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 106

possible. Secondly, there is open preaching, which invites people to consider the claims of the Gospel, repent and, ultimately, be baptized.<sup>542</sup>

In the light of this proposition, there are two areas for evaluating mission as presence for CoP and FGA. First, how have these churches fulfilled the first objective mentioned above that is the emergence of Christian communities? In other words, how have they continued mission by planting new churches? The second area leads to exploration of the mode of presence of Pakistani churches. Which kind of presence is this, is it silent or does it entail verbal proclamation? Is this current form of presence enough or is something more needing to be done? Before answering these questions - below is an overview of the presence of Lahore and Hyderabad dioceses of CoP and FGA.

### *5.2.1. An Overview of the Presence of the Churches and Institutions under Study*

- At present, the Lahore diocese is divided into 8 districts and 120 parishes. Along with those are 5 hostels for poor children (Patokee, Narowal and Rawalpindi), 28 schools, 1 vocational training institute 1 care and rehabilitation center for children with special needs (Rawalpindi), several development projects, which include community development, adult literacy, employment and scholarship projects.<sup>543</sup>
- Hyderabad diocese is divided into 3 regions with 26 parishes and 60 units or preaching stations in the diocesan Village Outreach Programme. The diocese has 6 schools, 3 hostels, 2 hospitals (Kunri Christian Hospital, Kunri, and Mission Hospital, Sukkur), an Audio Visual Centre, Aman Gah (previously Kunri Crafts), and four projects comprised of the Integral Mission Programme, the Capacity Building Programme, the TB Control Programme, and the Village LEAP Programme (Primary Education Project in 84 Villages of rural Sindh).<sup>544</sup>
- FGA currently has 210 churches, a radio ministry, 1 Bible college (B.Th level education), a Bible correspondence school, a technical institute, 3 orphanages (Youhanabad, Faisalabad and Sultanabad), print media for

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<sup>542</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 139

<sup>543</sup> Information taken from Bishop's office, Diocese of Lahore

<sup>544</sup> Information taken from Hyderabad diocesan office.

publications, 1 computer center, a book shop and several projects including a primary school project, adult literacy, midwifery and community development projects.<sup>545</sup>

The above mention of Christian presence in the forms of buildings and institutions cannot be underestimated as the physical presences of buildings with Christian imagery of Jesus, shepherd, sheep, cross, crucifix are not only architectural designs but are symbols and centers of Christian worship, service and witness. Their presence is uniquely important for the Pakistani context attracting many segments from society to the faith of a church. This in turn has enabled the churches to become symbols of Christian identity and spirituality in the context of Islamic extremism.

### *5.2.2. Geographical Distribution of CoP and FGA*

As mentioned earlier the organization of the CoP is on a territorial basis. It is divided into dioceses and parishes, which in theory at least should cover the whole of Pakistan. The constitution makes it clear that ‘there should be no place in Pakistan where members of the Church of Pakistan are not under the jurisdiction of some bishop of that Church.’<sup>546</sup> Lahore and Hyderabad diocese both have their presence in urban and rural areas.

FGA also maintains its presence in both rural and urban settings in all four provinces of Pakistan. Moreover, it consistently seeks opportunities for planting churches in the areas where there is no Pentecostal work.<sup>547</sup>

### *5.2.3. Presence through Church Planting*

Addressing the issue of definition, the term church planting can be described as ‘an effort to bring men and women to faith in Christ and incorporate them into growing, reproducing Christian fellowships.’<sup>548</sup> Aubery Malphurs defines church planting as, ‘a planned process of beginning and growing new local churches.’<sup>549</sup> His definition presents four basic notions:

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<sup>545</sup> Information taken from the FGA’s Headquarters at Bahar Colony, Kot Lakpath, Lahore.

<sup>546</sup> The Constitution of the Church of Pakistan, 20

<sup>547</sup> The Constitution of the Full Gospel Assemblies of Pakistan, 2

<sup>548</sup> E. Smith, ‘Church Planting’ in A. Moreau et al (eds.), *EDWM*, 202-203, citing 202

<sup>549</sup> A. Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998, 21.



- Church planting is an intentional activity, which involves human planning and effort.
- It is not an event but a dynamic process.
- Church planting involves both starting new churches and helping those churches grow.
- Growing new local churches carries a connotation of extending God's kingdom in double dimensions that is in geographical and cultural contexts.

#### 5.2.4. *Church Planting and Scriptures*

Church planting is done in faithfulness to the Scriptures. The NT provides the framework for church planting. There it is seen that church planting is essential because the risen Christ sent his disciples in the world to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28: 18-20). J. D. Payne notes:

The apostolic Church was given the mandate to bear witness to Christ and his resurrection by making disciples of all nations. Though a disciple is made whenever a person places faith in Christ for salvation, discipling is a lifelong process. The best context for both making disciples and discipling - which includes baptism and teaching obedience - is the local community of disciples (i.e., the church).<sup>550</sup>

When the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost, the disciples were baptized into one body and thus made members of the church (Acts 2:1-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13). The church in Antioch can subsequently be described as the doorway for the Great Commission because it was on the initiative from there that the Gospel moved *deep into* from Jewish soil to Gentile territory (Acts 13). Preaching the gospel led to people becoming believers, and wherever this happened, churches were formed (Acts 1:8; 11:19-30; 13:1-3; 14:21-23).

The ministry of church planting is revealed most clearly and fully in Paul's life and letters. The predominantly Gentile church of Antioch intentionally sent Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey to Galatia. It is clear that Paul regarded the establishing and strengthening of churches as a key part of his calling (Acts 14:23, 15:41). Although Paul was primarily engaged in evangelism, he also founded

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<sup>550</sup> J.D. Payne, *Discovering Church Planting: An Introduction to the Whats, Whys, and Hows of Global Church Planting*, Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2009, 11

churches as a necessary element in his missionary task. Conversion to Christ meant incorporation into him, and thus membership within a Christian community. Paul’s missionary activity went beyond gospel proclamation to the starting and nurturing of churches. He uses the words ‘planting’ (1 Corinthians 3:6-9; 9:7, 10, 11), ‘building’ or ‘laying foundations’ (Romans 15:20; 1 Cor. 3:10), ‘giving birth’ (1 Corinthians 4:15), and ‘betrothing’ (2 Corinthians 11:2 RSV) for starting churches. His careful nurturing of churches is clear from the longer times he spent at Corinth and Ephesus. We can gather this from Luke’s description of his encouragement and strengthening of new disciples (Acts 14:22), and from his own description of his task as bringing believers to maturity in Christ (Romans 1:1-15; 15:14-16; Ephesians 3:8-9; Colossians 1:24—2:7). Whole chapters in the middle of Acts are devoted to telling the story of how churches were established and grew. The welfare and growth of these churches is regarded as being as important as the spread of the Gospel (Acts 20:28). This signifies that the ‘Church is called to be essentially, not incidentally, missionary in character. The Church is to be so outgoing that it will reproduce itself, by the Spirit, in all the variety of expressions needed.’<sup>551</sup>

#### 5.2.5. Church Planting in Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses

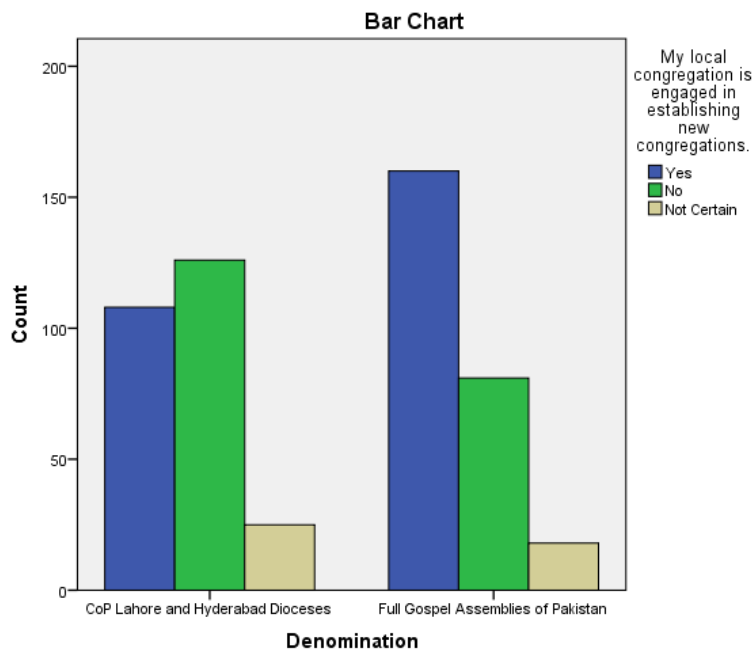
Considering church planting as an essential component of presence, both CoP and FGA were interrogated in the field research about their church planting process. The results of the quantitative research are as follows:

*Table 5: Local Church and Church Planting*

Denomination	My local congregation is engaged in establishing new congregations.			Total
	Yes	No	Not Certain	
CoP (Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses)	20.8%	24.3%	4.8%	50.0%
FGA	30.9%	15.6%	3.5%	50.0%
Total	51.7%	40.0%	8.3%	100.0%

<sup>551</sup> *Mission Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Context, A Report from Working group of the Church of England’s Mission and Public Affairs Council, 2003, 36*

Figure 4 Local Church and Church Planting



The above results show that FGA's church planting is stronger than that of the CoP. It was noted that church planting is not a very popular term in the Lahore diocese at the present moment. In the graph the percentage of the practice of church planting is probably higher because the responses include Hyderabad diocese as well. Hyderabad diocese has managed to maintain a good practice of church planting and its very existence is essentially a fruit of church planting.

Many of the churches in Lahore diocese were initiated by the British and have been left by them. Few new churches have been or are being build. The exceptions are for example in Kasur, Islamabad and Youhanabad. Some of the closed churches have been reopened, for example St. John's Church in Jhelum. The question was asked, how is church planting practiced and who provides training and mentoring in the process of evangelism, discipleship and church planting? In Lahore diocese, a variety of responses were gathered in qualitative research. Generally speaking, some of the respondents were rather teased with the question of mission engagement through church planting. They felt that in the current situation of growing radicalism in the majority community, church planting is simply not possible. Instead, they argued

that showing God's love through service is a more appropriate way to engage with the wider society.<sup>552</sup>

At the opposite end of the spectrum, a few people shared that they strongly believed in church planting as an effective mission strategy. For example, one respondent shared passionately that he has planted three churches in recent years.<sup>553</sup> Yet there were some people who understood church planting solely in terms of erecting a new building in any area.<sup>554</sup> The last category of response was those people who surprisingly denied the need for church planting because in their view CoP is geographically distributed over the whole of Pakistan. So, if any new believer comes to faith, they think he or she should go to one of the existing churches. Their emphasis is not on going to a new place to plant a church rather on staying where the church is and maintaining ministry. For example, one respondent commented

There are some people who go to some place, evangelize and save people but after doing that they never go back there. So, they give birth to children but don't help them to grow up. Then they claim that we have planted a church there. But when new believers are not taken care of, we are there to serve. This is how we work but we don't go somewhere with an intention to plant a new church.<sup>555</sup>

This perspective, denying the need for church planting, based on the geographical distribution, speaks of a lack of understanding of the process of church planting. As seen above, church planting has double dimensions of geography and culture. Those people see mission in terms of geographical boundaries only, without a cultural element. This endangers good mission practice by overlooking the need of reaching out to the people groups already within reach of the diocese.

On the basis of the available literature of the Lahore diocese on mission, it is observed that the theology of church planting has not received any substantial attention on the diocesan level. This finding was validated with the senior leadership who confirmed that at the moment church-planting is not one of the priorities of the diocese. There are exceptional cases in which leaders are engaged in mission on the parish level through church planting but on their personal initiative. Presently, the diocese has not set any goal or direction for church planting as such.

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<sup>552</sup> Participant Identification code\_ SM\_1.6

<sup>553</sup> Participant Identification code\_ SS\_1.7

<sup>554</sup> Participant Identification code\_ AI\_1.10

<sup>555</sup> Participant Identification code\_IJ\_1.1

Historically speaking this has not been the case with the Lahore diocese. There have been a number of initiatives at parish and at the individual level to engage in mission through church planting. For example St. Andrew's church took some noteworthy initiatives and planted some churches in Lahore. Youhanabad parish is a good example of that. Rev Robert Otto was a layman of St. Andrews and was ordained by that parish to minister in Christ Church, Youhanabad. Otto himself was so enthusiastic for church planting that even after his retirement he used to regularly ride on his motorbike to reach out to villages and the outskirts of Kasur to plant churches. He planted a significant number of small churches in various places on his personal initiative, examples include Bahadur Pur, Mabi Baksh wala, Kotlee, Kadee Wand, Dullu, Toluandee, Dloan and Gal Behrah.<sup>556</sup> Later, the Lahore diocese erected church buildings at six of these localities and has also appointed ordained clergy to run the local parishes.

In the light of the above discussion, the Lahore diocese has to meet two challenges. First, as the diocese seeks to be faithful to the Scriptures it must aim at developing a good practice of church planting in both geographical and cultural contexts. The second challenge is that it must allow itself to maintain a strong connection and continuity to its own history of church planting.

Hyderabad diocese has had a long commitment to the Hindu communities of Sindh. Fred and Margie Stock, Presbyterian missionaries from the USA, examined the mass people movements in the Punjab,<sup>557</sup> which occurred around the beginning of the last century and in consequence decided to move to the Sindh to be involved with the work among Hindu groups. They sought to apply the ideas of McGavran's homogeneous unit principle and of the 'people movements' to tribal evangelism.<sup>558</sup> Fred produced a thesis on methods of evangelism among the tribal groups in Sindh for Fuller School of World Missions.<sup>559</sup> He calls those communities a 'segment of the non-Christian population of Pakistan most responsive to the Gospel.'<sup>560</sup> Many are

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<sup>556</sup> A. Barkat, *Mirror*, 292

<sup>557</sup> F & M. Stock, *People Movements in the Punjab*, William Carey Library, Pasadena, 1975.

<sup>558</sup> McGavran developed the homogeneous unit principle, which proved to be one of the most contentious issues that was raised in connection with church planting. He defines 'homogeneous unit' as 'a segment of society whose common characteristic is a culture or a language . . . people like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers.' D. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1990, 69.

<sup>559</sup> F. Stock, 'Evangelizing Scheduled Tribes and Castes in Sindh' (A special project submitted to Dr. Donald McGavran, June 1979)

<sup>560</sup> F. Stock, *Evangelizing*, 1

nomadic therefore, an accurate census has been difficult to obtain. Stock with his intensive missionary work among the Hindus in Sindh has identified that there are almost 40 ethnic groups of Hindus in Sindh, which are further divided into innumerable sub-divisions or sub-castes.<sup>561</sup>

That diocese has a noteworthy history of church planting and it has continued to evangelize. That is why there is a growing church of Hindu converts alongside the Punjabi Christians. In the early stages, Punjabi Christians led the church but now there are about 6 ordained clergy from the Hindu background who have taken leadership roles.<sup>562</sup> At the moment there are six Hindu background churches; these include the churches of Kipro, Mithi, Kunri, Raj Wadhha Mall church, St. Matthew and Rawat Memorial. In addition to that different parishes have Hindu converts among the congregations.

Most of the work of church planting was done during Bishop Jiwan's time. Pervaiz Sultan has also highlighted that Bishop Jiwan was committed to a holistic approach to evangelism with the clear goal of planting churches.<sup>563</sup> To achieve that goal Bishop Jiwan developed different teams who used to regularly go among the Hindus to evangelize them. The diocese used to facilitate the teams with transportation.

It has been discovered that currently the diocese is struggling to continue its church planting among the nomadic people. One of the biggest challenges is lack of funds for church planting and follow-up. Some, working with the diocese for a long time, have confirmed that some thousands of Hindus from different groups have been baptized but could not be followed up due to lack of resources and coordination.<sup>564</sup> One of the respondent commented that

We have our work scattered on very wide grounds but sadly it is only 1 inch deep because we have failed to follow up the new converts. Therefore, a number of church plants have died.<sup>565</sup>

The challenge of following up nomadic converts adds considerable financial pressure to the diocese because geographically, the whole of the Sindh, except Karachi, is under their jurisdiction. While confirming the diocese's intention to plant

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<sup>561</sup> F. Stock, *Evangelizing*, 1 & 6-7.

<sup>562</sup> Participant identification code\_DF\_2.3

<sup>563</sup> P. Sultan, *Evangelization*, 4-6

<sup>564</sup> Participant Identification code\_PS\_2.10; DF\_2.3; MB\_2.8; SS\_2.11 and IG\_2.4

<sup>565</sup> Participant Identification code\_SS\_2.11

churches at various levels some other challenges were also mentioned. Some have mentioned the lack of clear direction for church planting at the diocesan level. For example, one respondent said that,

The diocesan structure is very good for planting churches but the problem is that there is little direction or vision given at the diocesan level. There are a number of parishes, which are engaged in church planting among the nomadic Hindus, but they are doing it on their own initiative. The diocese is not stopping them doing so but neither is it facilitating them in it. Moreover, some of the parishes are very poor. They have very few resources which is why they cannot keep up with the opportunities available.<sup>566</sup>

Some have shown concern for the lack of the teamwork required for the task at the parish level.

There is a lack of accountability at the parish level; the checks and balances are not well maintained. Only a few are faithfully working to plant churches. For example, the Village Outreach program of Audio Visual Center of the diocese has currently 60 workers who are working on a regular basis in different villages. However, this is not the job of one department of the diocese. I am totally convinced that each parish should be taking part in it and for this to happen, the Episcopal authority should set a direction and monitor the parishes on a regular basis.<sup>567</sup>

Some from within CoP are convinced that the diocesan structure of CoP is not fit for church planting. For example one informant said, that

There is so much stress on keeping the tradition. It is strongly believed that the new believers should come to church. Whereas, it is difficult for nomads to settled down permanently at one place. Then one of the challenges for the church is to be on the move with nomadic people. The house-church idea is not much appreciated in CoP, that makes me realize that the church planting is difficult in this situation.<sup>568</sup>

From the above statements, it becomes clear that there is a need to look for fresh expressions of church planting among the nomads that would be complementary to inherited ways. The report of Breaking New Ground suggests that

We need to find ways to enable diverse styles of church life to co-exist without always having to resource territorial or even denominational boundaries . . . Further, an Episcopal church is well placed to discern when, in order to be rooted in the community, the focus on parochial territory needs supplementing with a realistic awareness of network and neighbourhood . . . in such situations the assertion that the parish boundaries are paramount will merely paralyse initiative.<sup>569</sup>

The diversity of styles of church life can facilitate initiatives for church planting. Therefore, there is a need to develop a framework for both respecting and crossing

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<sup>566</sup> Participant Identification code\_ MB\_2.8

<sup>567</sup> Participant Identification code\_ SS\_2.11 & Participant Identification code\_ PS\_2.7

<sup>568</sup> Participant Identification code\_ PS\_2.7

<sup>569</sup> Cited in *Mission Shaped Church*, 125

the parish boundaries. Episcopal authorization is necessary to give legitimacy to a structure of accountability for the clergy at parish level. So, an appropriate mission strategy for church planting along with the mission workers must be developed.

#### 5.2.6. Church Planting in FGA

The extensive spread of Pentecostal Christianity can be reasonably attributed to the missionary efforts of the historic Pentecostal churches, among others. The main *modus operandi* of Pentecostal mission has been straightforward evangelism and church planting from its inception.<sup>570</sup>

The above observation for global Pentecostalism is certainly true for FGA. In this regard, it is significant to look at the FGA mission statement: 'The Full Gospel Assemblies exist to evangelize the people of Pakistan, to plant witnessing Churches and to become an instrument of the kingdom of God in Christ in Word and Deed.'<sup>571</sup> FGA's mission statement indicates that evangelism and planting churches are closely linked for the purpose of its existence. Therefore, FGA has a strong focus and intrinsic motivation to bring transformation on a grass roots level to Pakistan, through planting witnessing churches.

One respondent commented that

FGA, the first Pentecostal church in Pakistan, started its work with a clear vision to preach and teach the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Church planting has been from the beginning and still is a major thrust of FGA's mission work.<sup>572</sup>

Many of the respondents defined church mission in connection with church planting,<sup>573</sup>

Evangelism and church planting is mission.

Church planting and church growth is mission.

Another respondent described church planting as a motivation for him to engage in mission.

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<sup>570</sup> J. Ma, 'Pentecostal Evangelism, Church Planting, And Church Growth', in W. Ma, V. Kärkkäinen et al

(eds.) *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, Oxford: Regnum Books, 87-106, citing 87

<sup>571</sup> Taken from the Head Office of FGA

<sup>572</sup> Participant Identification code\_OF\_3.10

<sup>573</sup> Participant Identification code\_FG1\_FGA\_Q2\_A 1& 4



The book of Acts and Paul's life and church planting motivates me to be engaged in mission.<sup>574</sup>

By taking it seriously at the denominational level, FGA has demonstrated that it has a firm intention for church planting. It is one of the major strengths of FGA's mission engagement that it encourages local Christians to find ways to plant new indigenous churches on their own personal initiatives with a little support from FGA's central headquarters in Lahore. Hence a multiplicative effect follows. Many were in agreement with what one church planter said,

I believe that FGA's denominational structure is very helpful for the church planting work. I would say it's 100% helpful.<sup>575</sup>

Returning back to Aubery Malphurs definition of church planting above, it is seen that church planting is an intentional activity which involves human planning and effort. In this regard, it is important to see how FGA maintains its intentionality of church planting in line with its human or strategic planning.

As there is no specific material published and used for church planting training in its Bible college, it clear that FGA does not have any deliberate, thoughtful, methodical, well-formulated plan of action for church planting. It is also true that FGA has very little or no overall strategy as its board or headquarters does not hold a neatly packed package of church planting procedures. Instead, FGA stresses flexibility of operating methods developed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and subject to His direction and control. With this, it is also noted that FGA strategies or methods of planting churches vary from place to place and from people group to people group.

In response to a question, who provides training and mentoring in the process of evangelism, discipleship and church planting? One key respondent mentioned that,

At local level, each church does their own thing. At denominational level, it is the FGA Bible College where our workers get training. Their training is minimum two years.<sup>576</sup>

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<sup>574</sup> Participant Identification code\_ FG1-FGA\_Q7\_A3

<sup>575</sup> Participant Identification code\_ LS\_3.6

<sup>576</sup> Participant Identification code\_ TW\_3.9

FGA has its own set of challenges for mission engagement through church planting. It has been recognized that church planting is not a reality with all 210 churches of FGA. In other words, not all the churches have been able to take the mission statement of the denomination on board. For example, one pastor confessed that

We are not involved in any kind of church planting at all.<sup>577</sup>

This loose and un-hierarchical structure, with little central control from FGA headquarters, leads to fragmentation at times. Some discouraging incidents of conflicts, splits and strained relationships among leaders and congregants have brought a bad reputation for FGA on a local or national level. For example splits in Jhelum and Sindh in recent years got huge attention. In one incident the local church merged into Assemblies of God after the split. It has been a significant challenge for FGA to resolve such kinds of conflicts for its well-being and effective mission practice.

Nevertheless, in comparison FGA's position seems much stronger than that of CoP in regards to mission practice through church planting. By taking church planting on board as a denomination the major strength of the FGA church is that it managed to create a strong and significant presence of 210 churches in the short period of around 80 years all over Pakistan. The Lahore diocese with its extended history of 138 years has 120 parishes at the moment. Admittedly, some of the old churches have been already given to other dioceses. For example, all the churches in Peshawar under the jurisdiction of Peshawar diocese once belonged to Lahore diocese. Still, currently church planting needs a lot more attention at the Lahore diocesan level. Hyderabad diocese has its own very different nomadic setting, but the diocese has made remarkable progress in church planting, particularly during Bishop Jiwan's time. Currently, they have a challenge to allow more fresh expressions appropriate for the nomadic setting. Moreover, the diocese needs to revise its stance on church planting with more rigorous strategic planning.

Church planting is always difficult; however, in the context of Pakistan it is even more difficult due to the prevailing religious extremism. Even then church planting must continue. For in terms of intentional mission, there is no alternative other than

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<sup>577</sup> Participant Identification code\_ GT\_3.5

planting churches that will plant more churches to bring diversity and richness to the body of Christ in Pakistan.

#### *5.2.7. Mode of Presence for Mission Engagement*

As mentioned earlier Nazir-Ali has identified two modes of presence, first, there is witness of life and worship, which does not entail verbal proclamation of the gospel. Secondly, there is open preaching, which invites people to consider the claims of Gospel, repent and ultimately, be baptized. This section seeks to find answers to the question of the mode of presence of Pakistani churches; which kind of presence is this, is it silent or does it entail verbal proclamation?

Beyond the information about churches, institutions and projects there is an encouraging picture of the strong presence of the churches under study. Chapter 4 has clearly identified that these churches are aware of their obligation to carry out the Great Commission. The CoP and FGA both, in the Islamic land of Pakistan, at any rate, have managed to maintain their presence in the society at large predominantly through worship places, church planting and institutions in the fields of education and medicine. Such a presence shows the remarkable strength of both the denominations. Thus, it is evident that in Pakistani churches there has been a mixture of both the modes and the presence. The constitution of Pakistan gives freedom to proclaim but as previously noted that proclamation is very offensive outside the church compounds. For Hyderabad diocese, it has been possible to preach openly and baptize people from Hindu groups only.

In this regard, however, Nazir-Ali, strongly argues that 'this does not mean that the second mode can be ignored for all practical purposes. Rather, the first mode is a way of careful preparation for the second.'<sup>578</sup> This means that presence alone in passive form is not enough but proclamation is essential as being an indispensable dimension of mission. Then proclamation can lead to repentance and conversion and ultimately to baptism.

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<sup>578</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 139

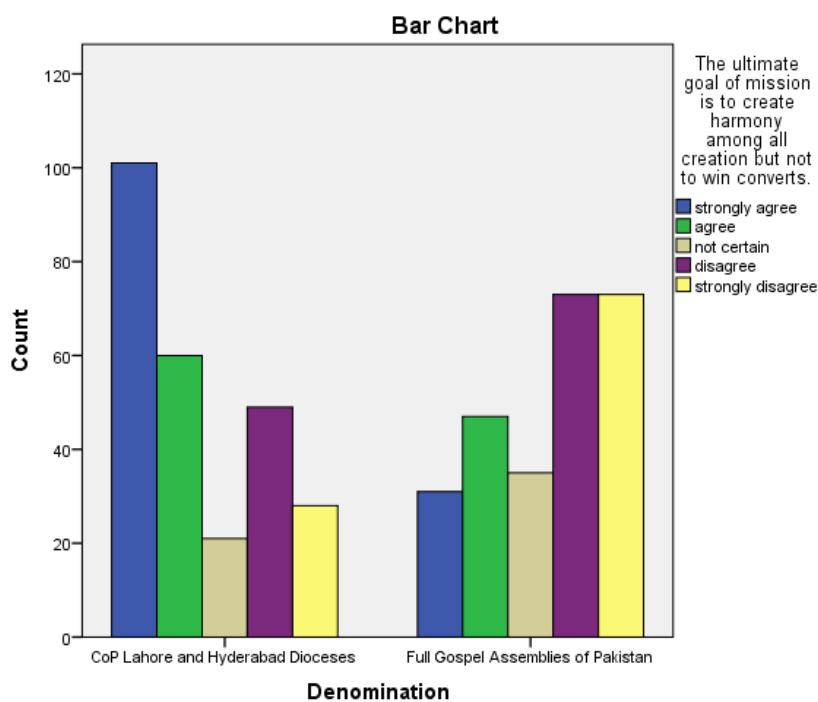
The respondents were asked, how much place conversion and baptism hold in their mission engagement? It was noted that the respondents believe in conversion and baptism but most agreed with the followings statements

Conversion is not our job, it's the work of the Holy Spirit. We should not only focus on converting or baptizing people.<sup>579</sup>

Conversion is not our goal.<sup>580</sup>

This notion had been expressed repeatedly on separate occasions in Lahore diocese during interviews. This is further validated in the quantitative research. The following graph shows a sharp contrast between CoP and FGA's attitude towards the goal of mission. For CoP the goal of mission is not necessarily to win converts, it could be service, sharing of love or dialogue. However, FGA clearly aims to win converts.

*Figure 5 Ultimate Goal of Mission*



It is true that Lahore diocese has a strong institutional presence, which does not always allow it to proclaim the message of the gospel openly. However, upholding the intention for proclamation is equally important. This intention is there but in a

<sup>579</sup> Participant Identification code\_ AM\_1.2 ; IJ\_ 1.1; SM\_1.6 & AG\_1.8

<sup>580</sup> Participant Identification code AM\_1.2

weaker form. When one key respondent was asked whether conversion is the goal of mission engagement, he responded

No, our goal is that Christians should become good Christians, whereas Muslims should become good Muslims. I believe there can't be a higher purpose than this to produce good human beings from our institutions.<sup>581</sup>

Such a perspective carries some weight on the grounds of the common good but the main problem with it is that it sacrifices Christ's exclusiveness. In engaging with context, on one hand, it should be made clear that the elements that are critically central to Christianity should not be sacrificed. On the other hand, while safe guarding biblical truths the Church must not lose its intention to share the gospel.

In this setting, it is acknowledged that the quest for a mission among the majority community is well known for some failure. In recent years, this task has become even more difficult because of the strong and growing hostility toward Islam in reaction to the extreme versions of Islam. It is an established truth that preaching the gospel in clear words other than to Hindus and Christian communities can be considered offensive in the wider society. This is mainly due to growing intolerance in the Islamic world. However, there are some opportunities. The first mode of witness, at times, gives opportunities for the second mode of verbal proclamation. This happens mainly through meeting the spiritual or physical needs of people from other faiths. For example, some of the respondents of Hyderabad mentioned that at times a need for healing has provided opportunity for sharing the gospel. However, other than to Hindu groups, no more baptisms have been reported, as it can be dangerous to respond.<sup>582</sup>

Similarly, FGA's presence gives her significant opportunities. FGA's distinction is its miraculous manifestations, as it's services are fueled by supernatural manifestations of God's power in the form of healing and solving life's challenges. Also common are 'power encounters' against spiritual forces. These have attracted people struggling with 'all forms of human affliction and bondage.'<sup>583</sup> Again, occurrences of such supernatural manifestation are relatively common and

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<sup>581</sup> Participant Identification code\_ SM\_1.6

<sup>582</sup> Participant Identification code\_ DF\_2.3

<sup>583</sup> A. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 199.

expected in Pakistani Pentecostal meetings and this has attracted many people belonging to other faiths. Many respondents shared incidents similar to what one participant said,<sup>584</sup>

We have a good testimony in the surrounding areas, sometimes majority community come to us and ask us to pray for them for their healing. They also come for exorcism; it is because they believe in the name of Jesus that the evil spirits will flee. We have many testimonies of people who have received healing and through these incidents, we get a chance to share the gospel.

Equally, healing crusades have been instrumental in drawing seekers to the church. The fact is valuable that a few have been led to a point of conversion. However, those conversions have usually not lasted long, largely due to lack of proper follow-up of new converts or due to persecution. Currently, crusades and evangelistic meetings have ceased for security reasons.

Again, conversion has become a very complex phenomenon in Pakistan for there are negative connotations attached to it. Some fake or false conversions from other faiths to Christianity have caused much trouble to the Church in recent years. Therefore, some churches do not trust newly converted people; rather they raise questions on the motives of the converts or of one who expressed the desire to convert. Sometimes, due to this fear, people who are genuinely seeking to follow Christ are turned away from a church.

There are a number of ways to strengthen this presence. First, the Christian presence and work in Pakistan have to do with intention and purpose to remain there for the sake of witness to Christ. The quality of presence can surely act as salt in society to affect it. C. E. Shenk has rightly pointed out

If we are not present as Christians we have opted for absence. The decision to be present should not be based upon the amount of freedom permitted. Lack of freedom might even help illuminate the gospel as Christians are forced to give more attention to the quality of presence.<sup>585</sup>

Second, 'the Christian presence cannot be passive, and there must be prayer and work for the emergence of more open societies where the Gospel can be freely

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<sup>584</sup> Participant Identification code\_ FG\_FGA4

<sup>585</sup> C. Shenk 'Presence' in A. Moreau et al (eds.) *DMTEF*, 312-313, citing 313

commended in any number of ways . . . it may be necessary to maintain some sort of witness through radio, television or literature.<sup>586</sup>

### **5.3. Mission as Identification**

The presence of the Church in a particular place or among a specific group of people can be alienating rather than engaging, especially in a context of violence, and oppression. Therefore, to emphasize authentic presence Nazir-Ali asserts that 'if it is to be truly incarnational, [it] must be one that identifies with the culture, aspirations and perceived destiny of a people, as far as this is possible without compromising the nature of the gospel.'<sup>587</sup>

This further raises questions about the authenticity of the 'presence' of Pakistani churches - how are Pakistani churches identifying with their context? Are they able to influence the society or have they themselves got unduly influenced by it? Are the churches tempted to submit to being co-opted into a system in the hope of obtaining privilege and influence? Are the churches speaking from the cutting-edge of what the gospel has to say about dignity, liberty, justice and the common good?

Here the discussion is intended to be focused on seeking how CoP and FGA presence is leading to identification. So, the main question is: are the churches engaging with their context or is their presence alienating? The problem of compromising the nature of the gospel will be further discussed in chapter 6.

#### *5.3.1. Positive Examples of Identification with Culture*

There are several positive examples of how CoP and FGA have integrated culturally into the community. Some of the examples include language, idiom, thought and even architecture of the indigenous culture. These forms are helpful for mission engagement.

##### *5.3.1.1. Punjabi Churches of Lahore diocese and FGA*

As mentioned earlier 80 percent of Pakistani Christians live in Punjab. The examples from Punjabi culture are equally applicable to Lahore diocese and FGA. Almost all of Lahore diocese is situated in Punjab, except Islamabad, which lies between the

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<sup>586</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 148 & 151

<sup>587</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 108

provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab (Islamabad is not a part of any province). FGA is scattered in all four provinces. However, most of the Christians in the other three provinces are from Punjab and they understand and practice the culture, language and thought patterns of Punjab quite well. Therefore, the examples of identification are more or less applicable to them as well.

As far as worship is concerned, Punjabi psalms are a good example. In this regard one of the greatest achievements of the Punjabi Church, is that it has paraphrased the Psalms into Punjabi and has set them to the *rags* (or tunes) of Punjabi folk music.<sup>588</sup> Furthermore, the translation of the Bible into Persian Urdu has an idiom that is thoroughly Indo-Muslim and its language is much admired and used in Muslim literary circles.<sup>589</sup>

Not only in Bible translation but also in church building, experiments have been made to integrate the Gospel as part of culture. For example, All Saints Church of Lahore diocese built in 1882 in Peshawar is now part of the Peshawar diocese.<sup>590</sup> It was an attempt to build in the eastern style of architecture. The building is an important part of the attempt to establish the Gospel appropriately in this part of the world. It is to be noted that most of the urban church buildings of CoP are designed in a traditional western style. Part of the reason for this is the desire to express unity with the worldwide Church in the face of dominant and majority Islam. However, they are probably seen by most of the population as symbols of the West and relics of the British Raj (which they generally are). In comparison to that, most of the churches of FGA are in Christian communities or *bastis* (slum areas) and are built in the eastern style.

In Punjab, the churches have made some effort to develop appropriate Christian customs and rituals for wedding ceremonies, for example an oil or anointing ceremony (*Mayaian*). Unfortunately, there are also possibilities of syncretism where there is uncritical acceptance of the Muslim or Hindu worldview. On occasion attempts are made to Christianize superstitions. For example, consecrated elements are used to prepare amulets and there has been increasing use of loudspeakers fixed outside the churches. However, it must be noted that after the recent bomb attacks

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<sup>588</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 157-158, F. Pressly, 'The Punjabi Zabur: Its Composition, Use and Influence, in *Reader in Contextualization for Pakistan*, Lahore: OTS, 2013, 90-100, citing 93-100

<sup>589</sup> M. Nazir- Ali, *Frontiers*, 81

<sup>590</sup> V. Stacey, 'All Saints Church: Peshawar', in *Reader in Contextualization*, 101-104, citing 103



in Youhanabad churches in Lahore, the use of speakers is banned other than their use for Sunday Sermons. This is also the case with the mosques.

#### 5.3.1.2. *Hyderabad Diocese*

The Hyderabad diocese is making consistent efforts to identify with the Hindu communities. The Audio-Visual Aid Centre was established to produce teaching materials in local languages, including a basic adult literacy program based on the Bible, appropriate for discipling largely illiterate Hindu background Christians.

In Sindh, although Urdu is the main language of the liturgy, some of the terminology has been adapted in the light of the sensitivities of the Hindu background believers. For example, Urdu words commonly used in worship by the Punjabi Christians, such as *ibadat* (worship), *dua* (prayer), *nijaat* (salvation), *kalisia* (church), *Ruh ul-Quddus* (Holy Spirit), *Khudawund* (Lord), *Khuda* (God) are seen as 'Islamic' by the Hindu background believers. So these are replaced by synonyms from Hindi with a Sanskrit origin, *bhakti*, *pratna*, *mukti*, *mandli*, *Paviter Atma*, *Prebhu*, *Ishvar*, etc.

The Audio Visual Centre has developed appropriate Christian customs and rituals in the languages of Sindh, to be used at major life events to strengthen the believers in their faith. Some of these are rituals for weddings, funerals and naming ceremonies. The centre has also produced cassettes and CD's of new Christian songs in 7 languages, using their cultural style of music and rhythm.

The Ashram Church in Kunri and the Raj Mall Memorial Church in Rattanbad are built in the style of the tribal houses, round with a conical thatched roof. They have prepared a hymnbook with the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer used in worship services.<sup>591</sup>

The above examples clearly demonstrate CoP and FGA are both well integrated in Pakistan through various forms of language, culture and architecture. However, the serious problem of appearing aloof and not part of society remains. In the context of the past being littered with situations of greed, exploitation, oppression, genocide and injustice, Nazir Ali suggests,

Presence, if it is aloof and elitist, is not enough. For presence to be effective and transforming, it must involve identification. Contextualization or inculturation involve not merely the

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<sup>591</sup> The languages include Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Gujarati, Marwari, Kutchi Kohli and many other local languages.

discovery of linguistic and cultural forms into which the Good News may be translated. The whole context is to be engaged in the articulation and the formation of the Christian faith in context. Both the Gospel and the bearers of the Gospel must be allowed to become incarnate in the context in which the Good News is being brought.<sup>592</sup>

Nazir Ali's argument implies that the mere discovery of linguistic and cultural forms is not enough but both the Gospel and the bearers of the Gospel must be allowed to become incarnate in the context. Then the question remains about the Gospel bearers, how much have they incarnated in the context, or not?

### 5.3.2. *Identification versus Alienation in Mission Engagement*

In the task of evaluating mission engagement of the Pakistani churches in relation to the Gospel bearers, the first thing to be mentioned here is that there are some strong evidences which suggest that the majority of Christian presence is alienating.

Historically speaking, the foundation of Christian villages by the missionaries has been seen as a major cause of the ghettoization of Christian presence. For instance, Dominic Moghal while commenting on the European theology and mission asserts that

Since it was convenient for the missionaries to operate out of a parish separate villages and *bastis* were structured on the basis of the western model of a parish. They brought the scattered converts together . . . as a result the religious identity became associated with separateness, which increased the ghettoization of the community. The ghettoization mentality forced Pakistani Christians to be always separate from the rest of the community. Christians moved from Christian village to Christian school to Christian college and then back to these institutions as teachers, professors, pastors and catechists. This process never allowed the Christians a chance to mix with their fellow citizens.<sup>593</sup>

It is worth mentioning here that CoP's presence can be seen strongly in Christian villages. Many of the churches and institutions are situated in prominent locations, such as in village or city centers and so on. Whereas, most of the FGA churches are in ghettoized communities, which has clear implication on their mission engagement. One of the major reasons for this is that there are considerable restrictions on building churches among Muslim communities. The Muslims do not

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<sup>592</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 151

<sup>593</sup> D. Moghal, 'Alienation of the Local People: The Future of Religious Minorities in Pakistan. *Al-Mushir*, 37:2, 1995, 25-41, citing 40

allow it to happen. One of the immediate outcomes is that usually FGA's corporate worship is not witnessed by the majority community.

Another important aspect is the unwillingness of people to identify with the majority community. One of the key informants of FGA said

It's a pity that we don't know how to identify our faith with the majority community. Just think about it, usually if two or three Christians are sitting together and are having a conversation on the Bible. Guess, in the middle of their conversation a Muslim will come. They will immediately close the topic and the next thing is that they would not know how to relate to that person.<sup>594</sup>

Even, if this were true, it is certainly not true for all Pentecostals. It is also worth-mentioning that an opposite response to the above was also evident in FGA. In five focus groups, about 80% of people mentioned 'friendship evangelism' as one of the key mission methods to reach to the majority community. In identification, personal relationships are important. Most people experience the faith through relationships, that is - they encounter the gospel through a community of faith. This signifies that there are people who consistently seek to identify with the people outside the church, which is a good sign of the ability to interact with boldness. Some are doing it as opportunity arises but others are doing it consistently in specific locations. Although many make serious effort to share the message of personal salvation, these efforts are focused solely on the short-term. The difficulty of developing a long-term strategy is still a missing component in FGA thinking.

In one sense, in CoP, identification can be seen in a much stronger form. It is mainly because of the extensive mission through service to the community of hospitals, schools and hostels. Through institutional presence, CoP identifies with other faiths at a much larger and more organized level than FGA. However, this identification suffers, when open proclamation is not given a priority and sometimes that is intentional.

On the one hand, Hyderabad diocese has a strong commitment to the Hindu communities but on other hand it was obvious that there is no well-crafted strategy for reaching to the majority community. Some of the respondents did not hesitate to admit in a group, that they are very fearful and careful when someone from the majority community asks for baptism or wants to join the church fellowship. For

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<sup>594</sup> Participant Identification code\_ LQ\_3.1

example, drawing on his experience one respondent shared how he tried to avoid identifying with a woman from the majority community.

A woman from the majority community who was my wife's colleague in the school was very sick. She sent us a message to pray for her. We prayed and eventually she got healed. Then she came to see me in the church. My first response was that I got very afraid. Second was a question, why has she come here. Then she said to me that she wants to have a small cross to keep in her wallet because she believes that she has been healed by its power. I was even more fearful and thought if her community come to know that I have given her a cross. I can be in a serious trouble. I kept on thinking how should I deal with her and then I got an idea. I said to her, 'I can't give you a cross, let us go and buy it from a Christian shop nearby'. So, we went to the shop and bought her a cross. I thanked God when she left without asking any further details about Christianity.<sup>595</sup>

One respondent from Lahore diocese said that,

If someone from the majority community shows some interest in Christian faith. I am always alarmed and there are times when I refer him to some other clergy or simply do not follow him up because where we live we are heavily surrounded by the radicals. We can have serious consequences of conversions.<sup>596</sup>

Such responses seem firmly locked into an effort for self-survival, which leaves little room for dynamic presence or identification. It raises questions on the element of intentionality and obedience for 'making disciples of all nations' (Matthew 28:18-20).

David Greenlee warns of this possibility in these words, 'Muslims come to faith in Christ – and Christians turn to Muslim faith – not just for 'religious' or intellectual reasons. Various relational, experimental, mystical, and other motives may push or pull them toward change.'<sup>597</sup> In the light of this, there is nothing wrong with discerning the motive of conversion. However, survival or fear should not lead to closing the door but trusting the grace of God who can genuinely and uniquely draw individuals to church. Therefore, the Pakistani Church has to discern and create an ability to communicate and inspire by the Word not only with those who are in the Church but also with those who are not. Such a need is felt even within the diocese. For example, two respondents in key positions of authority said,

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<sup>595</sup> Participant Identification code\_FG1\_DOH

<sup>596</sup> Participant Identification code\_AG\_1.8

<sup>597</sup> D. Greenlee, 'Mission Among Muslims: New Faith, Renewed Identity: How Some Muslims Are Becoming Followers of Jesus' in L. Pachua and K. Jørgensen (eds.) *Witnessing to Christ in a Pluralistic World Christian Mission among Other Faiths*, Oxford: Regnum Books, 2011, 139- 148, citing 140

A certain kind of Christianity has been confined to the *bastis* for so long.<sup>598</sup>

Church needs to work more on its outwards expression of Christian faith and its leadership should make concrete efforts to bring church away from its fortified frame of thinking.<sup>599</sup>

Some other issues of alienation relate to illiteracy and low economic status. Nazir-Ali has named it 'petty apartheid' that is active against the poorer Christians because some of them are sweepers.<sup>600</sup> Most Muslims will not eat or drink, nor use their water tap or even glass of water because the dishes they use will be rendered 'unclean' for Muslim use.<sup>601</sup> This is an 'untouchable' issue but some Islamists are doing this for religious reasons. This can of course, make it difficult to share the Gospel.

In fact, it is not only Muslims who avoid or discriminate against Christians doing menial jobs but Christians themselves avoid any interaction with them. John O'Brien observes that well-to-do Christians avoid social intercourse, even in the Church, with those employed in sweeping.<sup>602</sup> One leader said that,

The discriminatory culture is not only operating in the secular society, it is here in the Church as well, and we have simply sanctified it.<sup>603</sup>

One of the challenges for Hyderabad diocese is that there are cultural and sociological differences and conflicts between Hindu and Punjabi background Christians. A respondent said that

One of the dangerous things is that, the feudal lords oppress the Hindu groups and if the Church is also hating them, then where are the Christian values?. Our golden Punjabi Church is very judgmental in terms of culture. They will say 'our women wear *shalwar kameez* why do they wear *Ghaghara*?'. . . Then Punjabi and Hindu background Christians don't get merry with each other. Although some reformation has taken place due to the diocesan efforts in creating awareness through education and exhortation, still some issues are there.<sup>604</sup>

Based on the evidence of qualitative research and the above discussion of the complexity of the interrelationships between Islam and Christianity and among

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<sup>598</sup> Participant Identification code\_ MR\_1.5

<sup>599</sup> Participant Identification code\_ AI\_1.10

<sup>600</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *Frontiers*, 81

<sup>601</sup> P. Streefland, *The Sweepers of Slaughterhouse, : Conflicts and Survival in a Karachi Neighbourhood*, Assen, Netherland: Van Gorcum, 1979, 14, 28; M. Francis, 'Christianity in Pakistan' in N. Grienanher and N. Mette (eds.) *Christianity and Culture: A Mutual Enrichment*, London: SCM Press, 1994, 65-73, citing 68

<sup>602</sup> J. O'Brien, *The Unconquered*, 139

<sup>603</sup> Participant Identification code\_ MR\_1.5

<sup>604</sup> Participant Identification code\_DF\_2. 3

Christians themselves it is observed that the identification of different groups of people is largely compartmentalized on religious and social bases. It means there are different ways to relate to different people. For example in the above statements, the respondents expressed anxiety about relating to the majority community even when they are searching for truth. On the other side of the spectrum, some also find it difficult to identify with Christian sweepers, with those who have lower economic status or have a Hindu background. How can the Pakistani Church engage in mission effectively with this sort of complexity of interrelationships?

What is true is that the presence of the Gospel and the Spirit should result in integration and reconciliation. The Gospel must be incarnated in every context. The church's engagement with the poor, lowly and marginalized must be an integral part of mission. At the same time it is the demand of the Gospel that it should be intentionally proclaimed to people of all faiths for whom clear identification in friendship is a prerequisite. For mission cannot be done from a place of alienation. 'Ultimately, the enculturation of the Gospel and the identification of Christians and the Church with a particular people or culture is for the purpose of bringing out a transformation and renewal of the people and culture.'<sup>605</sup>

#### **5.4. Mission as Action**

The Christians in the early Church were known for their generosity and involvement with the needy. Throughout history, there has been a recognition of the responsibility of the Church towards the poor. Nazir-Ali in his book has mentioned a growing constituency in the churches, which, while acknowledging the necessity of presence and identification, believes that they are not sufficient if the wholeness of God's love is to be communicated to the contemporary world. Therefore, he points out two important themes, first the 'love for the poor'. He suggests that this category extends beyond the material poor to include exiles, widows, orphans and the sick. Second is that of 'love of poverty', this involves exhortations to the rich to share their wealth with the poor, the alien and the sick.<sup>606</sup>

In this perspective, he points to the holistic view of mission, variously termed 'integral evangelism', 'mission as transformation' or 'integral mission.' These terms

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<sup>605</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 161

<sup>606</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 170

are defined as an 'understanding of mission and evangelism that brings together proclamation of the gospel and seeking repentance and conversion, with involvement in action for justice and seeking to bring social transformation to structures and communities.'<sup>607</sup> In other words, the emphasis is on addressing the whole of human needs. In this connection, Nazir-Ali refers to various aspects of ministry, which include prayer, service, advocacy and struggle for those who need justice and compassion in the wider society.

For the sake of an evaluation of mission engagement of Pakistani churches there is a need to ask: are Pakistani churches engaged in integral mission at all? If so, how is this evident in different aspects of their ministries such as prayer, service, advocacy, and struggle for those in need? How is the social transformation of structures and communities to be effected through their mission engagement? Another important question that needs to be raised in the context of the service of the Pakistani churches is: are the Pakistani churches genuinely involved in social action or are they merely wanting to be a beneficiary of the social actions of the foreign affluent churches?

#### *5.4.1. Commitment to Social Action in CoP and FGA*

Chapter 4 has already pointed out that the CoP and FGA have both committed themselves to social action. The theological positions of CoP and FGA regarding the place of social action in mission have also been identified. It is seen that Hyderabad diocese and FGA are driven by an evangelical approach. For both of them evangelism is the priority, followed by social action.

Meanwhile, Lahore diocese under Bishop Malik's leadership has not been setting any priorities between evangelism and social action. However, based on the field data it has been discovered that with Bishop Jamil's predominately evangelical approach the diocese is going through a transitional phase. Nevertheless, it is also true that some of the parishes are still driven by an ecumenical approach.

#### *5.4.2. Ministries of Prayer, Service and Advocacy*

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<sup>607</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 112

In the present milieu, the Church is faced with a variety of social challenges such as, social oppression, poverty, illiteracy, injustice, terrorism, and caste and gender discrimination and so on. It is observed that the ministry of prayer is a consistent feature of mission engagement both for CoP and FGA. Prayer is playing a major role in building up, sustaining and maintaining the ministries of the denominations.

At least in theory, the Lahore diocese has strongly committed itself to a five-fold mission. It would not be wrong to suggest that this commitment is evident in most of its ministries. However, some serious concerns may remain in mission practice. While showing strong commitment to mission, at the international consultation on mission and evangelism Bishop Malik concluded his address with the following words,

In this broken world . . . death and destruction reigns . . . millions are hungry, sick and homeless . . . millions are orphaned . . . the world where millions are deprived of quality of life due to economic disparity and unjust distribution of wealth and resources; how can we, the Church, give the Christian message of life and fullness and wholeness? . . . We will continue the five-fold mission and evangelism by proclamation (*Kerygma*), by service (*Diakonia*), by fellowship (*Koinonia*), by witness (*Marturia*) and by dialogue. Activities in the fields of human rights, to speak and advocate for the rights of women, children, minorities and for those who are oppressed and socially discriminated . . . should be encouraged and strengthened.<sup>608</sup>

This indicates that the diocese had an intention to offer a message of life, fullness and wholeness. How much of this fullness and wholeness is demonstrated in mission practice? It is important to acknowledge that the diocese has various ministries of service in education, health and rehabilitation, and entrepreneurial economics. The diocese has also shown great commitment to advocacy that is acknowledged on national and international levels. Bishop Malik has been awarded *Sitara-e-Imtiaz* (highest civilian honour from the Government of Pakistan) for his outstanding public services. As the voice of the Church, Bishop Malik has worked alongside various leaders and institutions for de-nationalization of the educational institutions, for representations of minorities in the Senate and amendments of the discriminatory laws.<sup>609</sup> Along with others, he has appeared several times in the media and has persuasively spoken against the discrimination against the Christian community. At times such as these, he has not only represented the Lahore diocese

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<sup>608</sup> A. Malik, 'Mission and Evangelism in the Present Day World' in *Mission and Evangelism, International Conference*, Lahore, DOL 2000, 13-26, citing 24-25

<sup>609</sup> E. Massey, 'The Footprints' citing 12



but the whole of the Pakistani Church. This has been a matter of some pride for the Christian community. Certainly, this is a remarkable strength of the Lahore diocese.

Then the next question is, has this vision of five-fold mission penetrated or rooted in all the parishes? Are there any clear routes for individuals or communities to follow? How is the diocesan strategy maintaining a significant place for the proclamation of the gospel and seeking repentance and conversion along with social transformation? As seen above the key informants of the diocese have clearly shared that 'conversion is not our goal.'<sup>610</sup> The overall vast range of the diocesan ministry is significant. However, in being consistent to the commitment to integral mission, through prayer, advocacy and service, there has been a distinct tendency to lose the intention to preach, seek repentance and conversion clearly and strongly. This damages the integral and holistic mission of the diocese. Then it also raises questions about following the diocesan five-fold mission.

Returning back to the key themes of 'love for the poor' and 'love of poverty' they need to be reconsidered. Elitism in mission engagement is not desirable but humble service is. Unfortunately, many within the diocese cannot see humble service. Therefore, there is a criticism from within the diocese that the diakonia ministry has been lost as the essence of Christian mission. In the context of this discussion, one of the key informants seemed increasingly dissatisfied with the current institutional service when he said that,

Our diakonia has become a business - a ministry of investment. 80 to 90 percent of our service sector is for income generation. These institutions were invented as a means to serve. Where is the heart to serve? How can we do mission on the 'most dangerous spot of the earth'? I hold that the mission can't be done from the helicopters by throwing food bundles down on the needy people. The divine formula is of presence and service leading to relationship and eventually to proclamation. 90% of our preaching is in the house, we are preaching to ourselves. Then the security guards locks the Church gates so that the terrorist would not come in to bomb us. Who needs God more? They don't need bread only; who is going to evangelize them? I know it is very hard for us to breathe here but we have to continue. We have to build up our Christian presence and become a living community. We have to strengthen our social economic viability along with strong prayer life and commitment to our faith. <sup>611</sup>

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<sup>610</sup> Participant Identification code\_ AM\_1.2, SM\_1.6

<sup>611</sup> Participant Identification code\_MR\_1.5

This would leave many frustrated for the institutions which were designed to save the poor and serve the purpose of Christ are no longer fit for purpose; at best they maintain their secular goals rather than saving people. For example, there is a tendency in the institutions of the diocese that suggests that fivefold mission is not strongly rooted in the diocese. Many seem still unaware of it, or if they know it they are reluctant to follow out its consequences. They are simply happy to carry out the straightforward tasks of their position of authority. For example in response to a vision for social action, some mentioned views like 'I just work here'. Yet, fundamentally, the institutions are not only there to provide jobs but for witness and service for transforming the larger society.

Then, there is a tendency to see mission as something to maintain. For example, one of the key respondent said that

We are doing so much, if we are able to maintain it, it should be considered more than enough.<sup>612</sup>

Yet, this can be misinterpreted and therefore can mislead. Is maintenance enough while engaging in mission? If not, what else is required? Should there be any distinction between maintenance and mission? For, maintenance is generally seen as something static and unproductive, whereas mission is dynamic and challenging.<sup>613</sup> Significantly, maintenance for the sake of itself can blur the mission engagement. However, it does not always carry a negative meaning. A consistent discerning of the evangelistic purpose of presence through parishes and institutional mission can help towards meaningful mission engagement. This can help set the direction clear for engagement with the world. For mission engagement requires daily intentional decisions and commitment to a rapidly changing world, which also requires a discerning of God's will for the context.

This brings a challenge for the diocese to revive and renew its vision on a consistent basis for the intentional dynamic mission practice. It also requires it to take significant steps through which this fivefold vision of mission could become deeply

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<sup>612</sup> Participant Identification code\_IJ\_1.1

<sup>613</sup> Presence and Prophecy: A Heart for Mission in Theological Education, London: Church House Publishing, n.d. 28

rooted in each and every ministry of the diocese. Being a strong agent of social transformation, most importantly the diocesan strategy has to give a significant place to evangelization in its mission engagement by rooting it in every parish and institution.

Hyderabad diocese has played a significant role in social action. There has been a tradition of evangelization, service and advocacy in the region for the last 150 years, as the Sindh has been a mission field of CMS since mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Since its formation in 1980 the Hyderabad diocese has been serving Hindu people sincerely and faithfully through establishing parishes, schools, hostels, hospitals and community development projects in rural Sindh. The purpose of the diocesan presence is to uplift, support and empower the marginalized communities of Sindh in order to express the love of God through word and deed. Some Christian charitable organizations are working closely with the diocese to fulfill this vision.<sup>614</sup>

The diocese of Hyderabad has a comprehensive understanding of holistic or integral mission. There are two major reasons for this. There has been missionary presence in the diocese over a long time. As a result, different kinds of mission trainings have been available. There have been times when missionaries outnumbered the local clergy, for example in 1989; there were 23 clergy and 30 missionaries in the diocese.<sup>615</sup> The second, recent, and probably more important factor is that the diocese has initiated an integral mission project in 2012 with the support of Tearfund UK. Different techniques are being used to increase the understanding of integral mission. These include workshops, Bible studies, courses, exposure mission trips and follow-up visits.<sup>616</sup>

The diocese is committed to social transformation through its ministries. For instance, the Primary Education Project (hereafter PEP) is working in 84 villages of the marginalized communities of rural Sindh and making a significant impact. PEP's work is highly significant due to the following disturbing facts:

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<sup>614</sup> Primary Education Project work is being financially supported by Kids Rights, Church World Service, Tearfund UK, Tear Australia and global giving. Hostel project is being supported by Tearfund UK KNH Germany, Love Trust Korea, Church of Scotland, Kherwara Mission Denmark.

<sup>615</sup> Bishop Jiwan's Report, cited by P. Sultan, *Church*, 195 & 205

<sup>616</sup> H. Gull et al, Evaluation Report of 'Integral Mission', DOH: CoP, February 2015

From the four provinces in Pakistan, Sindh rates the lowest for the percentage of students completing primary school at about 43%. This means half of the children in Sindh are out of schools. The overall literacy rate in Sindh is 59% . . . Only 50% of students aged 5-15 are enrolled in schools, and around 70% of girls have never attended school. Rural areas suffer greatly due to a lack of accessibility to quality schools which is why PEP focuses on female and minority enrollment to serve this neglected population by building schools in their own villages with baselines for girls' enrollments.<sup>617</sup>

PEP is using interactive learning resources, and other materials that encourage a positive learning environment for students. In addition to the government subjects, PEP students learn about peace education, financial education, community health, and disaster risk reduction.

Additionally, in rural Sindh poverty is widespread. Due to this, many parents struggle to provide children with good food and clean drinking water, healthy living space, quality education and recreational activities. Considering the need, Hyderabad diocese took an initiative 25 years ago to start a hostel project to empower marginalized children. Since then thousands of children have benefited from the hostel project. Many of the children are working in all areas of life including spiritual, educational, physical and social.<sup>618</sup>

The diocese has a strong commitment to evangelization because of the presence of Hindu and animist Hindu communities. Kohlis, Bhils and Megwars are the main groups among the Hindus and they live as semi-nomadic communities throughout Sindh. They are extremely oppressed groups and are exploited by the landlords of the area. Most of them work as *Haris* (labourers or sharecroppers).<sup>619</sup>

Sindh has a very strong feudal system of landlords who claim to own the people who work on their farms. Sharecroppers are totally dependent on them for their needs. Many respondents shared disturbing stories of how badly these Hindus are treated by the landlords. Some have worked their whole lives for the landlords but they are not paid even once in their lifetime. The landlords usually don't object to the conversion of the Hindus, nor to their worshipping together as long as the Hindus continues working for them. In the past, during Bishop Jiwan's time, the diocese has

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<sup>617</sup> Primary Education Project (<http://www.primaryeducationproject.org/why-education.html>; accessed April 2015)

<sup>618</sup> H. Gull et al, Hostels Evaluation Report, Hostel Project, DOH: CoP, February 2015, 4-5

<sup>619</sup> P. Sultan, *Church*, 273

paid a ransom to rescue some of the labourers.<sup>620</sup> Some clergy are still engaged in advocacy for the oppressed with some success. This is helping with discipleship and education for the children in some places. However, the landlords are seriously threatened when the diocese takes an initiative for developing the oppressed. For example the landlords are not happy with the diocesan effort of educating people. For educated people would not be willing to work as their labourers.

There are several other challenges for the diocesan service that are worth mentioning here. The Hindus are often nomadic and are not a permanently settled group, due to their consistent migration the diocese face challenges of relocating these groups. Pervaiz Sultan has identified some more problems, for instance, the poor communities of Sindh do not value education and pay little attention to hygiene and other living conditions. They have also developed a practice of depending on the diocesan funds, thinking that they have special rights and privileges as converts. Due to these challenges sometimes the prophetic task of advocacy has failed.<sup>621</sup>

The diocese has several financial issues, due to which there is considerable strain on its service and advocacy ministries. For instance, due to lack of funds five schools have been closed down recently. The diocese has a history of securing grants and funds for its ministry, which are no longer available. Although the internal fellowship ministry in the church is self-sufficient the social action has been and still is much dependent on foreign funds. This dependence is a serious challenge for diocesan mission engagement. With all the funding and vibrant ministry in the past 25 years the diocese has not been yet able to become self-sufficient in its finances.

Most respondents agreed that there are huge needs in Sindh. People are poor, many are illiterate and the living and weather conditions are very hard. So, when one goes out to evangelize, people expect material benefits as well. The clergy or *munads* (catechists) cannot meet their needs all the time due to their own limited resources. However, this does not mean that they don't want to help because often they use their own resources to reach out to the nomadic. One respondent commented,

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<sup>620</sup> Participant Identification code\_DF\_2.3

<sup>621</sup> P. Sultan, *Church*, 194

Hyderabad is a new diocese and mission area, poor as it does not have inherited infrastructure or wealth and in one of the poorest areas of the country where educational levels have been very low.<sup>622</sup>

Then, it is a very real question whether a poor diocese can help a poor community. Nazir-Ali convincingly speaks of the grass root groups in connection with 'strengthening of the poor', to quote his words;

One secret of the success of these groups is the model of interdependence, which they exhibit. Here it is the poor who enable the poor, the poor who pleads for others who are poor, the poor who lead in worship, celebration and reflection. In this respect they represent a recovery of New Testament models of interdependence. We do not know if the Christians in Antioch who sent help to the church in Jerusalem were poor or rich (Acts 11:27-30), but we do know that the Macedonian Christians helped that church *out of their poverty* (2 Corinthians 8:1-5). Perhaps more importantly St. Paul develops his teaching on interdependence among Christians and churches on the basis of this example set by the Macedonians.<sup>623</sup>

This Biblical example of interdependence is a model that can strengthen the diocesan ministry so that it can continue. However, that is not enough; at the same time, there remains a ministry of the wider Church to strengthen the ministry of the poor. For instance, in the household of CoP, Lahore diocese with its financial stability can demonstrate its 'love for the poor' and 'love of poverty' by supporting the diocese of Hyderabad.

#### 5.4.3. *Service and Advocacy in FGA*

Chapter 4 has already seen that FGA is committed to becoming an instrument of the kingdom of God in Christ through word and deed. This also suggests that in FGA's understanding of mission, social action has a key place. Over the years, FGA has been committed to social service through its orphanages, educational services, a vocational training center and community development projects.

Unlike CoP, FGA has avoided establishing large medical and educational institutions. Instead, they have focused more on small projects. These services have had major positive influences in propagating and promoting the Gospel message as well as meeting the needs of the oppressed, sick and poor. FGA ministries have been

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<sup>622</sup> Participant Identification code\_ JH\_2.2

<sup>623</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 171

significant, with an aim to 'uplift the poorer communities'. These services are irrespective of caste, creed or race. These welfare ministries among FGA have been and are mainly evident through the efforts and partnership of Swedish Pentecostal churches and missionaries. These services are mainly in these forms: medical dispensaries, hostels for orphans, training and equipping boys and girls with a basic trade and literacy training programmes for the illiterate and uneducated.

There are significant Pentecostal encounters with Islam too. In relation to folk Islam Nazir-Ali has mentioned ecstatic dancing at cultic shrines, spirit possession and magic. He writes that 'the ministry of exorcism is widely sought after in the Muslim world. Properly exercised by authorised ministries of the Church, it can come as a healing and liberating experience.'<sup>624</sup> It must be acknowledged that FGA has historically played a significant role in serving and transforming the society with physical and mental healing and exorcism. Many respondents of FGA have shared in their ministries on these lines in the focus groups in Faisalabad and Lahore. It is also reported that sometimes CoP clergy sought ministerial support from FGA for exorcism.<sup>625</sup>

Nazir-Ali has also pointed out that the Roman Catholic Church in many countries, is actively encouraging the emergence of a 'Christian shrine cult' as a response to the popularity of the shrines of Muslim saints.<sup>626</sup> In this regard, a prominent strength of FGA is that it is on the frontline in questioning the enculturation of such practices. Additionally it is critically engaged in communities through teaching them and working on their spiritual character.

Concerning the financial aspect of the social action, in similarity with Hyderabad diocese FGA is struggling to maintain its services. For example, the medical dispensaries have been closed down due to lack of funds. It is significant that most of the churches of FGA are self-supporting but the idea of supporting the center with finances is alien for the local churches. So far, the center has failed to motivate its

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<sup>624</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 180

<sup>625</sup> Participant Identification code\_ FG1, FG2, FG3\_FGA\_Q3

<sup>626</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 181

own churches to give to the center. Until recently, on the denominational level most of the social action have been operating through Swedish and other foreign partners.

In a similar manner, Hyderabad diocese is facing such a situation. Pervaiz Sultan has pointed out the financial issues in his research on Hyderabad diocese. He writes,

There is a general tendency among all Christians, including most of the padres (pastors) to look to the Diocesan support even for local activities in the parishes. This does not help lower the level of dependency on overseas grants. It takes a lot of persuasion to invite people to participate financially in the work of the Diocese. This, of course, is not only a Hyderabad Diocesan problem as people in other dioceses . . . also have the same tendency in this regard.<sup>627</sup>

So, there is a tendency in both CoP and FGA to seek financial support from the center for arranging local activities. Due to this, the churches still have to rely on foreign support via the center for their social services. There is a great need at this time that both diocesan and congregational strategy should set aside a certain percentage of the returns on their investment to invest in church-based social ventures.

Regarding holistic mission, the understanding of FGA seems weaker than CoP. There were a very few participants who mentioned holistic mission in their understanding of mission. For example, one key informant said,

I believe in holistic mission, which is aimed at bringing transformation to spiritual as well as social dimensions of human life.<sup>628</sup>

Such responses spark hope. However, in comparison to CoP, an understanding of holistic or integral mission is stronger in Hyderabad diocese among the clergy than it is in FGA. However, it also varies among the parishes. Similarly, the Lahore diocesan center has demonstrated a clear understanding of holistic mission but the idea has not penetrated at the parish level yet. One of the major reasons is that as a minority movement the Pakistani Church is overwhelmed with the injustices and discrimination that are active against her. Therefore, overall, the Christian community is self-absorbed rather than opening eyes to the social and economic injustices on a wider level. The understanding of holistic mission can be developed

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<sup>627</sup> P. Sultan, *Church*, 194

<sup>628</sup> Participant Identification code\_ TW\_3.9



at the grass roots through adult education, seminars and training courses but it all needs financing, of course.

It is one of the serious challenges for FGA to engage in holistic mission. For example, advocacy is not one of the priorities of FGA. FGA has not spoken against blasphemy laws or social discrimination against Christians in the past. It is worth mentioning that such an engagement has only recently begun to happen. In FGA, some have started voicing their concerns against social evils like corruption, terrorism and injustice in their monthly magazine.<sup>629</sup>

Dhan Prakash has looked into the place of social action among Pentecostals and he has indicated that the 'Pentecostals have viewed social concern not in terms of changing social structures but in terms of personal transformation.'<sup>630</sup> FGA's encounter with folk Islam, Christian shrine cults and community are more or less on the lines of personal transformation. Prakash has also indicated a dichotomy between social concern and evangelism among Pentecostals. He says, that 'the movement from its inception has found it difficult to integrate its ministry of evangelism with social responsibility. There exists a false dichotomy between Spiritual and secular, eternal and temporal.'<sup>631</sup> Debra Buenting has disclosed the implications of this dualism as 'separating the Spiritual and the physical', which has resulted in a split Christian mind.<sup>632</sup>

Despite the better understanding and practice of integral mission in CoP, it is noteworthy that a dichotomy between Spiritual and secular also exists within CoP. A couple of respondents mentioned that among lay people generally earning money is considered as a secular work, whereas going to church is considered holy.<sup>633</sup> Dealing with a split Christian mind is a challenge for both the denominations, to a greater or lesser extent. Breaking this dichotomy through discipleship is an

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<sup>629</sup> For example see, L. Qaiser, 'But this is According to the Law' *Satoon-e-Haq* 25:10, Oct 2013, 2 ; L. Qaiser, 'Condemnation or Greetings' *Satoon-e-Haq* 27:4, April 2015, 4; L. Qaiser 'One More Fresh Wound' in *Satoon-e-Haq* 26:11, November, 2014, 4

<sup>630</sup> D. Prakash 'Toward A Theology Of Social Concern: A Pentecostal Perspective' *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 13:1 2010, 65-97, citing 66

<sup>631</sup> D. Prakash 'Toward A Theology Of Social Concern', citing 67

<sup>632</sup> D. Buenting, 'Evangelicals and Social Action: : YWAM's Adoption of Kingdom Mission', *IJFM*, 15-19, citing, 16

<sup>633</sup> Participant Identification code\_DF\_2.3 & Participant Identification code\_IG\_1.8

essential step for the Pakistani church, so that the whole community can engage in mission in their work place and neighbourhood.

There are challenges for both CoP and FGA if they are to continue advocacy in the complex and increasingly demanding context of Pakistan. The task is huge and both CoP and FGA need to take concrete steps consistent with their church's vision, beliefs and capacity for building at the grass roots level. The local churches should give congregations and communities the opportunity to develop skills and flourish, to prepare them for greater social action. This is how mission engagement at grass root level can be most effective. D. Buenting has put it very well,

Charity alone fails to deal with the core systems that allow evil to flourish. It is one thing to feed people, rebuild their homes, or try to heal the emotional or physical wounds of war, sexual abuse or ethnic prejudice. It is another thing to fight the systems that contributed to these circumstances . . . our God-given responsibility is not to fight all the battles ourselves, but to empower individuals and communities to fight the battles they face uniquely. Should we not proclaim a message that frees all human beings to be all that God intended them to be—full participants in their destiny as co-creators in God's universe, nurturing a spirit of truth and love to flow everywhere and through everyone? <sup>634</sup>

Beside, prayer, service and advocacy the situation may require church leaders to meet with the Government and to discern what is needed to allow the Church to enter the social settings for delivering and grouping public services in holistic provision.

## **5.5. Mission as Dialogue**

As mentioned earlier in chapter 2, Nazir-Ali has identified six forms of dialogue.<sup>635</sup> There is, for example, the dialogue where the primary purpose is for partners to learn from each other and through other people by an exchange of information. This involves meeting people of other faiths, listening to their accounts of faith and sharing with them the Christian account of faith.

The second form of dialogue focuses not so much on exchange of information but how each partner is nurtured in this life by their own tradition. This is a dialogue

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<sup>634</sup> D. Buenting, 'Evangelicals and Social Action' citing 18

<sup>635</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 164-167 & M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 114-117, M. Nazir-Ali, *Mission and Dialogue: Proclaiming the Gospel Afresh in Every Age*, London: SPCK, 1995, 81-83

about the interior life; this is sharing mystical experiences. These experiences are evaluated in particular theological, psychological and philosophical ways by different religious traditions.

The third, form of dialogue that is assuming greater significance these days, has to do with the building up of community. This can be at very basic levels such as self-help projects in local communities or could be at a world level in which people of different faiths meet together to address common problems. This is held to be an essential element in promoting proper integration.

Fourth, is a dialogue that occurs on the basis of common humanity. This is about identifying and being committed to fundamental human freedoms, such as freedom of expression and of belief.

Fifth, there can be dialogue of scholars in a highly structured form, for example as the dialogue between Al-Azhar, the premier place of Sunni learning in Cairo, and the Roman Catholic Church or the Anglican Communion.

Sixth, the most important, is called 'the dialogue of life' that is to say, the daily conversation and mutual learning that goes among one of neighbours or colleagues and even family members at work or study. In all these forms, one of the purposes of dialogue is to witness. Nazir Ali says,

In the Christian use of the term 'dialogue', therefore, there has always been an element of witness and of persuasion . . . There can be no coercion, of course, nor should there be any manipulation, but dialogue would be meaningless unless we were able, with sensitivity and love to bear witness . . . and what we long to do for our partners in dialogue.<sup>636</sup>

Carrying out Christian mission through dialogue means inviting our partners in the quest for truth to take Jesus Christ as the clue, which leads to the unraveling of the mystery of our existence.<sup>637</sup>

This gives rise to many genuine questions about how dialogue is taking place between Pakistani churches and people of other faiths. Is it in the form of exchanging information or nurturing spirituality dialogue or the highly structured form of

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<sup>636</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 116

<sup>637</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 182

dialogue of scholars? Most important how is 'the dialogue of life' taking place? Does the Pakistani Church understand the value and benefit of dialogue for nurturing their life and the life of their partners - or think of dialogue as something unnecessary?

### *5.5.1. A Brief Historical Overview*

The Indo-Pak has a long history of engaging in mission through debates (*Munazras*) and dialogue (*Mukalama*). From the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, debates between Christians and Muslims were a common and favourite activity. Indeed, well before this, the Great Akbar was very fond of listening to such debates. Due to his interfaith interest, from the mid-1570s, he instituted weekly religious discussions in a specially built structure called the *Ibadatkhana*, (hall of worship).<sup>638</sup> The Jesuits of the Roman Catholic Church engaged in debates with Muslim scholars.

Later the Agra debate was held in 1854 between the Muslim religious scholars, led by Rehmat Ullah and the German missionary Carl Pfander, who was assisted by Thomas Valpy French who later became First Bishop of Lahore in 1877.<sup>639</sup> Engagement through these debates generated heat and hatred at times. Nevertheless, there were two famous conversions after these debates. Safdar Ali was baptised in 1864 and Imad-ud-din (1830-1866) in 1866. Later many local converts from Islam to Christianity joined in the debates. The most distinguished ones were Maulvi Padri Abdul Haq, Maulana Sultan Mohammad Paul, Allama Barkat Ullah, Akbar Masih, Maulvi Hashmat Ullah, Barkat A. Khant and many more. With such a strong historical encounter of Christianity and Islam, the Church in Pakistan has continued to be engaged in dialogue on a number of fronts.

### *5.5.2. Forms of Dialogue in CoP*

In recent times the Lahore diocese has been actively engaged in different forms of dialogue such as exchange of information, nurturing, dialogue commitment to fundamental human freedoms (such as freedom of expression, of belief, of worship and family life) and structured dialogue between scholars. During the Lambeth Conference in 2008 Bishop Malik joined an English Bishop in representing the

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<sup>638</sup> S. Neill, *The History of the Indian Church*, (n.p. n.d.)167

<sup>639</sup> M. Able and F. Carey, *History*, 79-81

Anglican communion at a press conference and then after two years succeeded Bishop Nazir-Ali , as Co-Chair of the Anglican al-Azhar Dialogue.<sup>640</sup> The diocese has organized an international Consultation on interfaith dialogue in 2009, which covered the following topics;<sup>641</sup>

- The Brokenness of the World and Restoring Humanity's Wholeness
- Christian Evangelism, Concepts of Uniqueness and Finality as Potential Hindrances Towards Inter-faith dialogue
- Wholeness

The diocese has been committed to fundamental human freedoms and has expressed its desire for peace and stability in the region and a peaceful world order. For example, the diocese has condemned the unwarranted occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, and drone attacks on Pakistan. It has also manifested solidarity with the people of Kashmir.<sup>642</sup> The diocese has played a key role in dialogue, which has been acknowledged on provincial, national and international levels and also among other Christian denominations and different sects of Islam.<sup>643</sup>

There are different opinions in the Lahore diocese for and against dialogue. Some of the respondents considered dialogue to be a crucial tool for mission engagement.<sup>644</sup> Others do not consider it of much value and are pessimistic about it. According to one of the key respondents,

... Intelligentsia of the Christian community are more driven towards interfaith dialogue. Whatever that will achieve I don't know. But dioceses and every church seems to have a committee on interfaith. And they invite leaders of different religious groups and you know it is a time of talking about how we should be tolerant towards one another and these sort of things. But nothing comes out of that. If there is a riot against Christians ... there is very little result of the dialogue. I mean the idea of this interfaith dialogue is to provide people with an understanding of the other person's worldview. But again it is limited to meetings and tea parties and those types of things do not find ways into the Kingdom.<sup>645</sup>

Hyderabad diocese's mission engagement through dialogue is not as prominent on the national and international level as that of Lahore diocese. Some of the respondents showed a great concern that the diocese has been so occupied with its

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<sup>640</sup> R. Khan, Message for Bishop Alexander in E. Massey (ed.) *Bishop Alexander John*, 42-43

<sup>641</sup> Papers of the Consultation Taken From the Bishop's Office, Lahore

<sup>642</sup> E. Massey, 'The Footprints' citing, 11-12

<sup>643</sup> E. Massey (ed.), *Bishop Alexander John Malik*, citing 17-50

<sup>644</sup> Participant Identification code\_ SM\_1.6 & AI\_1.10

<sup>645</sup> Participant Identification code\_ MA\_1.13

internal ministry of evangelism and service that it has not given much attention to participation to the wider issues on the national level.<sup>646</sup> In addition, the structural dialogue of scholars is not much evident in that diocese. However, some other forms of dialogue are taking place such as exchange of information, nurturing, dialogue committed to fundamental human freedoms (such as freedom of expression of belief, of worship and family life etc.).

The most frequent form of dialogue is taking place in the villages between Hindus and diocesan mission workers. It usually occurs in the evenings. Some respondents shared their stories of encountering Hinduism. One told about his experience of the early days of diocesan formation, he said,

We used to go to Hindu villages at night, Hindus are up all night. When we would arrive there, the villagers would call their religious leader. We would all sit together. They would explain their faith through singing *bhajans* (songs). Then we would explain our faith. Through this dialogue, people used to perceive that which faith is the better one. Finally, some would decide to follow Jesus. <sup>647</sup>

This kind of exchange of information, nurturing dialogue is still taking place in the diocese. Some people are engaged in dialogue with the Sindhi landlords about the fundamental human freedoms of the oppressed in the villages. It must be mentioned here that currently the diocesan strategy of Hyderabad diocese does not hold any special place for dialogue. Mostly people are engaged in dialogue on their personal initiative.

### 5.5.3. *Forms of Dialogue in FGA*

FGA Mission engagement through dialogue is not at government or international level as it is in the diocese of Lahore. However, there are some significant examples of dialogue taking place at grass roots level. The most consistent form of dialogue in FGA has been in the form of the dialogue of life. There are some issues of alienation in the Pakistani Church but a dialogue of life has been carried on in both CoP and FGA. In some communities, there are instances of Christian Muslim exchanges of visits on feast days, birthdays, and weddings; this has developed concern, respect and hospitality.

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<sup>646</sup> Participant Identification codes\_ JH\_2.2; PS\_2.10

<sup>647</sup> Participant Identification code\_DF\_2.3

Muslims have been invited to attend different programmes of FGA on special occasions. Here FGA has also taken the opportunity to witness and distribute Bibles. On these occasions, exchange of information has taken place. Recently, apologetics and interfaith studies have been a consistent part of the Bible college curriculum. In connection with that, some students have started a dialogue through social media, such as Facebook and Twitter. This youth initiative seems promising, as recently some young leaders and Bible schoolteachers participated in a forum, where they were given an opportunity to interact with Muslim scholars. This has been covered on a News channel as well. This signifies that FGA has begun to take structured dialogue as part of their mission engagement agenda seriously.

FGA's monthly magazine is also a forum for dialogue. The magazine has some regular Muslim readers, who continually interact with the editor and their letters have been published frequently. Many times these are in the form of simple testimonies but how they have come to appreciate Christian spiritual truths through the magazine title page, which normally depicts Biblical stories or images such as Cross, Calvary, Shepherd, or Pentecost or its contents. Such testimonies indicate that *Satoon-e-Haq* is facilitating the dialogue of exchange of information and the dialogue of common humanity. Some of the comments of Muslim readers are as following.

I liked your article 'New Heart and New Spirit'. I am appreciative that your magazine only publishes spiritual material and it has never published anything unethical.<sup>648</sup>

Your magazine is beautiful, informative and free of any kind of prejudice. You just write about religious or educational stuff. It is the most beautiful thing that you want to see Pakistan as a civilized society. This is my prayer that Allah would abundantly bless you.<sup>649</sup>

The above discussion has shown that both CoP and FGA are engaged in different forms of dialogue. Nazir-Ali asserts that 'dialogue at every level has its own justification and it is not necessary to sacrifice one for the sake of the other. Rather, they need to be held together so that their cumulative benefit can be experienced by individuals, communities, nationally and even internationally.'<sup>650</sup>

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<sup>648</sup> 'Editor's Mail' *Satoon-e-Haq*, 27:2, Feb 2015, 26

<sup>649</sup> Editor's Mail' *Satoon-e-Haq*, 24:7, July 2012, 24

<sup>650</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 117

Thus, it is not a mistake to conclude that overall, dialogue of all the above-mentioned forms is occurring in Pakistani churches. Still there are many within the churches who think of dialogue as something unnecessary. So, it is a challenge for both CoP and FGA to convince their congregations and leaders that is not the case. With the desperate need for greater national integration and harmony, the task of dialogue is ever more urgent and crucial. On the one hand, the Pakistani Church can overcome its alienation and on the other hand, it can engage and witness to the people of other faiths through dialogue. Nazir Ali advises that,

... there can be no authentic Christian witness without prior dialogue. Unless we understand people's beliefs, their culture, the idiom of that culture, their thought forms, the intellectual tradition, the artistic tradition, the faith tradition, unless we understand these we will not be able to witness to people authentically as Christians. . . dialogue is not only preparatory to witness, *it is also a means to witness.*<sup>651</sup>

## 5.6. Mission as Evangelism

The above discussion has shown that the Church exercises her missionary vocation in a number of different ways - through presence, identification, service and dialogue. The discussion in this chapter on the mission engagement of the Pakistani Church stands in agreement with the thesis of Nazir-Ali that all these have 'an evangelistic dimension in that they bring the Gospel into encounter with individuals and communities.'<sup>652</sup>

Christian presence is for the sake of witness and commitment to the wholeness of mission and to its integrity. It will always lead to opportunities for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Evangelism or proclamation is a necessary aspect of mission; therefore Nazir-Ali has called it a 'crown' of mission because he believes that in the course of mission the church is pointing beyond herself to the one who is the source of mission engagement.<sup>653</sup>

He argues that

True evangelism, then, is not just about making people aware of their shortcomings and bringing them to repentance, but it is also about that assurance that springs from faith in

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<sup>651</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *Mission and Dialogue: Proclaiming the Gospel Afresh in Every Age*, London: SPCK, 1995, 82-83

<sup>652</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 182

<sup>653</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 117



what God has revealed, and trust in the one who has given us this knowledge of his purpose for us.<sup>654</sup>

Another dimension that he highlights is:

evangelism is truly educational in the sense that it brings out what is deeply implanted in the soul . . . the rusty mirror of the heart is polished up again so that it can reflect that divine image so completely revealed in Christ. Evangelism is not the whole of mission but without it our mission is not complete . . . Even as the Church takes the gospel to the world, it is also continually being evangelized by it.<sup>655</sup>

This brings forth a most crucial question: are Pakistani churches crowning their mission engagement with evangelism? Are they conscious of, and intentional in, the evangelistic dimension? If so, how are they adding the evangelistic aspects to their various activities? Above all how is the Church being evangelized by the gospel itself?

#### *5.6.1. COP: Crowning Mission Engagement with Evangelism*

Lahore diocese has given a phenomenal place to evangelization in its consultations and resources. The contents of a consultation include;<sup>656</sup>

- Mission and Evangelism in the Present Day World
- Evangelism and Contextualization
- Holistic Evangelism
- Women and Evangelism
- Media and Evangelism
- Evangelism and the local church
- Interfaith Dialogue and Evangelism

It shows that the diocese is very well aware of the evangelistic dimension in its mission engagement. It has been seen earlier that Bishop Malik who has been more influenced by the liberal or ecumenical approach has run the Lahore diocese for 32 years. Evangelism and social action have been and (are still) considered equally important.

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<sup>654</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 119

<sup>655</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 120

<sup>656</sup> Mission and Evangelism, International Conference 2000, Consultation on Mission and Evangelism, Papers of International Consultation on Interfaith Dialogue 2009

In the field studies, only a few respondents in the Lahore diocese expressed their strong commitment to evangelism through verbal proclamation.<sup>657</sup> Most of the respondents stressed ministry through service a lot more than evangelism or disciple making.<sup>658</sup> For most, an engagement through social action can speak louder than words. Practically, most find it difficult and awkward for the church to add evangelism as a key component to all of its ministries in the wider society. One respondent commented that,

As being a part of the outreach, mission and evangelism subcommittee of the diocese, one of the things that I have asserted is to talk about missions as an aspect of crossing of religious and cultural boundaries. But whenever we have met as a committee, every pastor stands up to give his report about how many baptisms they have done, how many marriages they have done, how many Sunday schools are going on, how many women's ministries are going on and at every meeting. I have to tell them that is your normal duty as a part of the church, tell us what have you done to witness among those who are outside of the wall of your Church compound and the answer always is we cannot do it because of the Islamic radicalism. Having said that, there have been individual churches that have carried out evangelistic outreaches. Again, this has been mostly among nominal Christians.<sup>659</sup>

It has already been established in chapter 4 that most of the proclamation of the gospel in the Lahore diocese is among nominal Christians. There are many who still think that presence, identification, dialogue and action are enough meaningful engagement and in the current situation, it is not possible to add proclamation to the agenda of mission engagement. Yet, evangelism or proclamation is a necessary aspect of mission, so much so that Nazir-Ali has called it the 'crown' of mission. In the light of the above discussion, there is a question: can mission be left to passive presence, identification, social action or dialogue? Clearly, the answer is 'No'.

Historically speaking, the diocese has been engaged in open proclamation as mentioned above in the presence and church planting sections. However, as shown above currently the diocese has distanced itself from proclamation, conversion, baptism and disciple making in and among the majority community. So, for the Lahore diocese the question remains, how can an evangelistic dimension be taken seriously in the diocesan strategy and in the parish ministry?

The very purpose of the creation of the Hyderabad diocese was to evangelize various communities of Sindh. Currently, the diocese has made it clear that 'evangelism is

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<sup>657</sup> Participant Identification code\_ SS\_1.7

<sup>658</sup> Participant Identification code\_ IJ\_1.1, AG\_1.8, SM\_1.6

<sup>659</sup> Participant Identification code\_ MA\_1.13

the hallmark of the diocese.’<sup>660</sup> Historically speaking the diocese of Hyderabad has been making intentional efforts to crown its mission with evangelism. John Rawat, a senior pastor in the diocese wrote that ‘the diocese of Hyderabad is an evangelistic project in itself, it was established because of this need in rural Sindh.’<sup>661</sup>

Bishop Bashir Jiwan was absolutely committed to evangelize the rural Sindh, he wrote,

We share the Good News of Jesus Christ throughout the diocese, in city and village, to Punjabis, Bhils and Kholis . . . with Hindu and Muslim, we worship together . . . we serve all in the community regardless of caste and creed . . . our involvement is not to share the Gospel verbally only but to love and express our concern. <sup>662</sup>

The leaders of the diocese have been aiming at the ‘salvation of the lost’ by the soul saving approach. Discipling people after conversion and planting indigenous churches have been the goal of evangelization.<sup>663</sup>

The diocese has been taking steps to add an evangelistic dimension to all of its ministry. For example in its health projects, the display of Christian pictures is quite common and the gospel message is preached once during each patient day. Similarly, in the diocesan schools and hostel projects proclamation, conversion and discipleship are given significant attention. Along with that, the Audio Visual Centre is making a conscious effort to produce resources for evangelizing among the various communities. Some of the efforts have been already mentioned above such as relevant audio, visual and written resources to be used by local believers for outreach and discipleship.

With all this some are really frustrated in the diocese. There is not much done to capitalize on all the opportunities for evangelization. Some are unhappy with the adjusting of social action through the closing down of some educational institutions. Others have mentioned internal issues that are restricting evangelism such as lack of teamwork and lack of resources. Some are discouraged that in the diocesan council meetings most of the reports of the parishes are filled with re-counting of child

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<sup>660</sup> Printed in the Diocesan Brochure

<sup>661</sup> J, Rawat, ‘Evangelism’ in *A Handbook of the Diocese of Hyderabad*, 1989, 24- 25 citing 24

<sup>662</sup> B. Jiwan, ‘Diocesan Overview by Bishop Bashir Jiwan’ in a Handbook, citing 3-4

<sup>663</sup> P. Sultan, *Church*, 275

baptisms, marriages and funerals. The parishes are not engaged in evangelism as they used to be. In this context, a major challenge for the diocese is to attend to these voices coming from the inside and to re-evaluate its evangelistic dimension in light of its origin and history.

#### *5.6.2. FGA: Crowning Mission Engagement with Evangelism*

Allan Anderson has called evangelism the 'Central Missiological Thrust' for Pentecostals. He has written that 'Pentecostals are notorious for aggressive forms of evangelism, as from its beginning, Pentecostalism was characterized by an emphasis on evangelistic outreach. All Pentecostal mission strategy places evangelism as its highest priority.'<sup>664</sup> This is very true for FGA for it has been actively engaged in evangelism through its outreaches, healing crusades and literature distributing teams. Moreover, its hostel, primary school and vocational projects have been consistently committed to an evangelistic dimension.

Evangelism is one the major reasons for its wide spread in the whole of Pakistan. However, some concerns remain. As already identified most of the time the focus of FGA has been on evangelism among nominal Christians. Some of the evangelistic efforts are no longer possible due to the changing context. The literature teams have stopped working because of Islamic radicalism. Healing and evangelistic crusades are no longer possible due to terrorist threats.

Recently there have been some voices coming from within the denomination that are deeply dissatisfied with the direction of FGA. Many have pointed to concerns that the evangelistic thrust of FGA is withering. One respondent has pointed to the loss of evangelistic dimension in the social projects. He regretfully commented,

The pioneers of FGA founded orphanages; they made sure that orphans are getting all basic needs. In addition, there was a lot more emphasis on their development and training according to Biblical principles. So, even in the social projects the element of spiritual growth and development was always there. Currently FGA looks like an NGO because it is conducting relief work in which there is no element of evangelism. Evangelism and social action are kept alongside.<sup>665</sup>

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<sup>664</sup> A. Anderson, 'Towards A Pentecostal Missiology' citing 36

<sup>665</sup> Participant Identification code\_ KC\_3.8

Such a response is clearly nostalgic about the evangelistic endeavors of FGA in the past. At the same time, it is worth mentioning that some of the local churches are seriously pursuing their evangelistic goals even with insufficient resources. There are many examples of the local churches engaged among people of other faiths through evangelistic activities. This is a significant work. As an example, a church in Peshawar is effectively engaged with the majority community of North Pakistan through a children's hostel. Similarly, the churches in Faisalabad are engaged in different surrounding villages through evangelism and social action.

In one sense both CoP and FGA are standing on the same ground as they are struggling to keep up with the evangelistic dimension in their mission engagements. There is a certain degree of similarity between the Hyderabad diocese and FGA. They are both making efforts and are intentional in adding an evangelistic dimension to their mission engagement. By contrast there is a tendency in Lahore diocese to give social action priority over proclamation, conversion and disciple making.

In the light of the above discussion it would not be a mistake to say that in all three cases there is a need to revive a thrust in the evangelistic dimension of the mission engagement. The degree of effort required to achieve an acceptable level of evangelism will differ, being greater in Lahore diocese than the other two organizations surveyed. So here again, it is salutary to remember that the communication of the Gospel in the NT is a command of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20) and therefore, inherent in all Christian mission. It goes with his promise to be present in the Church and with the believers.

As noted above evangelism is truly educational as it brings out and makes explicit what is already there. Even as the Pakistani Church takes the gospel to the wider society, it is also continually being evangelized by it. All Christians need continually to be formed by the Gospel and by its challenge and its comfort, until they have attained to 'the mind of Christ' (1 Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:5; Colossians 3:1-3).<sup>666</sup>

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<sup>666</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere*, 193

## **5.7. Conclusion and Implications**

Based on Nazir-Ali's grid, this chapter has evaluated the mission practice of the Pakistani churches in five different dimensions: that is presence, identification, social action, dialogue and proclamation. Having surveyed in detail the different strong and weak aspects of these dimensions, finally what can be concluded? For this, it is important to review some key findings as given below.

### *5.7.1. Presence*

It must be acknowledged that the CoP and FGA, have managed to maintain their institutional presence over the decades. Although, there has always been the witness of life and worship, their situation does not always allow them to proclaim the gospel openly. This is strongly affecting their intentionality to practically commit themselves wholeheartedly for active presence. However, for the sake of witness, the church must remain faithful by being present, and not absent because of a perceived lack of freedom.

### *5.7.2. Identification*

The Church in Pakistan has culturally integrated well into the community through language, idiom, thought and even the architecture of the indigenous culture all of which are helpful for mission engagement. However, it has sometimes failed to identify with people and has maintained an intentional alienation instead of intentional engagement. This has been partly for the sake of its survival. Due to the complexity of the interrelationships between Christianity and other faiths, it has been observed that the Church has largely compartmentalized identification with different groups on a religious and social basis. Ultimately, for the purpose of transforming and renewing Pakistani society the Church must identify with all people without any discrimination or fear.

### *5.7.3. Social Action*

Trapped between their institutional presence and personal and social alienation, CoP and FGA have been committed to social action through prayer, service and

advocacy, although at times they have failed in the implementation. Due to the increasingly demanding and complex context, it is appropriate that the local churches should give their congregations and communities the opportunity to develop skills for greater social action in the task of mission engagement. This could be done through Kairos (a mission mobilization course) and discipleship training programmes.

#### *5.7.4. Dialogue*

Dialogue in different forms is occurring among CoP and FGA and their partners. It is significant that the Pakistani Church has managed well to live up to its legacy of debates and dialogue. Still there are many within the churches who think of dialogue as something unnecessary. Therefore, it is a challenge for both CoP and FGA to convince their congregations and leaders of the need to engage in dialogue for witness, integration and harmony.

#### *5.7.5. Proclamation*

Hyderabad diocese and FGA are both making intentional efforts at certain levels to maintain an evangelistic dimension to their mission engagement. A few concerns remain unattended. There are voices from within that suggest that the evangelistic dimension is withering. The Lahore diocese seriously lacks intentionality and the practice of verbal proclamation, conversion, disciple making and church planting.

Based on the field research and the above discussion, it is concluded that there are healthy signs that the CoP and FGA are engaged in mission but this engagement cannot be considered complete or adequate. This is due to the agonizing fact that the churches have succumbed to the temptation to concentrate on passive presence, intentional alienation and compartmentalized identification. The social action is significant but brings with it a great complexity of issues of maintenance, secular agendas, income generation and financial dependence on the affluent churches or mission agencies. Most importantly the evangelistic dimension in the mission engagement is withering or being compromised because proclamation, conversion, discipleship and church planting are being consumed by the fear of external radicalism and a desire for self-survival.

The mission engagement of the Pakistani Church can only be considered adequate once it is intentionally 'crowned' with evangelism, which will enable the Church to point beyond herself to the one who is the source of mission engagement. It is almost obligatory to rearticulate, what Nazir-Ali has rightly asserted: that 'Evangelism is not the whole of mission but without it our mission is not complete.'<sup>667</sup>

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<sup>667</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *The Unique*, 120



## 6. Perceived Restrictions for Mission Engagement

### 6.1. Introduction

Chapters 4 and 5 have evaluated the mission theology and practice of the Pakistani churches. Chapter 4 has shown that Pakistani churches have inconsistent and incomplete theological reflection. Chapter 5 has identified that although there is some evidence of significant mission engagement, most of the Pakistani churches are in survival and maintenance mode. Therefore, they lack strategic planning and intentionality for mission engagement and spend most of their energy on maintaining what they already have. This chapter seeks to evaluate, the third area of this research i.e. the perceived restrictions and it traces their effect on the Pakistani churches as they seek to engage in mission.

#### 6.1.1. Methodology

Initially 16 perceived restrictions were gathered from qualitative field research, which includes focus groups and interviews. These restrictions were organized in a quantitative survey and the respondents from CoP and FGA were asked to rate each restriction on a scale of '0 to 10'. '0' indicating that it is not a restriction and '10' indicating that it is the highest restriction in mission engagement. The/this numerical scale was then reduced to scale of five/five categories with the following labels of highly significant, moderately significant, significant, insignificant and not a restriction. Each of the five categories were labeled for the sake of analysis and interpretation. The following table illustrates reduction and scheme of labelling. The rating on the scale of 0 – 10 was labelled in the following manner.

<b>Not a restriction</b>	<b>Insignificant</b>	<b>Significant</b>	<b>Moderately Significant</b>	<b>Highly Significant</b>
0	1 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 7	8-10

#### 6.1.2. Findings on Perceived Restrictions

Serial No.	Percentages of Perceived Restriction for Mission Engagement in Descending Order of Significance	Highly Significant	Moderately Significant	Significant	Insignificant	Not a Restriction
1	Fear of persecution because of certain national laws. e.g 295 C etc.	64.5	18.5	9.7	6.0	1.4
2	Trends of self-centeredness and personal gain in churches	54.4	23.9	14.7	4.6	2.3
3	Internal politics within churches	53.9	27.2	9.5	5.4	4.1
4	Lack of concern for the nations or unreached people groups	49.2	32.0	11.8	4.4	2.5
5	Family pressures. Household responsibilities	48.8	34.7	10.8	4.1	1.5
6	Lack of understanding of personal calling	48.3	37.1	8.1	4.8	1.7
7	Lack of prayer	47.1	30.5	13.7	3.7	5.0
8	Lack of finances in the local congregation	45.0	37.6	7.7	2.9	6.8
9	Lack of discipleship in the churches.	45.0	35.3	9.5	4.6	5.6
10	Lack of mission training in the local congregations	44.2	32.6	12.2	7.1	3.9
11	Local congregation's busyness with itself – Internal focus	42.5	34.9	10.8	7.9	3.9
12	Lack of mission awareness among the local congregations	40.7	40.2	11.2	4.4	3.5
13	Mismanagement of resources within the local congregations	36.5	38.6	14.5	7.3	3.1
14	Lack of effective leadership	33.0	36.7	16.6	6.6	7.1
15	Court cases in the churches over property matters	31.5	27.2	18.5	11.8	11.0
16	The church structure of my denomination	29.5	38.6	16.8	7.5	7.5

The gathered results are analyzed and compared by using the SPSS programme. The results of the survey are shown in the above table. The results were surprising in many ways, for example, due to its context of poverty, generally it is believed that the Pakistani Church cannot be engaged significantly in mission due to lack of the finances. As a matter of fact, 'the lack of finances' are rated down the level of significance. This restriction is on number 8 among 16 restrictions identified. Similarly, the Pakistani church being existent in the most dangerous part of the world is thought to be restricted by the mega context and overwhelming external restrictions of religious extremism, discrimination and persecution. Whereas the qualitative and quantitative, both researches shows that in the task of mission

engagement most of the restrictions are coming from within the Church rather than from outside the Church. Therefore, it would not be wrong to conclude that that the Pakistani Church is so preoccupied and perplexed with its internal issues that it is spending most of its energy on dealing with internal restrictions rather than planning and engaging strategically with its context. This is not to deny the difficult and unique context in which the Pakistani Church exists and seeks to survive. As the following sections evaluate the restrictions, they also seriously take into account the possible contributions made by Pakistani culture or context.

Due to the focus of this research on assessing mission engagement in three areas namely, theology, practice and perceived restrictions, it would not be possible to fully deal with all the identified restrictions at the expense of other aspects of the research. Therefore, the current discussion will be limited to first four highly significant restrictions in the descending order. At the same time, some of the moderate restrictions are used as sub-themes as all of the restrictions are interconnected. For example, restriction number 2 i.e. 'trends of self-centeredness and personal gain' is addressed from perspectives of both leadership and congregants which also covers the restriction number 11 i.e. 'local congregation's busyness with itself – internal focus' and restriction number 14 i.e. 'lack of effective leadership'. Similarly, restriction number 4 i.e. 'lack of concern for the nations or unreached people groups' deals with restriction number 10 i.e. 'lack of mission training in the local congregations' and restriction number 12 i.e. 'lack of mission awareness among the local congregations.'

### *6.1.3. Four Highly Significant Rated Restrictions*

- Fear of persecution because of certain laws. E.g. Penal Court 295 C
- Self- centeredness and personal ambitions within the churches
- Politics within the churches
- Lack of concern for the unreached nations/ people groups

## 6.2. Fear of Persecution

Perhaps, at the moment, the best identity of the Pakistani Church is a persecuted Church. There is a great deal of worldwide reporting on the Pakistani Church's persecution. Google alone gives about 742,000 results, within 27 seconds on the topic of persecution of Christian in Pakistan. How much of it is a reality? The participants were asked if persecution is a major restriction for their mission work in Pakistan. Drawing on the qualitative research, however, a range of both ordained clergy and laity said that persecution is not the strongest restriction for mission engagement. Rather they were overwhelmed with internal issues and problems within the Church such as internal politics, lack of resources and vision. For many participants persecution and its fear was an issue but of little significance, partly because they have had not experienced it firsthand. They might know it is happening elsewhere. For example, one respondent of CoP, with his nearly 30 years ministry experience said that

Fear of persecution is exaggerated, and it does not have any strong foundations.<sup>668</sup>

Such a view is most evident from those who are engaged in mission from a position of a better socio-economic status and enjoy good relationship with affluent people of the majority community. For them fear of persecution is more perceived than actual. It is noted, however, that the general assumption and fear regarding persecution seems to be, 'if it happened there it can happen here too'. There were some respondents, who commented that,

When I think of engaging in mission, I am fearful because of Islamic extremism and 295 C law.<sup>669</sup>

The situation is getting difficult because of 295 C law. The consequences of mission engagement can be very dangerous.<sup>670</sup>

Some of the respondents were concerned for the whole community or church, who could be put in danger as a result of engaging in mission.

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<sup>668</sup> Participant identification no\_ S.M\_1.12

<sup>669</sup> Participant identification no\_ FGA\_FG2\_Q7\_A 2

<sup>670</sup> Participant identification no\_ IG\_2.5

You can't put the whole church in trouble just because of one lost sheep. If you have converted one non-Christian to Christ, it can generate a great trouble for him as well for the whole church which has accepted him.<sup>671</sup>

As I think of engaging in mission, nothing makes me afraid personally as such but due to 295 C law and mob attacks history in Pakistan I am concerned about my church and community. I don't want my people to be at risk.<sup>672</sup>

Exaggerating things is a part of our culture that makes me afraid. What if I say or do something for Christ and someone would exaggerate it in a negative way then me and my community could be all in trouble.<sup>673</sup>

At the moment the biggest challenge is the blasphemy law. People are very scared. We can't preach openly because society has become so much radicalized and they don't want to hear the Christian message. The message I am receiving is that the majority community out there is saying that, it's fine you can preach in your own Church compound but not in the public square.<sup>674</sup>

With these mixed responses, the fear of persecution was added in the list of perceived restrictions in quantitative research. The results of responses are shown below;

*Table 6: Fear of persecution because of certain laws*

Denomination	Fear of persecution because of certain laws. E.g. 295 C etc.					Total
	Not a restriction	Insignificant	Significant	Moderately Significant	Highly Significant	
CoP (Lahore & Hyderabad Dioceses)	3	16	29	47	164	259
FGA	4	15	21	49	170	259
Total	7	31	50	96	334	518

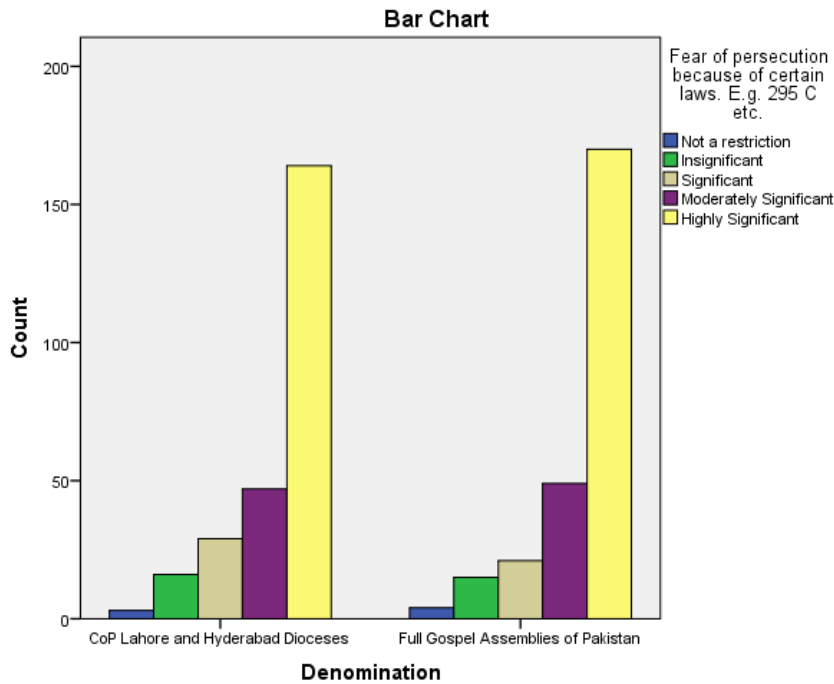
<sup>671</sup> Participant identification no\_ LQ\_3.1

<sup>672</sup> Participant identification no\_ FGA\_FG1\_Q7\_A3

<sup>673</sup> Participant identification no\_ FGA\_FG1\_Q7\_A4

<sup>674</sup> Participant identification no\_ AM\_1.2

Figure 6: Fear of Persecution



About 65 % people of the sample population considered fear of persecution the highest restriction out of the list of 16 restrictions. If we add the percentage of respondents who consider it moderately significant, then the percentage escalates to 83%, which is a matter of grave concern. The comparative analysis of quantitative research makes it quite clear that CoP and FGA both almost equally consider persecution to be the highest restriction.

In the qualitative research, the Lahore diocese and FGA both shared their own experiences and various incidents, which have been faced by their local churches or parishes in rural areas of Punjab. In comparison to other provinces, Punjab has been highly affected by incidents of persecution. According to the 1998 census, the province of Punjab is home to 81 percent of the Christians.<sup>675</sup> As most of the Pakistani Christians are clustered in Punjab that is why Punjabi churches are at high risk of persecution, whereas this is not the case in Sindh. One respondent said that

We don't have many cases reported in Sindh under blasphemy law, it's mainly because we are very tolerant people. Sindhis are not bothered much with the religious affiliation, they respect the beliefs of all religions.<sup>676</sup>

<sup>675</sup> ([www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/other/.../Population/16-16.pdf](http://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/other/.../Population/16-16.pdf); accessed April 2015)

<sup>676</sup> Participant identification no\_ DF\_2.3

Respondents of Sindhi origin in a focus group of Mirpur Khas region agreed that,<sup>677</sup>

We don't have this issue of persecution like Punjab has. Generally we are people who mind our business. It does not matter whether we live in desert or in a village, we have less or more. Even under tough weather conditions we continue to do our own work and tolerate other religions.

Therefore, it noted that fear of persecution is not very intense in Hyderabad diocese as it is among Punjabi churches of Lahore diocese and FGA. The question why Pakistani Christians are so fearful of engaging in mission cannot be answered in a vacuum. Therefore, it is important to glance back on the historical developments that have considerably contributed in generating the fear.

### 6.2.1. *Persecution Due to Legislation*

Under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948), Pakistan came into being in 1947. Jinnah based his argument for a separate state for Muslims on the 'two-nation theory'. There was strong antagonism between Hindus and Muslims. Muslims being a minority in the sub-continent felt a competitive pressure and thus were strongly convinced in favor of a separate Muslim nation. G.W. Choudhury observes 'Pakistan was, in a sense, itself the product of minority problems.'<sup>678</sup> Although religion played an important role in nationalism, Jinnah famously declared in his speech on 11 August 1947,

You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in the State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the State . . . We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State.<sup>679</sup>

Thus, Jinnah's speech makes it clear that he envisioned Pakistan to be a secular, liberal, democratic, inclusive and pluralistic society. Unfortunately, following Jinnah's death in 1948, a process of official Islamization began. The Pakistani Constitution which preserves religious rights and freedom for all its citizens<sup>680</sup> has

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<sup>677</sup> Focus Group at Mirpur Khas at St. John's, , Hyderabad, 11, April, 2015

<sup>678</sup> G. Choudhury, G. 'Religious Minorities in Pakistan', *The Muslim World*, Vol. XLVI No. 4, 1956, n.p

<sup>679</sup> M. Munir, *From Jinnah to Zia*, 2nd ed. Lahore: Vanguard , 1980, 30

<sup>680</sup> (<http://www.infopaksitan.gov.pk/Constitution30April2010.pdf> ; accessed 15 Feb 2013)

been steadily undermined by decades of constitutional and legislative revisions. The most damaging change to the Blasphemy Law (sections 295 A, B and C) came in 1980.

The blasphemy laws underlie a huge proportion of inter-communal strife in Pakistan. A striking fact is that the blasphemy laws are not an original product of Pakistani government but are based on laws relating to religion in the Indian Penal Code introduced by the British in 1860 to stop inter-religious conflicts in the religiously pluralistic Indian society. They prescribed a punishment of two years imprisonment, a fine, or both, for 'Injuring or defiling a place of worship, with intent to insult the religion of any class.'<sup>681</sup> That was further amended in October 1990, making the crime punishable only by death.<sup>682</sup> According to the information service of the Pontifical Mission Societies, between 1927 and 1986 there had been only seven reported cases of blasphemy.<sup>683</sup> So, there were no strong reasons for adding the death sentence.

The National Commission for Justice and Peace says that in the last 25 years, 1,058 cases of blasphemy have been registered. Of the accused, 456 were Ahmadis, 449 were Muslims, 132 were Christians and 21 were Hindus.<sup>684</sup> Thus, the misuse of the law affects citizens of all religions including Muslims themselves. However, minority communities are more vulnerable to non-legal violence. Furthermore, the discriminatory attitudes are well rooted in society and also in the corrupt law and order enforcing institutions, making access to justice harder for minorities. A large number of incidents have taken place against Christians. Under 295 C, untrue accusations and fabrication of blasphemy cases have become a quite common trend in order to threaten and assault individuals for personal and business reasons. To

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<sup>681</sup> Pakistan Penal Code, accessed <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/1860/actXLVof1860.html#f106>; February, 2013

<sup>682</sup> J. O'Brien, *The Unconquered*, 284

<sup>683</sup> Pakistan Blasphemy Laws: A Fact Sheet, ([www.fides.org](http://www.fides.org); accessed April 2015)

<sup>684</sup> A. Patel, 'Pakistan's Blasphemy Law', available at <http://tribune.com.pk/story/426498/pakistans-blasphemy-law/> Published in *The Express Tribune*, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012.



make the matter even worse many Christian villages and communities have been attacked by angry Muslim mobs.<sup>685</sup>

With the passage of time, Blasphemy laws have developed the status of divine laws in the consciousness of the predominantly Muslim society of Pakistan. Some steps have been taken by the Pakistani government led by the late Minister for Minorities Affairs Shahbaz Bhatti, to improve religious freedom and tolerance. However, the assassinations of Shahbaz Bhatti (January 2011) and Salman Taseer (Governor of Punjab, (March 2011) for supporting progressive amendments to the Blasphemy Law has left the situation unchanged. Consequently, the issue has become religiously and emotionally so sensitive that any suggestion to hold a rational debate to reform these laws generates serious threats from self-appointed defenders of Islam.

It would be a mistake, however, to think that all the Christian persecutions have resulted as a consequence of mission engagement. Rather in the field research, persecution is mentioned as a fear that restricts engaging in mission. That fear is due to the recent rise of individual and corporate victimization of Christians, which have left many in church paralyzed and demotivated to share the gospel with the larger society. Many do not dare to think of engaging in mission because of this fear. In this case, is lack of mission engagement, in short, the price of survival? There is no denying of the tribulation that the Church is facing time after time. It is also important to see that while reaffirming the command for evangelization, how the Christian community has been coping and responding towards persecution.

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<sup>685</sup> Some of instances have been broadcasted on international level: Shanti Nagar mob attack by thousands of Muslims that burnt 785 houses and 4 churches. 2500, villagers were forced to flee, mob attack in Gojra, Punjab, in 2009 that killed eight Christians and burned forty homes; the 2010 death sentence decreed for Asia Bibi, a Christian woman laborer accused of blasphemy; the 2012 burning of St. Paul's Church in Mardan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province; blasphemy accusations in 2012 against Rimsha Masih, a mentally handicapped girl in Islamabad; the March 2013 Badami Bagh mob attack in Lahore that destroyed 175 Christian homes; the suicide bombing at All Saints' Church in Peshawar in September 2013, when 119 Christians were killed and 145 were wounded; the November 2014 burning of a Christian couple in a brick kiln after they were accused of burning pages of the Qur'an and most recent twin suicide bombings on Christ Church (Lahore diocese parish) and the Roman Catholic Church in Youhanabad, Lahore in which 15 people died and 70 people got severely injured.

### 6.2.2. Responses to Persecution

It's a major strength of the Pakistani Church including both CoP and FGA that despite its difficult situation it still maintains its presence, worship, witness and service. Response of the Christian community to persecution, however, can be divided into five categories marking both outward and inward aspects.

- i. Following the events of persecution a greater communication, more networking and partnership between the persecuted and non-persecuted has developed. With the assurance that the love and concern of fellow-Christians will encourage those who are suffering, the non-persecuted churches across the denominations have consistently helped the persecuted churches. This includes spiritual support, prayer, practical help, and counseling. It has built up the persecuted and has strengthened the Body of Christ in Pakistan as a whole. Recently, the Christian leaders, especially from the Lahore diocese, have appeared a number of times on primetime TV talk shows. They have expressed their views in favor of the victims and have also pleaded the case for the abrogation of the antagonistic laws.
- ii. Anti-persecution protests both in peaceful and violent forms have become a typical response of Christians after the events of persecution.<sup>686</sup> For instance, protests following after the Youhanabad, Lahore suicide bombing of churches in March, 2015 gained immense attention worldwide.<sup>687</sup>
- iii. There are some Christians who think that the only solution to the problems that Pakistani Christians are facing is a demand for a separate homeland. Thus, some have suggested a Christian land known as *Takistan* (Vineyard).<sup>688</sup>

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<sup>686</sup> A recent trend of violent protests are not only defaming Christian community nationwide but also creating many more difficulties for peaceful Christians, for instance undue arrests, threatening of mob attacks and hateful comments from the majority community.

<sup>687</sup> See for example <http://dunyanews.tv/index.php/en/Pakistan/267601-Lahore-Twin-blasts-near-church-in-Youhanabad-kill>, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/853983/two-separate-cases-registered-against-lahore-church-bombings/>

<sup>688</sup> For example Nazir S. Bhatti, the president of Christian Congress demanded in a press conference that the Punjab to be divided into three parts, thus giving one part to Christians of Pakistan (The New International April 22 1992)

- iv. Various statements and different initiatives by Christian political leaders have followed after almost every catastrophe.<sup>689</sup>
- v. Such incidents have also stimulated an initiative of various advocacy agencies to help persecuted Christians through providing legal aid assistance and representation in court trials, settlement, rehabilitation, shelter, protection of victims of sexual abuses and domestic violence.<sup>690</sup>

Having mentioned all the above responses, this research has identified that rarely have Pakistani churches engaged in much detail with the theology of suffering, persecution and martyrdom for Christ and its significance for mission engagement. In most churches theological reflection emerges orally right after the incident, reaches a climax at the next Sunday service and dies in the next couple of weeks until something happens again. This reflection is beneficial in that sometimes through sermons the believers are strengthened and the witness of the believers becomes more effective. However, it cannot take the place of an organized and consistent theological reflection. An appropriate response should result in theologizing of persecution in the context of the mission of God that can direct Christians to engage in mission in an appropriate way. Instead of accepting the pain and suffering passively, how can the Pakistani Church deal with its fear and actively seek opportunities to engage in mission through presence, service, identification, dialogue and proclamation.

### *6.2.3. Persecution a Predictive Norm in Scriptures and Mission Engagement*

While reaffirming the necessity of proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour to all humankind, how can the Pakistani churches rise above its the context of persecution?

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<sup>689</sup> For example Federal Minister for Ports and Shipping Kamran Michael strongly condemned the terrorists attack see <http://www.samaa.tv/pakistan/2015/03/task-force-needed-for-worship-places-security-minister/>

<sup>690</sup> There are two prominent indigenous advocacy organizations; one is the National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP) which is working since 1985. The second one is the Centre for Legal Aid Assistance and Settlement (CLAAS) originated in 1992.

The first task of a theology of mission in the context of persecution is that it must recall that the NT clearly and consistently portrays persecution and unjust suffering for Christ's sake as expected norms in a Christian's life. Believers are reminded 'do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you' (1 Peter 4:12). Jesus himself in the Beatitudes said, 'Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you' . . . (Matthew 5:11). Here Jesus' words associate persecution with blessing. There is a need to see persecution as part of the servant master relationship. Jesus said a 'servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me they will persecute you' (John 15:20). Christians are called to follow Jesus by 'taking up the cross,' (Matthew 16:24) and crucifixion is a graphic example of suffering, torture and violent death. Servants cannot expect any better treatment than their master.

Suffering and martyrdom are strongly linked to mission. Suffering and the weakness perceived as implicit in the witness are a mode of mission (2 Corinthians. 12:9; 4:7-10), and martyrdom becomes the most radical form of witness. The well-known quotation from the Church Father, Tertullian, '*The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church*' strongly implies that the seed of the blood of martyrdom can bring fruit. Schirrmacher has convincingly argued that 'Even when martyrdom is fruitful, however, its results are never automatic, but always due to God's mercy.'<sup>691</sup> Then, one of the painful questions for the Pakistani Church could be, how can it bring forth fruit from its persecution? How can the church deal with its fear and come out of its survival mode and meaningfully engage in mission?

#### 6.2.4. *Recommendations*

In the light of the above discussion, three steps can be significant;

- Undeniably, there is persecution but Pakistani church should rise above its fear and while being sensitive to its context should continue its mission with courage and hope. Where will this hope come from? While exhorting Timothy in the context of persecution, Paul reminds him 'For this reason I remind you

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<sup>691</sup> T. Schirrmacher, *The Persecution of Christians Concerns Us All: Towards a Theology of Martyrdom*, Bonn: Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft Culture and Science, 2008, 65

to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God' (2 Tim 1:6-8). The mission of God must not be allowed to suffer due to fear because the one who sends us to make disciples of all nations also promises that 'all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me . . . And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age' (Matthew 28:18-20). Therefore, the distinguishing mark of mission is obedience in Christ.

- While recognizing the inevitability of persecution, there is a need for developing a theology of persecution in the context of mission engagement. Many questions and issues need to be reflected on, especially on the theology of the cross and suffering in mission, love for enemies, engaging in mission as a minority, discipleship, martyrdom and service.
- The churches should focus on promoting facilities to enable this to happen effectively, as well as sharing existing relevant resources (books, articles, journals, bibliographies, textbooks, courses etc.). There do exist resources for the persecuted Church, which are under-utilized due to lack of awareness. These include Christian assistance for a persecuted church and materials concerning times of suffering, persecution and martyrdom.<sup>692</sup>

### **6.3. Self-Centeredness and Personal Ambitions within the Churches**

Self-centeredness and personal ambition within the churches is rated as the second highest restriction in the quantitative research. About 54.4 % people considered

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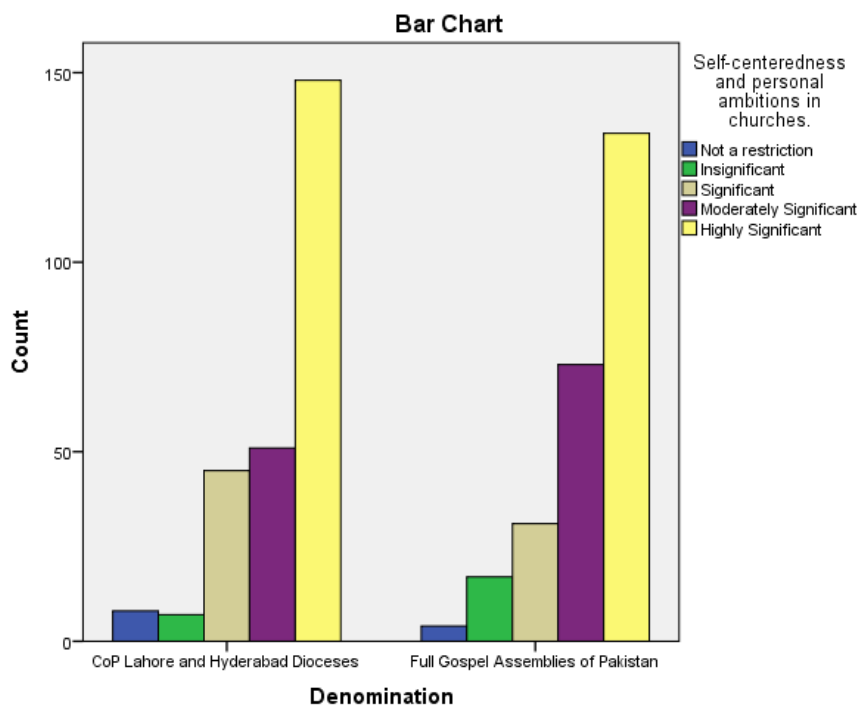
<sup>692</sup> Lausanne 1974 and at later consultations have shown a complementary theological emphasis on persecution, see papers on Lausanne website: [www.lausanne.org](http://www.lausanne.org). For example Lausanne Occasional Paper on the Persecuted Church available at [www.lausanne.org/wp-content/uploads/2007/06/LOP32\\_IG3.pdf](http://www.lausanne.org/wp-content/uploads/2007/06/LOP32_IG3.pdf)

that this is a significant restriction for mission engagement. The results of the quantitative research are shown in the following table and bar graph;

*Table 7: Self-Centeredness in the Church*

Denomination	Trends of self-centeredness and personal gain in churches					Total
	Not a restriction	Insignificant	Significant	Moderately Significant	Highly Significant	
CoP (Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses)	8	7	45	51	148	259
FGA	4	17	31	73	134	259
Total	12	24	76	124	282	518

*Figure 7 Self-Centeredness in the Church*



The above analysis has shown that the bar of responses of CoP is higher than for the FGA, which indicates that self-centeredness is a slightly more of a significant problem within the CoP. However, this is not to suggest that it's not an issue with

FGA because the bar of moderate significance is considerably higher than CoP. Thus, it is logical to conclude that it is a significant restriction in both the denominations for mission engagement. This demonstrates that rather than engaging with the world with the message of the gospel there is a tendency within the Pakistani churches to be consumed with self-gain and self-serving.

Bishop Jiwan warned clearly,

Today if we are selfish and self-centered, it is because we are all the time looking inward. Dennis Clark in this book, "The Third World and Mission", has rightly said "Lawsuits, party strife, factions and jockeying for the assets of church property have drained Churches of spiritual power and evangelism vigor" . . . The Pakistani Church is disobedient to the Great Commission. How can a Church grow spiritually if it is disobedient to God's commandment? We mature in faith when we share and participate in the missionary vision of God . . . if there is friction and dishonesty, it is because we are inward-looking and not outward looking.<sup>693</sup>

### *6.3.1. Evaluating Self-Centeredness as a Restriction from Various Perspectives*

The data generated from the qualitative research shows that the self-centeredness and personal ambition in the church can be seen from three perspectives. This includes;

- a) The self-centeredness of the ordained clergy pointed out by the congregants.
- b) The self-centeredness pointed out among ordained clergy in hierarchal terms, which included issues with the top leadership and subordinate leadership, both pointing at each other.
- c) The self-centeredness of the congregants pointed out by the ordained clergy.

The statements of the respondents suggested that there are people in the Church on all the three levels who always seek their own advantage out of something. This situation makes it difficult to think in terms of reaching out to others with the message of the Gospel.

The awkwardness surrounding the theme of self-centeredness in the Church did not stop respondents from speaking straightforwardly. The answers displayed negative characteristics associated with the self-centeredness of leadership; however, sometimes the answers were unjustifiable. For instance, some mentioned greed-

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<sup>693</sup> B. Jiwan, 'Mission and Selfhood', in *Struggle*, citing 30

based, wealth-consuming, self-promoting leadership. There are people in the church who are self-absorbed and ego-driven. These reflections reflect a great deal of and suspicion among the Christian communities over this issue.

It is also worth mentioning that the Lahore diocese was observed to be more stable; the respondents did not express any significant mistrust or dissatisfaction as such against ordained clergy or laity. If any controversial issues emerged out of the conversations, they rather defended each other. This can be counted as a strength. However, in both the Hyderabad diocese and FGA ordained clergy and the congregants mentioned some minor or serious grievances within the church and shared many stories and incidents. Which shows that due to self-centeredness and seeking after selfish ambitions, relationships within the churches are in a bad state and need healing and restoration.

The importance of healthy relationships was considered highly valuable among CoP's pioneers.

During the discussion we realised [sic] that we could not talk of relationships with others unless we set our own house in order. We should first look at our own Church. It is Church here that needs to change for the sake of its mission in order to establish healthy and meaningful relationships. . .<sup>694</sup>

While defining 'selfhood' for a newly founded church A. Barkat stressed,

Surely, selfishness, self-centeredness, and narrow minded arrogance are concepts which are associated with selfhood . . . Selfhood is not to be understood in its individualistic or atomized sense, but in pluralistic sense. We cannot think of selfhood in its separateness, but rather in terms of its relationship.<sup>695</sup>

A wide variety of issues related to self-centeredness came out in the qualitative research. It includes authoritative leadership which did not listen, land grabbing and lack of pastoral care for both clergy and laity.

Generally clergy are very well respected among Pakistani churches. Many respondents shared positive stories of their leaders' loyalty and faithfulness in ministry. Some shared how much they are inspired by their leaders who lead by being an example. On the other hand, some of the respondents, both in CoP and FGA, felt that the leadership is very authoritative and not ready to listen. It does not

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<sup>694</sup> J. V. Samuel 'Opening Keynote Address' in *Struggle*, 11-17, 13

<sup>695</sup> A.M. Barkat 'Introduction' in *Struggle*, citing 4



appreciate creativity or consider the personal call of an individual. Some respondents shared complicated situations that they were unable to deal with because some had been aggressively eager to exercise power through bullish dominance.

One participant of CoP said,

A hierarchical church structure with the seeking of unquestioned obedience by Church leadership further constipates innovative and creative ideas. Pastors need to be engaged into applied missions studies and subjects such as conflict resolutions and community development need to be incorporated.<sup>696</sup>

A respondent from FGA said,

FGA is a hugely well known and recognized denomination in Pakistan. But certain people in executive leadership have their own feudal system, they want to keep everyone under their own control and command. In my understanding that's the major challenge for missional engagement. Feudalism should be brought down and the specific leadership should repent and seek true repentance of their ungodly behaviors. It is an essential step for the denominational future.<sup>697</sup>

Another issue related to the evil of self-centeredness is of land grabbing and land mafia. There are serious property related issues both in CoP and FGA. There are people from within and outside of the church who are directly or indirectly involved in land grabbing matters of the diocesan or denominational properties. There is a consensus in both denominations that there is significant financial strain on the churches' annual budgets due to court cases. Thus, in some cases, in the churches there is more money involved in safe-guarding church property then utilizing it for mission work.

Lahore Diocese has been engaged with legal battles with regard to the number of cases related to land grabbing and illegal occupations on the church property. This has implication for financial resources that negatively affects the working on other dimensions of the church.<sup>698</sup>

Many leaders from Hyderabad mentioned issues of land-grabbing in Hyderabad diocese. One commented,

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<sup>696</sup> Participant identification no\_ AI\_1. 10

<sup>697</sup> Participant identification no\_ GT\_3. 5

<sup>698</sup> Participant identification no\_ AI\_1.10

We are facing property issues from many years. There are so many illegal occupancies in the parish compounds by the people who once used to work for the diocese. We are spending so much money in the court cases that we could have saved and used for mission work.<sup>699</sup>

One leader from FGA said that,

We face various challenges related to property at the local church level. Sometimes the local pastor raise funds, on top of that he gets financial help from the center for the church building. Then he legally allot that property in his own name. Then there are illegal occupancies in some of our properties and we have to spend a lot of money and energy to get those properties.<sup>700</sup>

With this there is another sensitive issue of lack of pastoral care. Some leaders in both the denominations shared their stories about when they needed help but it was not given by the senior leaders. In some cases self-centeredness overlaps with the politicking as well. Some leaders are simply ignored by the senior leadership to teach them a lesson or because they failed to please the senior leader. So, it is also noted that a few young leaders were emotionally distressed. That makes it difficult for the young leaders to continue their ministries. This is significantly contributing to mounting mistrust and fragmentation. It was evident in both the denominations which is a serious weakness. One respondent of Cop said,

My father has been sick. While I was caring for him, I reflected on the mounting strife in the diocese and I decided that I would resign. So, I sent a text message to my leader saying that 'I can't continue my service therefore I am resigning'. His response was just one word 'ok', he did not even say that you come back to your parish and then we can discuss the issues and resolve the conflict. After two days my father died and he did not even call me for condolences.<sup>701</sup>

Most of the respondents agree in a focus group in FGA

We have never been visited or asked that how are we doing in our ministries. Only favorites ones are being followed-up.<sup>702</sup>

There is a need to give attention to the mission workers. We are doing things on our own initiative. We are left without any help like orphans.<sup>703</sup>

A board member from FGA defended the centre in this way.

As a center we could not teach our local churches to be self-sufficient. So, financially they are not independent. Many times they have an unjustified expectation that the center should

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<sup>699</sup> Participant identification no\_ KJ\_2.1

<sup>700</sup> Participant identification no\_ SS\_3.2

<sup>701</sup> Participant identification no\_ MB\_2.8

<sup>702</sup> Participant identification no\_ FGA\_FG4

<sup>703</sup> Participant identification no\_ LS\_3.6

be doing something more to support them. Another challenge is that we have a weaker link with the local churches, although our interaction is polite but sometimes we can't be there for them at their time of need. We have a lot of financial issues which means we can't travel much to meet pastors even when we should be there for them.<sup>704</sup>

The problem of self-centeredness identifies the Church's 'little agenda' for itself at the expense of God's agenda for the Church. Such a priority was seen as deeply undesirable by the respondents. Above all, the respondents expressed sorrow and anger on behalf of people who have been injured by the self-centeredness of the leaders. This has ruined optimism for many. On the other hand, no matter how critical of the denomination or of the leadership they might be some were hopeful for meaningful mission engagement by pointing to being Christ-centered rather than self-centered.

On the other side, it is also true that people in positions of authority including clergy may become a focus for people's anger and frustration when their needs or desires are not fully met. People may feel their rights to self-fulfillment have not been fully respected or they have been let down. There are congregants who want to depend on church for their own personal gains. For instance they expect financial assistance for their own needs or help to find a job, or provision of a letter to support their refugee status in applying for immigration.<sup>705</sup> If the church denies them help, they feel frustrated and consider it deliberate discrimination and disloyalty.

Illegitimate dependency of the congregants on the church is a complex phenomenon. Traced historically, landless Christian labourers often used to be dependent on Hindu or Muslim *zamindars* (landowners). That created what John O'Brien calls a 'chronic dependency syndrome'. It was caused by years of subjugation and oppression. He quotes the adage '*Tussi Sadhe Ma-bap o*' (You are our father and mother), through which he notes that 'historically, the dependency on the *zamindar* was transferred onto the Church: here was a benevolent ma-bap [mother and father] who could provide, forgive and accept. . . .'<sup>706</sup> This issue of dependency of

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<sup>704</sup> Participant identification no\_ KC\_3.8

<sup>705</sup> There is a significant number of the Christian community migrating to economically wealthy countries because of the fear of persecution, discrimination and lack of opportunities. So, it is not uncommon that many Christians craft false cases of persecution in order to get refugee status in a desired country. Some expect the leaders to support them in their fake cases of persecution.

<sup>706</sup> J. O'Brien, *The Unconquered*, 140

congregants on the church also demonstrates a challenge as to where does having a motivation or heart for mission engagement fit in all this. How can a minister encourage those in a church for their own gain to become a missionary congregation when those outside the church have to be reached?

### **6.3.2. Restriction of Self-centeredness and Scriptural Reflection**

Is there a justification for being self-centered? Selfishness that seems reasonable and therefore acceptable is totally in contrast to the teachings of the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Romans 2:8; 8:8; Philippians 2:3). Jesus himself said to his disciples, 'If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me' (Matthew 16:24). In mission, self-emptying and self-denying are interconnected. Jesus is the model to follow who emptied Himself by taking the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7). The scriptural principle of self-denying is equally applicable on the leadership and laity. It is clear that without self-denial mission is impossible,

The cross demonstrates an offering of *self-denial* and *self-sacrifice* that is God's way of doing mission. There is a necessary *kenosis*, a self-emptying, which takes us through incarnation into death and only then on to resurrection . . . this is costly. The sacrificial imagery of the cross expresses the costliness of Christ's atoning work . . . it is a continual reminder that divine love has assumed the shape of the cross. . . So, while mission is obedience, it is also the free and glad response of those who offer their lives unconditionally and unreservedly.<sup>707</sup>

The Scriptures are also very clear on how the Church should treat and respond towards leaders whom God has called for leadership assignment. The believers are urged to meet the needs of their leaders and to love, respect and submit to their authority (1 Corinthians 9:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14; Hebrew 13:17). On the other hand, the leaders are to be qualified for the position of authority (1 Timothy 3:1-7) and are told not to rule over those in their charge but be an example for them (1 Peter 5:3).

In connection to that, the legislative bodies of both CoP and FGA must not only function as supervisory bodies but they must develop principle of accountability and

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<sup>707</sup> V. Samkutty 'Cross' in A. Moreau et al, *EDWM* 78-82, citing 81

pastoral care. A check to balance the rights and responsibilities of the clergy is necessary. Then there is need to take appropriate practical measures that will remove the possible causes of self-centeredness. For example, providing for the basic needs and nurturing proper regard and respect for both pastors and their families. This can facilitate the leadership as they seek to engage in mission.

### 6.3.3. *Possible Reasons of Self-Centeredness*

The Pakistani Church does not live in a hermetically sealed environment. It seems that the church has submitted to the cultural pressure of promoting self-esteem, individualization and selfishness instead of dying to self through a God-centered life. It implies that on all levels people can be trapped into thinking 'what can I get from church for myself?'

This strong suspicion of a tendency for the Pakistani Church to seek to replace God with self-centeredness requires an exploration into the factors that have caused such a state of affairs. Following is a brief discussion on the possible reasons for self-centeredness that hinders the task of mission.

The Pakistani Church's context is largely that of poverty. Azeem Rehmat Bible teacher at FGA Bible College writes,

Many pastors live lives of poverty. They don't have a good house to live in. Their children cannot attend a good school. They live miserable lives; even their basic needs are not being met. All this badly affects their ministries and above all pastors themselves become mentally distressed and sick . . . unfortunately many churches keep their pastors under financial strain, they only pay them 5000 Rupees (approximately 50 pounds sterling) monthly income . . . there are many church councils who use their pastors like puppets, they do not let their pastor work part-time at some other place to supplement his income and don't pay him enough. This gives rise to hatred, fragmentation and hard heartedness . . . <sup>708</sup>

Coupled with the above situation is the issue of lack of education, skill and capability of a majority of pastors. Azeem compares a congregational system with a diocesan or episcopal system and consider diocesan system to be better and well structured. It facilitates its clergy with a better salary, transportation and medical needs along

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<sup>708</sup> A. Rehmat, 'Is My Church Part of Body of Christ? Part 11' *Satoon-e-Haq*, 26:6 June 2012, 17-20 citing 17, 19 & 20

with housing. He concludes that they can have a better life style and can be effectively engaged in mission.<sup>709</sup>

Azeem in his judgement is right to some extent, for CoP has carefully crafted rules on financial matters such as loans and provident fund.<sup>710</sup> Even then, some key informants in CoP think that the vision of most local priests is very poor and handicapped for all the time he is worried about paying the assessment to the diocesan office.<sup>711</sup> Therefore, mission engagement has to be built around the issue of assessment. The mission agenda is highly affected by assessment issue in some parishes. For example, one pastor said that

I know that the task of mission is huge and I alone can't accomplish it. It's hard for me to raise enough funds to pay my assessment to the diocese. If I will have an assistant pastor how will I raise assessment for him as well?<sup>712</sup>

Discussing the missionary task, another informant said in a very frustrated manner,

How do I determine how to respond appropriately and offer the good news to people? Which mission are you talking about? I am unable to meet the basic needs related to my family and ministry. I tell you 90% of my problems are administrative and funds related. I am so overwhelmed that I can't even think of mission. My primary responsibility is towards people in the diocese under my pastoral care, if I can't do something for them, how can I go out and evangelize?<sup>713</sup>

This creates ambiguity, discouragement and pessimism, which facilitates an inescapable slide towards self-centeredness. It is also noted that there is a lack of financial planning both in CoP and FGA. The financial situations get even worse because of uncertainty about the future. There is no social security or pension scheme for retired clergy. Therefore, while living out from the margins of society some live by faith and survive to engage meaningfully in the mission of God. Yet for others it becomes a hard decision to choose between self-centeredness or God-centeredness.

#### *6.3.4. Recommendations*

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<sup>709</sup> A. Rehmat, 'Is My Church Part of the Body of Christ?' citing 11

<sup>710</sup> For example see The Constitution and Bye-Laws of the Hyderabad Diocesan Council 47-54

<sup>711</sup> The salary of each clergy is given by the diocesan office but in return each parish has to raise funds equivalent to the salary and submit them regularly to the diocesan office, this is known as assessment in CoP.

<sup>712</sup> Participant identification no\_ IJ\_1.11

<sup>713</sup> Participant identification no\_ KJ\_2.1

In the light of above discussion following recommendations appear to be a necessary prerequisite as the Pakistani church seeks to obey its missionary obligation.

- Self-centeredness rated as a second restriction by the churches themselves calls following desires of power, greed, gain and selfish ambitions, both clergy and laity are called to be God’s servants in every aspect of life by serving one another. This is how their own little agendas can be replaced with God’s agenda of mission.
- Both CoP and FGA have to re-consider the issue of self-centeredness in relation to the financial strain that clergy are facing. The diocesan strategy must consider softening the assessment principle so that clergy can fully devote themselves for mission engagement. If funds are not available, where necessary FGA should consider the pastors to be bi-vocational so that they can earn enough to meet basic needs. Working outside the church can give further opportunity to pastors to engage in the secular world and share the good news.

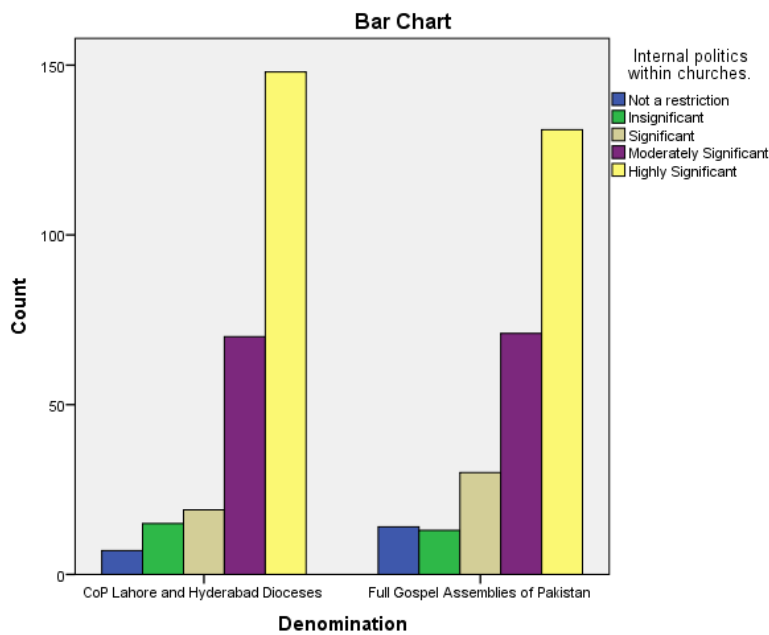
#### **6.4. Internal Politics within the Churches**

The third highest rated perceived restriction is internal politics within the churches. About 53% of the sample population considers it to be a highly significant restriction on the mission task. There is a strong connection between politicking and self-centeredness. Politicking is an activity directed towards acquiring power and influence, achieving one's own goals. It means that self-indulgence and self-centeredness also facilitates an unavoidable slide towards politics and fragmentation. The survey results are illustrated in the below table and bar graph.

*Table 8: Internal Politics within the Churches*

Denomination	Internal politics within the Churches					Total
	Not a restriction	Insignificant	Significant	Moderately Significant	Highly Significant	
CoP (Lahore & Hyderabad Dioceses)	7	15	19	70	148	259
FGA	14	13	30	71	131	259
Total	21	28	49	141	279	518

Figure 8 Internal Politics within the Churches



The above findings provide additional support to previous research indicating the destructive existence of politics and fragmentation within the churches.

In the context of CoP, Pervaiz Sultan has discovered

Many Christians . . . have formed opposition groups which are called 'partibazzi' (groups formed to oppose each other). It has become a characteristic of the Christians in big villages to relate to one group or another, based on kinship, leadership or other factors . . . The influential people . . . adopt the old formula of 'divide and rule' to hold the influence on people. . . Church elections are also heavily affected by partibazi.<sup>714</sup>

Similarly, Azeem Rehmat has pointed to politics in a magazine of FGA,

Today the Pakistani churches have the biggest danger from within which is consuming it. Church is not always threatened from outside but from inside . . . today the Pakistani

<sup>714</sup> P. Sultan, *Church*, 175 & 203



churches are divided from within, different groups are formed, sometimes pastor himself is involved in politicking. . . at times politicking is involved for forming Church councils. A pastor wants his people to be part of the council whereas the opposite group seeks to bring their own people. Sometimes this hatred is so escalated that people fight and they may even physically attack each other.<sup>715</sup>

The issue of politics is specifically related to the process of election in the churches.

One key informant of CoP said,

Elections have become a very dirty game within CoP.<sup>716</sup>

In context of congregational elections Rehmat has written,

Today in churches, we have election system, this is human invention . . . Church elections for pastors, church council or executive leaders is a political election. Due to which the churches are standing at the brink of destruction . . . for sometimes due to elections wrong people come in the position of authority who are necessarily committed to .<sup>717</sup>

It was also noted that some leaders have chosen to forgive others who harmed them for their selfish ambitions. On the other hand, some people have carried on with the destructive tactic of lobbying and behavior of revenge. One confessed that,

I was very much involved in a bishop's election in a certain period of time. I was supporting my brother in law who was one of the candidates for bishop's elections. We worked day and night but in the end he lost because the selected bishop of that time had more power, influence and money. However, I knew that it was not all well behind the elections. So, when he won I gave him a very tough time and in return he gave me even tougher time.<sup>718</sup>

Unfortunately, some leaders have stressed the necessity of politics for survival,

If we wouldn't do politics how can we survive? The congregations will simply throw us out.<sup>719</sup>

Some respondents mentioned issues of nepotism and the drive to gain *izzat* (respect) in relation to politics in the church which directly or indirectly affect mission. One respondent said that,

Instead of building team for mission work, many people in position are spending all their energy to secure their status, position and authority.<sup>720</sup>

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<sup>715</sup> A. Rehmat, 'Is My Church Part of Body of Christ? Part 13' *Satoon-e-Haq*, 24:8 August 2012, 17-20 citing 17

<sup>716</sup> Participant identification no\_ MR\_1.5

<sup>717</sup> A. Rehmat, 'Is My Church Part of Body of Christ?' *Satoon-e-Haq*, 23:5, 2011, 15- 18, citing 16

<sup>718</sup> Participant identification no\_ IG\_2.5

<sup>719</sup> Participant identification no\_ MA\_0.2

<sup>720</sup> Participant identification no\_ AM\_2.6

Another said that,

Only a few are trusted and they have surrounded the leader, rest of the people are at periphery. It does not count if you can do the job better. There is one, who is doing everything, the other one is waiting for a task to be delegated to him. If someone fails to fulfill the drive of *izzat* (respect) of a person in authority, he can be in real trouble.<sup>721</sup>

One of the key informant said,

I know they don't respect me. They just want me to be a problem solver. They want some extra favors from me. I know when they meet me they pretend they respect me but on my back they say nasty things about me. This situation is so intense that we can't think of anything else.<sup>722</sup>

A respondent of FGA mentioned,

. . . Favoritism hinders FGA from engaging in mission. Some leaders preach more but it cannot be seen in their own lives. They only think about themselves, they know how to demand *izzat* (respect) but they don't know how to give *izzat* to the other people as well.<sup>723</sup>

In the light of the above statements, the context of mission for the Pakistani Church can be described as a context of fragmentation and conflict. It also demonstrates that some relationships within the church need healing and reconciliation before the church can offer itself to the lost world with credibility.

#### *6.4.1. Possible Reasons of Politicking*

With this in mind there is a need to ask, why politics are being used in the church? When analyzing the above mentioned contexts of fragmentation, one can notice two important factors that relate to this process of politicking. One is the issue of gaining power and the second is the factor of culture.

Ashkenaz Asif Khan describes the situation in this way:

The powerless people dream of having power. Only a few are able to have power in society... In a country like Pakistan the churches and Christian institutions offer an opportunity to assume positions of power. Tragically, people make use of these organizations as a springboard to rise to positions of power . . . Politics has become a pastime for people who have leadership qualities. These people normally do not have any other civic or national political forum where they can exercise their skills as a politician. The result is that they make the church into a body which is divided into different parties. This can easily start a court case. These are often about property of the church, positions, constitutional matters, illegal

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<sup>721</sup> Participant identification no\_ SM\_1.6

<sup>722</sup> Participant identification no\_ KJ\_1.1

<sup>723</sup> Participant identification no\_ LS\_3.6

occupation of church buildings etc . . . This is rather a common . . . phenomenon . . . Church after church suffers from it.<sup>724</sup>

In the light of Khan's observation, powerless people are accused of causing fragmentation for gaining power. On the contrary, it is also true that they are seeking self-affirmation of their identity within the community because of the experience of exclusion from the wider society. Many of the Christian community lives on the margins of society. Gaining power and influence in society has been denied by the society at large, therefore there are many who seek to gain control and influence within the church.

#### 6.4.2. Cultural Factors Influencing Politicking and Fragmentation

It is also worthwhile to look into cultural factors and the possible influence they can have on the fragmentation of the Christian community. As noted above 80% of Pakistani Christians live in Punjab, therefore the Pakistani Church is, 'strongly influenced by the worldview, beliefs, values, social institutions, and patterns of behavior of Punjabi society.'<sup>725</sup> The *biradari* system dominates the Punjabi worldview. A *biradari* is a kinship group that is larger than the extended family and involves a complex system of favours and obligations.<sup>726</sup>

There are several disadvantages of *biradari*. The loyalty demanded from the *biradari* can make it difficult to be loyal to others. Patrus Yusaf, a Catholic bishop, has done intensive work on the *biradari* system and he points out that the Punjabi culture requires that a man must belong to a *biradari* or he is nothing. *Biradari* demands the highest loyalty. Often individual conscience and personal initiative is crushed. Disagreements between *biradaris* often end in violence and the spirit of revenge lasts for generations.<sup>727</sup>

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<sup>724</sup> Ashkenaz Asif Khan, 'Fate or Call?' cited by F. Carey, 'Edinburgh 1910', citing 163-164

<sup>725</sup> W. McClintock, 'A Sociological Profile of the Christian Minority in Pakistan', *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol. XX, No. 3, July 1992, 343-353 citing 347

<sup>726</sup> W. McClintock, 'A Sociological' citing 349

<sup>727</sup> P. Yusaf, 'The Biradari System in Punjabi Society' *Al- Mushir*, :22:4, 1980, 155-160, citing 155, 158-159

Another disadvantage of *biradari* is nepotism. Some have investigated the concept of *biradari* and have mentioned that the complex system of favours and obligations within the *biradari* leads to a situation where Christian leaders in places of position and authority are expected to use their influence to provide economic and political support for their *biradari* members. If requests for jobs are not fulfilled within the *biradari* the relationships can become very strained, even if those requesting are not competent to fulfil the job. Yet, complying in providing help will result in heavy criticism of nepotism from other church members. Ironically, those critics would do the same in securing benefits for their *biradari* once they were in a position to do so.<sup>728</sup>

Another issue connected to politicking and fragmentation is of *izzat*. *Izzat* is another foundational value of Punjabi culture and is used as a psychological tool for controlling society and ensure conformance with social, cultural, religious and moral values. *Izzat* can be described as honour, prestige, respect, personal pride, self-esteem or worth. The opposite of *izzat* is *be- izzat* that brings shame not only to an individual but to whole *biradari*.<sup>729</sup>

Once lost, *izzat* can never be fully regained. It can be partially restored, however, either by avenging the original offense by an act of violence or, in the case of minor offenses, by seeking reconciliation. Thus the concept of *izzat* fosters in the individual a loyalty to the family and clan and an adherence to tradition.<sup>730</sup> The concept of *izzat* influences the behavior of Christians within the church as well. The longing for *izzat* and personal recognition in a relational society where the *biradari* has deep influence on all aspects of life, leads to scheming, fragmentation, manipulation and putdowns.<sup>731</sup>

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<sup>728</sup> W. McClintock, 'A Sociological' citing 349-350; D, Moghal, *Human Person in Punjabi Society: A Tension Between Religion and Culture*, 1997, 66; P. Sookhdeo, *A People Betrayed*, 309

<sup>729</sup> W. McClintock, 'A Sociological' citing 350; P. Yusaf, 'The Principle of Izzat: Its Role in the Spiritual Formation of Punjabi Religions' *Al- Mushir*, :22: 1, 1980, 17-28, citing 18

<sup>730</sup> W. McClintock, 'A Sociological' citing 350

<sup>731</sup> Heinrich's famous and often cited research on oppressed classes in India had identified a number of abnormal patterns of behavior which result from continuing oppression of a community including 'submissiveness and acquiescence'<sup>731</sup> He has further pointed out three main reactions of the oppressed classes: a) direct reaction of resentment; b) concealment reaction (individual withdrawal of the oppressed in his contact with the dominating group) and c) indirect reaction (the oppressed expressed their anger towards people other than dominating group such as towards village pastors by showing lack of respect for them (J. Heinrich *Psychology of Oppressed People*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1937, 15-42)

Looking at social factors causing fragmentation, there is a tendency that the mission of God is lost in the ambiguities of petty politicking. Fragmentation and power struggle bear profound implications for mission practice. In this context, there are several questions; who has the power to make decisions for mission work? Who is in control of the resources and initiatives?

#### *6.4.3. Power and Mission Engagement*

Mission is not about gaining power, influence or *izzat* for one's own self but it is about surrendering to the will of God. The church should never seek power for its own selfish ambitions.

Christianity speaks radically differently of power *for and with others*: the power that serves and does not dominate or manipulate others (1 Pet 5:2-3). It is the power that is available for mission. For the first Christians, the Spirit of God was the source of power, through whom the power of God could be released to perform his will. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God who bestows power, the presence that empowers. God gives his power away, he entrusts it to us for our mission.<sup>732</sup>

In addition, there is the power of weakness; God choose the weak things of the world, to shame the strong (1 Corinthians 1:27). It is through this weakness that God demonstrates his power and strength (2 Corinthians 13:4). Mission engagement through weakness can be powerful mission, showing to the society at large that a different dynamic is possible.

In Scriptures, fragmentation is a sign of the sinful world and of powers aiming at the destruction of the harmonious community that is intended by God. In this regard forgiveness and reconciliation are vitally important. The wholeness and reconciliation that God offers to the broken world is also offered to the church which is God's appointed agent of the good news of reconciliation. Nazir-Ali puts it extremely well, when he says that

The Gospel's offer of wholeness to humanity involves more than social action; it includes a further dimension of spiritual healing. Such healing is concerned with all aspects of life. It should bring integration of personality, mental stability and experience of salvation along with physical healing. An area that is much emphasized today is the healing of relationships.

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<sup>732</sup> A. Fonseca, 'Power' in A. Moreau et al, *EDWM*, 303-305, citing 303

Christians as a community should show marks of restoration and wholeness in their communal life. This is powerful witness in the world.<sup>733</sup>

#### 6.4.4. Recommendations

- The problem of politicking during elections needs urgent attention from Synod and FGA board. In context of democratic polity of CoP, Nazir- Ali has suggested an appropriate solution. This can be equally applicable on FGA. He says,

... when elections are held to a vacant see or for officers of a diocesan council or synod. Without opting for a 'sectarian' alternative, it is nevertheless highly desirable that there should be doctrinal and ethical criteria for those who would seek membership of any council in the Church. Also the period between election and the election itself should be sharply reduced to avoid canvassing, corruption and manipulation.<sup>734</sup>

- A theology and practice of mission in the context of politicking and fragmentation needs to begin with a courageous act of self-criticism and the call for repentance. The Pakistani Church must confess where it has failed to demonstrate God's power in mission but has pursued after its own power and influence. The Church is an agent of transformation and it must consistently and prayerfully reflect which components of the culture cause fragmentation for mission engagement and seek God's guidance to transform them.
- In continuing its mission how can the Pakistani Church be saved from its own sin of gaining influence and power? For, this both laity and ordained clergy in the church should critically evaluate themselves and thus the congregants on a consistent basis. The church should take serious steps to create an interdependency and accountability on the part of clergy, people in position and congregations. A situation of mistrust and fragmentation suggests that there is not only a need of dialogue with the non-Christian

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<sup>733</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *Frontiers*, 156

<sup>734</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *Frontiers*, 94-95

community but the leaders and congregants should be willing to acknowledge the need of dialogue amongst themselves as well.

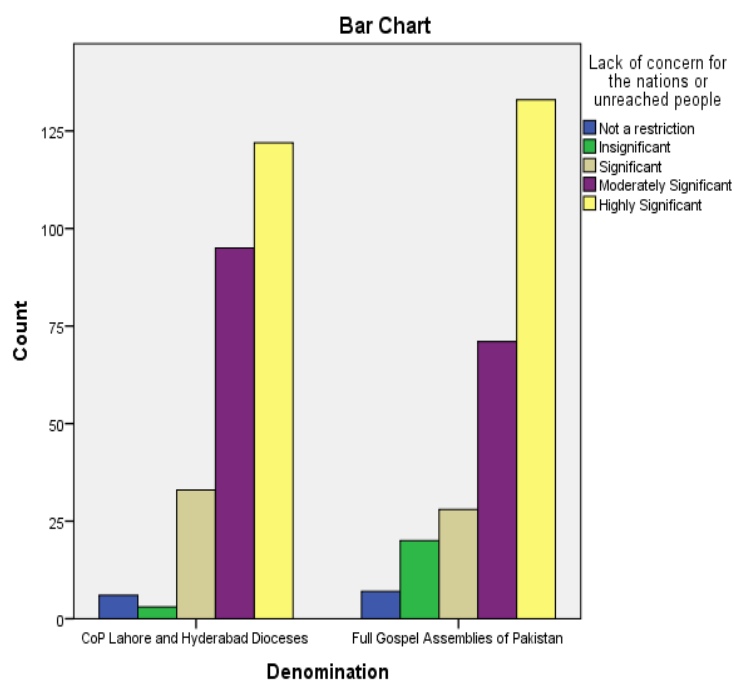
## 6.5. Lack of Concern for the Nations and Unreached People Groups

In the task of mission engagement, another perceived restriction that appears to be prevalent in the Pakistani Church is lack of concern for the unreached people groups. About 49% people have rated it as the fourth highest restriction. The results of the field research are shown in the following graph chart and table.

*Table 9: Lack of Concern for the Nations*

Denomination	Lack of concern for the nations or unreached people					Total
	Not a restriction	Insignificant	Significant	Moderately Significant	Highly Significant	
CoP (Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses)	6	3	33	95	122	259
FGA	7	20	28	71	133	259
Total	13	23	61	166	255	518

Figure 9: Lack of Concern for the Nations



Ralph Winter's 'Hidden Peoples' article at the 1974 Lausanne Conference, brought a crucial focus on unreached people groups and population segments. Since then, massive research has been done by David Barrett, Patrick Johnstone, the Joshua Project and others who later published and provided listings of these people groups. Mission agencies, churches and denominations began to mobilize awareness of prayer for, and involvement among, these groups.<sup>735</sup>

Chapter 1 defined 'people group' as referring to a large grouping of individuals who perceive themselves to have a common affinity for one another because of their shared language, religion, ethnicity, residence, occupation, class or caste, situation.<sup>736</sup> An unreached people group refers to a people group within which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians able to evangelize this people group. The term people group is sometimes applied interchangeably for 'nation'. According to the Joshua project currently there are 394 people groups or nations in Pakistan out of which 384 are unreached. This means that among 384 people groups

<sup>735</sup> For example *Hidden and Forgotten People, Including Those Who Are Disabled*, Lausanne Occasional Paper No. 35, Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, Pattaya, Thailand, September 29 To October 5, 2004, n.p.

<sup>736</sup> R. Winter and B. Koch, 'Finishing the Task: The Unreached Peoples Challenge' *IJFM*, Vol 16:2, Summer 1999, 67- 76, citing 69



there is no indigenous community of believing Christians. This is a grave situation which suggests the urgency of reaching out strategically to the unreached.

#### *6.5.1. Biblical Basis for Reaching to the Nations/People Groups*

For the purpose of evaluation, an important question was: why these people groups should be reached? Referring back to chapter 2, it has been clearly established that God's redemptive purpose for the nations is the dominant motif of the whole Bible. The Abrahamic covenant is an undeniable evidence of God's universal intention. Abraham was called for the ultimate mission of God to bless all the nations (Genesis 12:3).

The divine election and call of Israel by God was 'a missionary and ministry call' (Exodus 19:5-6) as suggested by Walter Kaiser.<sup>737</sup> As a 'kingdom of priests'; Israel had to play the role of mediator as they related to the nations and people groups around them.<sup>738</sup> It is also noteworthy that 175 references in the psalms have a universalistic note relate to the nations of the world.<sup>739</sup> In the prophets God's redemptive plan for the nations is further unfolded. For example the prophets predicted that God would realize the covenantal goal through His Servant is 'to restore the tribes of Jacob' and 'to be light to the nations' so that his light be taken 'to the ends of the earth' (Isaiah 49:5, 6). The OT hints at how the eschatological vision of the nations coming to know God will be realized. The universal implementation of this vision comes through the unique mission of Jesus. Jesus himself said, 'and this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come' (Matthew 24:14).

Only after Jesus had accomplished redemption through his death and resurrection did he give the disciples the explicit command to bring the gospel to the nations with the great commission. Luke depicts the gospel going out from Jerusalem to the nations.<sup>740</sup> Acts 1:8 provides the structure of the Book of Acts as it details the expansion of the church in, Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth.<sup>741</sup>

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<sup>737</sup> W. Kaiser, *Mission* 24

<sup>738</sup> W. Kaiser, *Mission*, 23 & J. Blauw, *The Missionary*, 24

<sup>739</sup> R. Martin-Achard, *A Light* 58

<sup>740</sup> C. Ott et al (eds.), *Encountering Theology*, 41

<sup>741</sup> D. Johnson *Let's Study Acts*, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2003, xx-xxii.

Finally, the book of Revelation gives a vision of the end by depicting ultimate victory of Christ over all evil and establishment of the kingdom in fullness. '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. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice, salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb' (Revelation 7:9-10). The Bible closes with a vision that the nations will join in the praise of God. The whole Bible clearly reveals God's intention for the redemption of all nations, which makes it important for the Church to reach out to the nations with the good news.

### *6.5.2. CoP's Concern for the Unreached People Groups*

Chapter 4 has already seen, in relation to the arena of mission theology of Pakistani churches that both CoP and FGA have soft targets for mission that include nominal Christians or Hindu communities and not without a reason. At the beginning of this chapter, it was seen that the fear of persecution plays a key role in determining the arena of mission. However, it is critical to ask that what is being done for reaching out to the people groups?

In the qualitative research, the key informants of Lahore diocese said that people groups are not a specific priority in their mission agenda. Therefore, the Lahore diocese does not hold any strategic plan to reach out to other people groups. One key respondent said and many gave a similar kind of response,

We don't have any specific work among other people groups. Our main focus is nominal Christians. However, it is not to say that the CoP is ignoring the reaching out to the people groups. Hyderabad diocese of CoP is an evangelistic diocese and it is doing extensive work among the tribal Hindus.<sup>742</sup>

It must be mentioned here that the Lahore diocese have been engaged in past in reaching out to the Mazibi Sikhs and Balmikis. Chapter 5 has also given hint of diocesan cross-cultural outreach through St. Andrews and the Rev. Robert Otto's work in outskirts of Lahore city.

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<sup>742</sup> Participant Identification no\_IJ\_1.1

It is a well established that the very reason for Hyderabad diocese's origin and existence is for mission among people groups of Sindh. This is one of the major strengths of CoP. It is also a matter of great significance that Hyderabad diocese is engaged in more than 10 people groups in Sindh through evangelism and social action.<sup>743</sup> Bishop Kaleem in his interview clearly pointed out that 80% of the diocesan ministry is among unreached people groups. Despite this, some of the participants from the diocese showed a great concern and frustration because they felt that there is a lot more opportunity to reach out to Hindus but due to lack of resources and team work the diocese is not able to avail itself of these opportunities.

However, even if Hyderabad diocese is reaching out to the Hindu people groups does this justify that the other dioceses of CoP should not be reaching out to unreached people groups? Is it fulfilling the missionary obligation on behalf of all the rest of dioceses of CoP for people groups? If so, on a practical basis, does Synod or other dioceses provide consistent support to this diocese to do so? On the other hand, Hyderabad diocese has confirmed its financial struggles and also the fact that there is an unequal distribution of resources within CoP. Bishop Kaleem also pointed out that,

We don't receive any support from other dioceses, till to date no system has been established through which we would share any kind of resources. Every diocese is autonomous and busy with their own work. The rich dioceses like Lahore and Karachi have strong institutions and they are sustainable. Poor dioceses like Hyderabad, Faisalabad and Multan are struggling.<sup>744</sup>

This also sparks a question about how other dioceses claim a legitimate ownership of the mission engagement of Hyderabad diocese among people groups without investing much in it? For Lahore diocese, there is a little evidence to support its claim of concern for other people groups by depending on the ministry of Hyderabad diocese. Therefore, it is crucial for Lahore diocese to return to its original vision as affirmed by the constitution that 'it is the duty of every diocese acting as a whole to spread the knowledge of the Gospel throughout its territory and to provide for the spiritual needs of the members of the Church who reside within it.'<sup>745</sup>

Returning to the organizational structure of CoP, it is clearly noted that its administration is on a territorial basis with diocese as its unit. Each diocese is under

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<sup>743</sup> Participant Identification no\_KJ\_1.1

<sup>744</sup> See also chapter 4

<sup>745</sup> Constitution of Church of Pakistan, 20

the charge of a bishop who has jurisdiction throughout the diocesan territory and no jurisdiction outside the territory.<sup>746</sup> This territorial jurisdiction also defines the immediate scope or limits of the diocesan ministry. The strengths of such an arrangement are centralization, organization, unity and order, at least in the diocesan area. Now this structure needs to be seen with the perspective of mission engagement as well.

How does this structure facilitate or hinder mission engagement outside the diocesan territorial jurisdiction? The field research gathered a mixed response to this question. A few people think that the diocesan structure facilitates mission engagement for each diocese. Each diocese is autonomous and can have its own mission goals. Yet, there are some who think that the diocesan structure hinders mission engagement. For the centralization creates some problems because it controls everything, power is centralized. When engaging in mission, the church traditions have to be followed, as there is little flexibility.

On centralization of CoP Nazir-Ali has warned

A top heavy superstructure, directly responsible for mission and ministry of the church is not desirable. Bureaucracy kills local initiative, is cumbersome and too far removed from the situation on the ground to be able to take initiatives on its own. Our fear is that the Church in this respect will simply reflect society at large. In a heavily centralized situation, there is danger that . . . centralization will become an occasion for dispensing patronage and privilege. Thus, the power, instead of being dispersed throughout the whole Church, will become unacceptably concentrated.<sup>747</sup>

Beside that, it is also identified that there are so many pastoral responsibilities within the parishes that church planting among other people groups is neglected. In the organizational structure of CoP, if not in principles, but practically, there is limited space to reach out of the diocese because each diocese is busy doing its own ministry and there is a lack of initiatives within dioceses for mission purposes or for reaching out to the other nations.

### 6.5.3. *FGA's Concern for the Nations*

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<sup>746</sup> The Constitution of Church of Pakistan, 20

<sup>747</sup> M. Nazir-Ali, *Frontiers*, 92-93

In *Satoon-e-Haq* Azeem Rehmat laments the fact that the Pakistani Church has forgotten God's plan for the nations. He asks how many of the people groups are being adopted by our churches? How many evangelists have we sent to the unreached people groups? In his judgement, the answer to both the above questions is no one.<sup>748</sup> When key respondents were asked for their mission engagement among the unreached people group there were only a few examples given of reaching out to other people groups. Most of the key informants confirmed that until recently most of FGA's work focus has been to reach out to the nominal Christians and still is.

One of the exceptions in the context of mission among other people groups has been that FGA had established its work in Sindh among the tribal people groups since the late 1970s. However, FGA's work in interior Sindh is rapidly declining. There are several reasons for this. The major issue is of internal fragmentation, which has led opposition groups to the courts. Consequently, various projects of FGA have been closed down in Sindh, which were used for reaching out to the Hindu people groups.

There are some recent developments worth mentioning here. One significant development is that several years ago a few local churches of FGA in Lahore shared their resources to send one Pakistani evangelist to the northernmost area of Pakistan and his ministry among people groups is continuing and is fruitful.<sup>749</sup> Along with him there are more people who are engaged in proclamation and service in the North.<sup>750</sup>

With this there is a growing trend among FGA in recent years for praying for the unreached people groups and this concern has been shown in publications.<sup>751</sup> There were also a few participants in the focus groups who mentioned that their churches regularly pray for unreached people groups.<sup>752</sup> They have also some data gathered from mission conferences, which are used as prayer guides. This growing awareness is a good sign but concerns remain over FGA's deteriorating work among people groups in Sindh.

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<sup>748</sup> A. Rehmat, 'Is my Church a Missionary Church' part 1, *Satoon-e-Haq*, July 25:7, 2013, 14-17, citing 15

<sup>749</sup> Participant Identification no LQ\_3.1

<sup>750</sup> Participant Identification no LS\_

<sup>751</sup> T. Waris, 'The Biggest Challenges Faced by the Church in 21<sup>st</sup> Century', *Satoon-e-Haq*, Aug 2013, 27:6, 9-13, citing 9

<sup>752</sup> Participant Identification no- FGA\_FG2

#### *6.5.4. Possible Reasons for lack of Concern for the Nations*

Why is there a lack of concern for the nations and people groups? Some of the reasons could be as following;

##### *6.5.4.1. Lack of Theological and Biblical Reflection*

The first major reason is rooted in the lack of theological reflection. Chapter 4 has already seen that the theological reflection of Pakistani churches on mission is inconsistent. The biblical motif of God's redemptive purpose for the nations is not fully appreciated among the churches. There is little literature available on the theme of reaching out to the people groups. The nations are certainly overlooked if not fully forgotten. Undeniably, in this area, the Hyderabad diocese has made the most significant contribution in comparison to other churches. Nevertheless, the task of reaching to all the people groups in Pakistan is massive and Hyderabad diocese cannot accomplish it alone. So, there is a need of prayerful reflection among the churches to ask guidance from God how to reach out to the unreached.

##### *6.5.4.2. Lack of Awareness and Knowledge of People Groups*

It is observed that, at present, although being aware of its missionary obligation the Pakistani Church is not yet fully aware of the strategic mission focus on the unreached. One obvious reason is that they have not heard much on the reality of the unreached situation - that there are nearly 400 unreached people groups in Pakistan. Although the level of awareness of the Hyderabad diocese of people groups is quite high.

It is also to be noted that if people are aware of the concept of unreached people groups they immediately think of unreached clusters in Sindh or Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Both Lahore diocese and FGA's center is Lahore which is the capital city of Punjab. Due to better facilities in the fields of education, business and medicine, the city has attracted many from the unreached people groups. Which means that some of the unreached are at very door step of Lahore diocese and FGA.

Moreover, there are a significant number of people groups settled in Punjab who have little access to the gospel, for instance, Parsees, Rajputs, Skaikh, Ahmadi, Kashmiris and Jats. There is very little information in churches for or about, these groups. Therefore, these people groups are overlooked by both CoP and FGA. The challenge to the Lahore diocese and FGA Church is to take concrete steps for reaching nations on its mission agenda. Wayne McClintock has conducted some significant research on mirasi people which can be useful recourse for Lahore diocese and FGA as they engage with people groups in Lahore.<sup>753</sup>

Some other reasons for a lack of concern for the nation may include,

- Lack of commitment and love for the unreached.
- The church may have low prioritization and unwillingness to sacrifice financially.
- The churches are self-centered and their internal programs and agendas take precedence over the unreached. Therefore, they are not able to balance those with their involvement with the urgency of the people groups who have not heard.

#### 6.5. *Recommendations*

For enhancing the mission engagement among the people groups a number of recommendations flow from the above discussion. They are:

- Prayerful theological reflection should be a priority in order to reach out to those without the message of the Gospel.
- This could be done by conducting mission mobilization courses within the churches. For instance, the Kairos course can be an effective tool. The Kairos Course is an interactive course on world Christian mission, designed to educate, inspire and challenge Christians to active and meaningful participation.<sup>754</sup>

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<sup>753</sup> W. McClintock, *The Mirasi People's Occupations*, Lahore: Nirali Kitaben Abes. 1991; W. McClintock, *The Mirasi People of Lahore, Volume One: Ethnography*. Lahore, Association for Community Training Services 1990a and *The Mirasi People of Lahore, Volume Two: Summary and Recommendations*, Lahore, Pakistan: Association for Community Training Services, 1990b

<sup>754</sup> [www.kairoscourse.org/](http://www.kairoscourse.org/)

- The churches can take very basic steps by starting with regular prayer for the unreached people groups. Their prayers can be informed by numerous resources available on the Internet.<sup>755</sup> In addition, the mission organization and para-church bodies can also assist CoP and FGA to engage in mission through prayer. Various partnerships with these mission bodies can also help to engage in mission practically.
- There is also a need to revisit the present denominational structures and issues with new insights as to how the existing systems can support mission engagement. For example there is a need for the dioceses to come together and at the central synod how to shape mission strategies for reaching out to the people groups at diocesan, parish and deanery level.
- FGA's existing work among people groups in Sindh is suffering due to internal issues. A foremost challenge for FGA is to resolve the conflict for the sake of its mission engagement among the unreached.
- Formation of different networks for mission engagement can be a useful strategy. Through focused collaborative ministries of CoP and FGA (or other churches) church planting and social ministries can be developed through which the unreached can be given access to the gospel.

## **6.6. Conclusion**

This chapter has explored the perceived restrictions in mission engagement. The qualitative field research gathered sixteen restrictions, which shows that the Pakistani Church is facing an ongoing series of restrictions in the task of mission. The quantitative research used the restrictions for rating on a scale from 'greatest restriction to not a restriction'. The data gathered by the quantitative research is analyzed by the SPSS program. On the basis of the results of the analysis the four most significant restrictions are evaluated in the above discussion i.e. fear of

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<sup>755</sup> [www.joshuaproject.net/resources/prayer-guides](http://www.joshuaproject.net/resources/prayer-guides), [www.globalfrontiermissions.org/pray-for-unreached-people-groups/](http://www.globalfrontiermissions.org/pray-for-unreached-people-groups/)



persecution, self-centeredness, internal politics and lack of concern for the nations and people groups. In all these areas some recommendations are also drawn.

Due to limited space, the other twelve restrictions cannot be discussed in detail. However, before reaching the final conclusion of this chapter it appears essential to have a look at them. The restrictions listed below are identified by CoP and FGA themselves. With the data analysis these are presented in the sequence of their rating starting from highly significant restriction to least significant restriction.

1. Fear of Persecution because of certain laws
2. Self-centeredness and personal ambitions
3. Internal Politics within the church
4. Lack of concern for the people groups and nations
5. Family pressure and household responsibilities
6. Lack of understanding of personal calling
7. Lack of prayer
8. Lack of finances in the local congregations
9. Lack of discipleship in the churches
10. Lack of mission training in the local congregations
11. Local congregation's business with herself - internal focus
12. Lack of mission awareness within the local congregations
13. Mismanagement of resources within the local congregations
14. Lack of effective leadership
15. Court cases over congregational issues or property matters
16. Denominational structure of the church

As is clearly evident some of the restrictions are dealt with as sub-themes in the above discussion. Now with the completed list, the picture of restrictions for mission engagement is sharply visible. As a matter of fact, many of these restrictions are failings of the church that 'ruin our witness to the world and deface the likeness of Christ and deny the gospel of his transforming grace.'<sup>756</sup>

Thus evaluating the restrictions to mission engagement for Pakistani churches, it is immediately prominent that most of the formidable restrictions to mission

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<sup>756</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 283

engagement are internal rather than external. It seems almost certain that a number of identifiable forces are at work in the church which are more powerful than external factors in damaging God's mission in Pakistan. That makes it obvious that the Pakistani churches most important battles are fought on its internal grounds. This comes with a caution that the vibrant energy of the churches can be dangerously confined to an inward focus rather than exploring opportunities of the mission engagement in the wider context. There can be no response to such things other than repentance and seeking after God's guidance for the mission entrusted to the Pakistani Church.

In light of the above discussion, it seems fitting to conclude this chapter with the powerful words of Christopher Wright,

The first recorded command of Jesus was not 'Go', but 'Repent' . . . So, it must be for the church. We cannot go forth in mission to the world without attending to ourselves. This is not to suggest that we have to wait until we are perfect before we engage in mission. There never would have been any mission - Old or New Testament - if that had been the case. It means that part of our missional responsibility has to include facing up to the failings and shortcomings of the church itself-precisely because they are such a damning hindrance to God's mission through us.<sup>757</sup>

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<sup>757</sup> C. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 282

## 7. Final Conclusion

Instead of its mission engagement, the Pakistani Church is in a global spotlight because of the surrounding socio-political issues, persecution, Islamic radicalism and terrorism. The purpose of this pioneering study is to evaluate the mission engagement of the Pakistani churches in three main areas namely, theology of mission, mission practice and perceived restrictions. It has compared the mission engagement of CoP and FGA by bringing out their similarities and differences, as well as issues of growth and decline. The argument of this thesis is that the mission engagement of the Pakistani churches is inadequate. This is primarily due to inconsistent theological reflections on mission, incomplete mission practice and overwhelming internal restrictions in the churches.

The inquiry involved both quantitative and qualitative methods. Multiple methods of data collection were used which included documentation, archival records, direct observation, participant observation and physical artifacts. Moreover, based on sampling from key informants, the qualitative research gathered data from interviews and focus groups. To substantiate the qualitative research quantitative surveys were conducted. For data analysis of the quantitative research, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) programme has been used. Graphical techniques are used for individual results, for comparison, to establish relationships and to identify trends. To the best of my knowledge, this empirical work has not been carried out in Pakistani churches before.

This research began by pointing to the lack of mission engagement in the complex context of the Pakistani Church. The immediate challenge that bounced back was the critical question about the basis on which one can determine the validity and reliability of this investigation. In chapter 2, after the review of a select literature of mission studies, a combination of criteria was constructed from the works of two distinguished scholars: Christopher Wright and Michael Nazir-Ali . To evaluate the mission theology of Pakistani churches, Wright's biblical theology of mission was used as the first analytical tool. Wright has developed a biblical theology of mission from four major sections of the biblical story, i.e. creation, fall, redemption in history and new creation. Nazir-Ali's work on the church's mission practice was used as a

second analytical tool for this evaluation of mission practice. Nazir-Ali argues that a Church practices her missionary vocation in a number of different ways. He identifies them as presence, identification, dialogue, action and evangelism.

From this launch pad, the research explored the origin and history of the Pakistani church and, in particular, the churches under study namely CoP and FGA. It was argued that the subcontinent has a long history of Christian activity stretching back to the Apostle Thomas and certainly predating the Christianization of many parts of Europe. However, the current Pakistani church with its diverse ethnic backgrounds is a product of the 16<sup>th</sup> century modern missionary movement. It was discovered that CoP and FGA both originated with a distinct mission focus and purpose. Thus, they have a prestigious heritage.

Insofar as self-reflection is measured in terms of research and publication, the research has identified that there is currently very little, if any, up to date consistent academic reflection on theology of mission in the Pakistani churches. Additionally, in the global arena of theological conversation and engagement, the voice from the Pakistani Church is almost entirely absent. Thus, the quest for theological reflection among Pakistani churches proved challenging and led to the strong probability that most of the theology of mission in Pakistan is carried on in an oral form such as worship, prayers, reflection on the Scriptures and informal conversations. Such oral reflections enabled respondents to participate in the current research and give responses on Wright's grid for evaluation of mission theology of the churches.

The research has discovered that currently CoP and FGA both have serious gaps in their theological reflection on mission. An interrogation into the existent theological resources of CoP and FGA led to the conclusion that CoP with its longer history and theological diversity has indulged in inconsistent theological reflection. Conversely, FGA with fewer resources has successfully maintained a consistent published theological reflection for more than 50 years, although admittedly mission theology is a marginalized component in it.

Based on Christopher Wright's grid of biblical theology and the criteria constructed in chapter 2, in chapter 4 an evaluation of the mission theology of CoP and FGA was conducted in four major areas i.e. scriptural unity, creation, fall and redemption in history and new creation.

Due to the lack of publication and reflection on mission theology in Pakistan, Wright's missional hermeneutical approach had to be used to explain the Pakistani context and help the Pakistani Church to understand the Scriptures as the grand narrative in relation to her missionary obligation. Moreover, Wright's grid has been significant in facilitating the research and in providing a way to see mission in the unity of the Scriptures. Wright's insistence on keeping mission theology and mission practice together has strengthened the conviction on which much of this thesis proceeds that theology and mission practice, often considered as distinct concepts and disciplines, are in fact integral to each other.

It has been discovered that CoP and FGA's mission theologies are based largely on the NT and that the OT has a marginal place in them. This implies that in both cases the Biblical story has not been seen in all its full magnificence but only a small part has been considered, which definitely means they only understand the biblical story as a fragmented story. As CoP and FGA have failed to grasp that the biblical story runs from creation to new creation, ecological concerns and action are not considered to be fully legitimate parts of the mission of the church, leaving their theologies largely anthropocentric and not cosmic. Thus, it is argued that there is a need for both CoP and FGA to engage with mission reading of whole of the canon.

In the section on redemption, the understanding of mission, the relationship between social action and evangelism and the role of the Holy Spirit in mission are explored. It has been identified that the partnership between evangelism and social responsibility is of roughly equal weight in Lahore diocese whereas in Hyderabad diocese and FGA it is unequal as both churches give precedence to evangelism over the social action. Conviction of the Holy Spirit's redemptive transformation and empowerment at the individual level is quite clear in both churches. However, any expectation of experiencing power for real Holy Spirit redemption in fallen structures of societies or communities at the corporate level is not fully realized as yet.

It is clear that by restricting the good news to soft targets the Pakistani Church is not facilitating the vision and the possibility of a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language (Revelation 7:9-10). In Christ, the Abrahamic blessing is

sought but there is no evidence that anywhere the churches have actually taken upon themselves any Abrahamic responsibility by doing theology on how and why to reach the nations and then implementing it.

Sufficient evidence is gathered to conclude that the mission theology of both the denominations is inconsistent and incomplete. Due to their fragmented understanding of the biblical story, their focus is anthropocentric rather than on cosmic redemption. The Abrahamic responsibility of being a blessing to the nations is largely neglected. It is argued that a good and strong theology of mission based on the biblical story as a whole is essential if a proper level of mission engagement in the Pakistani churches is to be established. Only then will their mission theology be adequate to provide direction, validation and correction to their mission practice.

In the context of the ambiguity surrounding the term 'mission' and its engagement Nazir-Ali's grid was an extremely helpful tool to facilitate and limit the research. Based on the grid, this research has evaluated mission practice of the Pakistani churches in five different dimensions: that is presence, identification, social action, dialogue and proclamation.

It has been discovered that there are some healthy signs of mission engagement in both CoP and FGA. Strong institutional presence and cultural identification through idiom, thought and architecture are some of these signs. Different forms of the dialogue occurring in CoP and FGA were identified, including exchange of information, nurturing and dialogue amongst scholars. However, it is argued that this mission engagement cannot be considered complete or adequate. This is due to the agonizing fact that the churches have succumbed to the tendency to passive presence, intentional alienation from the contextual society and compartmentalized identification as the lines of least resistance. There are also significant evidences that the churches are engaged in social action through prayer, service and advocacy. However, the social action is heavily overshadowed by the complex issues of secular agendas, income generation and financial dependence on the affluent churches or mission agencies.

Most importantly the evangelistic dimension of the mission engagement is withering or being compromised. Proclamation, conversion, discipleship and

church planting are being consumed by the fear of radicalism and the need for self-survival. So, it is concluded that the mission engagement of the Pakistani churches will only be considered adequate when it is intentionally crowned with evangelism that will enable the Church to point beyond herself to the One who is the source of mission engagement.

This research has wrestled with the perceived restrictions on mission engagement. Sixteen restrictions were discovered through qualitative field research. The quantitative research enabled the prioritization of the perceived restrictions on a scale of 'highly significant restriction' to 'not a restriction'. The data gathered by the quantitative research was analyzed by the SPSS Programme. The first four highly significant restrictions were found to be fear of persecution, self-centeredness, internal politics and lack of concern for the nations and people groups.

Thus, in evaluating the restrictions to mission engagement of the Pakistani churches this research has clearly argued and demonstrated that there are sufficient evidences that most of the formidable restrictions to mission engagement are internal rather than external. It seems almost certain that a number of identifiable forces are at work within the Church that are more powerful than external factors in damaging God's mission in Pakistan. The main battles are fought on its internal grounds and not on external grounds. The Church must not let its light be extinguished and its salt be tasteless. Therefore, the inward focus has to be repented of with a U turn to God's grace and love coupled with exploring opportunities of mission engagement into a wider context.

This research could not touch upon all the issues pertaining to the mission engagement of the Pakistani churches. There are a number of potential leads to further research.

- 1) A thorough study of the historical mission engagement of the Pakistani Churches with special reference to the local contributions.
- 2) Developing a contextual theology of mission for effective mission engagement.
- 3) A study of vulnerable mission by exploring the meaning and working of a redeemed community in all of its vulnerability by demonstrating God's redemption in Pakistan holistically.

- 4) An investigation into the oral theology of Pakistani churches.
- 5) Discipleship as an appropriate mission model for mission engagement in the Pakistani context.
- 6) Restoration and Healing ministries in the Church as a prerequisite for mission engagement.

This research has argued that the Pakistani Church is engaged in mission but in an inadequate form. This is mainly due to insufficient and inconsistent theological reflection, incomplete practice and overwhelming internal restrictions of the church. Is there hope for such an engagement? Returning to the role of the Church as pointed out by Bosch, 'the *missio Dei* institutes the *missio ecclesiae*'.<sup>758</sup> Hence the church has a mission to fulfill because God has a mission. To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people, since God is a fountain of sending love.<sup>759</sup> There is immense hope in this because as 'salvation belongs to our God' (Revelations 7:10) so does mission belong to Him.<sup>760</sup> Therefore, the mission engagement of the Pakistani Church can move on in all that is possible in its fullness and completeness if the Church is willing to consistently discern and tune in to the voice of the one who commanded, '*Repent*', '*Come follow me*' and '*Go*' with an unwavering assurance that '*I am with you always*'.

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<sup>758</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 370, 391

<sup>759</sup> D. Bosch, *Transforming*, 389-390

<sup>760</sup> C. Wright, *Mission of God*, 531



## **Appendix A: Information Sheet**

**Study Title: An Evaluation of the Engagement of the Pakistani Churches in Mission**

**Sub-Title: A Comparative Case Study on the Church of Pakistan (Lahore & Hyderabad Diocese) and Full Gospel Assemblies of Pakistan**

You are being invited to take part in a research study. In order to help you decide whether to do so it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. For any further information or questions about my research, please do not hesitate to contact me on: [gloriaaziz@yahoo.com](mailto:gloriaaziz@yahoo.com)

Take time to decide whether you wish to take part and thank you for your time and consideration.

The purpose of this study is to assess the involvement of the Pakistani churches in Christian mission through examining their mission theology, practice and restrictions. You have been chosen to take part in the research because you are or have been part of either Church of Pakistan (Lahore or Hyderabad Diocese) or Full Gospel Assemblies of Pakistan or you are from a partner organization of one of these churches.

You are free to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you do wish to take part, you have the right to withdraw your consent without explanation at any time, even after the research has taken place, without giving a reason. Please notify me in writing if you do. However, it is usually not practical to withdraw consent after the research project has been written up. If you take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form and you will be given a copy of it to keep, with this information.

The research will involve carrying out focus groups, surveys, and semi-structured interviews of a number of church leaders and mission workers. During your interview or survey, you will be expected to answer questions regarding your mission theology and practice. The interview or survey would not take more than 30 - 90 minutes. The interview will not be using any probing personal questions that may affect your wellbeing. The research will be highlighting issues at the denominational level, which can be improved or done differently, for getting involved in effective mission.

The benefits of this pioneering study are: it has a great potential to inform and strengthen the churches' reflection and practice of mission in Pakistan today. It has the ability to become a foundational study for the renewal of the powerful advance of the Gospel in Pakistan. Through this study, Pakistani churches should be better mobilized and engaged in mission. Therefore, your contribution in this study can help me understand the missional engagement of Pakistani churches and help the Pakistani Church to be effectively engaged in mission.

All information and data obtained from the field research will be kept confidential. Any identifying details will be altered or omitted from the dissertation. In the publishing of reports pseudonyms will be used for participants, agencies and geographical settings and the original recordings and any transcripts of the interviews will be kept securely. The obtained data will be transcribed and analyzed. The research project and any research data will only be read by myself and the examiners, and any data will be destroyed once the project has been marked and approved by the Exam Board.

Counselling support will be available should people be emotionally distressed through participation in the research.

If you require further information or have any questions or complaints about this research or research process. Please contact my first supervisor Bishop Michael Nazir Ali on [oxtrad@gmail.com](mailto:oxtrad@gmail.com).

Thank you for considering taking part.

Yours Sincerely,

Gloria Calib

PhD Researcher at London School of Theology,  
Middlesex University, United Kingdom.

## Appendix B: Letter of Consent

Dear Mr/Ms\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for considering taking part in this research process. I am currently a student at London School of Theology, Middlesex University studying for the Doctor of Philosophy research degree. My thesis is on the mission capacity and commitment of the churches in Pakistan. I am hoping to compare the work of the Church of Pakistan (Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses) and of the Full Gospel Assemblies (a Pentecostal group). I will examine the historical context but also seek to identify contemporary challenges, which are emerging for mission workers. The overall aim of the research is to find out how Pakistani churches are involved in Christian mission. It explores three areas of their engagement that is mission theology, mission practice and perceived restrictions for mission engagement. This research will also suggest a way forward for a more meaningful engagement.

As part of my thesis, I am carrying out research to know the views of church leaders concerning mission theology, methods and restrictions. The potential benefits of this pioneering study are; it will inform and strengthen the churches' reflection and practice of mission in Pakistan today. This study can be used furthering the missionary efforts in Pakistan by exploring new possibilities of mission engagement in all of its complexity and diversity. Through this study, Pakistani church can be better mobilized and engaged in Mission. It is hoped that it will be a timely resource to enable Pakistani -led mission by Pakistanis to Pakistanis and beyond.

The research will involve carrying out focus groups and semi-structured interviews of a number of church leaders, congregants and mission workers and these will be audio recorded and analyzed. The surveys will also be conducted to obtain statistical data. All information and data from the interviews, focus groups and surveys will be kept confidential. Any identifying details will be altered or omitted from the dissertation, to protect the identity of participants, coding data with numbers will be used instead of names. In the publishing of reports pseudonyms will be used for participants, agencies and geographical settings. The obtained data will be transcribed and analyzed. The original recordings and any transcripts of the interviews will be kept securely. The research project and any research data will only be read by myself and the examiners, and any data will be destroyed once the project has been marked and approved by the Exam Board.

You have the right to withdraw your consent without explanation at any time, including after you have taken part. Please notify me in writing if you do. If you have any questions or complaints about this research or the research process, please do not hesitate to contact me on [gloriaaaziz@yahoo.com](mailto:gloriaaaziz@yahoo.com) or my project supervisor – Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali on [oxtrad@gmail.com](mailto:oxtrad@gmail.com).

Yours sincerely,  
Gloria Calib

PhD Researcher at London School of Theology, Middlesex University, United Kingdom.

## Appendix C: Consent Form

Participant identification code: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Title of Project: An Evaluation of the Engagement of the Pakistani Churches in Mission**

Name of Researcher: Gloria Calib

Name of Supervisor: Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali

Please read and sign:

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time prior to the research project being written up, without giving a reason. I agree to the interview being audio-recorded.

I agree to take part in the study.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher

Date

Signature

*1 copy for participant; 1 copy for researcher*

# Appendix D: Questionnaire for Interview

## *Part I: History and Extent/Scope of the Denomination*

1. How would you describe the development of your denomination? Who were the key individuals driving the church growth? What were their key contributions?
2. What were the key events or factors that contributed to the growth of the denomination?
3. Which kind of opportunities and threats/challenges did your denomination face at and after formation? How were the opportunities used and the challenges tackled?
4. What missional changes are appearing now in your denomination, which are distinct from the past historical development?
5. What are the distinctive features of your denomination in terms of doctrine and denominational structure?
6. How does the diocesan or congregational structure help to achieve mission goals?

## *Part II: Denominational Theological Basis for Mission*

1. How would you define mission?
2. What are the biblical bases for your mission work? Which theological position or approach for mission work is being used in your denomination?
3. Which of the Old and New Testament texts hold foundational place in the mission theology of Lahore diocese?
4. How relevant is the Old Testament Scripture for the church's mission?

## *Part III: Mission Engagement*

1. How is your church finding ways to reach out to others? Which methods are being used to express mission? (presence, identification, social action, dialogue or evangelism)
2. What is the goal of your missional engagement? How is that goal being achieved?
3. Who in the diocese is doing the evangelism, discipleship and church planting?
4. How does your church equip, empower and mobilize its congregations to be engaged in God's mission purpose in the host community and in the broader world beyond?
5. How is your church engaged in community, particularly through social issues such as economic development, environmental improvements and health care?
6. How is the diocese impacting the transformation of persons, systems (including the church), communities and culture?

## *Part IV: Restrictions and Identification of Effective Strategies*

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your church concerning mission engagement?
2. What kind of challenges is your church facing that restricts or hinders its mission engagement? From within and without?

3. What should be done to enhance your church's missional engagement?

# Appendix E: Focus Group Interview Outline

These introductory remarks and guidelines of topics and questions are to help the discussion to flow. They are presented here as a guide for a semi-structured discussion. It does not have to be mechanically worked through.

## 1. Group Objectives

The aim of the focus groups as a research tool is to explore, understand and compare the experience of mission engagement of Church of Pakistan and Full Gospel Assemblies of Pakistan by evaluating their mission theology, practice and perceived restrictions.

## 2. Group Composition

Focus-group participants will be chosen purposefully in consultation with the denominational leaders in order to represent a diversity of their church life.

## 3. Introductory Remarks

- Introductions
- Purpose: Clear and Specific without too much background details.
- Explain what a focus group is and how it will flow.
- Research Ethics: Recording, transcription details and signing of the consent forms.
- Request that people speak up, speak one at a time and be honest with responses

Questions will be open-ended rather than directed. The participants will be encouraged to share a diversity of experiences and stories. My intention with this project is to focus the research on what I believe to be the most important aspects of mission engagement of Pakistani churches; that is, mission theology, practice and perceived restrictions.

## 4. Question Guide

1. For an introductory topic, invite each person to briefly share, in one or two sentences: **How would you describe your church to a newcomer?** Having listened to one another's initial responses (thank them for sharing).

2. **What is your understanding of mission?** (How would you define and describe mission?) (What comes into your mind when you hear the word 'mission'? You can share words or images).

3. **How does your church practice mission?** Which methods do you use for mission practice/engagement? (Presence, Identification, Dialogue, Action, Evangelism).

4. How does your church **teach about mission? What is the basis of your mission?** Which of the scriptural texts hold a foundational place in your mission theology? (Mosaic Law, Wisdom Literature, Prophetic Literature, Great Commission, Acts, Epistles or Revelation).

5. How has this teaching helped **nurture your mission activity** as a Christian? **What motivates you** to engage in mission?

6. **What are the general practices of contextualization within your church/denomination?** (Examples: Punjabi Zabur, worship style).

7. What **factors detract you from engaging in mission?** What kind of challenges are you facing that hinder your mission engagement? From within and without? (Lack of finances, vision/motivation, team/human resource, training, political set up, etc)

8. How is **mission affected by leadership in your church?** How is the congregation equipped and empowered to be engaged in God's mission purpose in the host community and in the broader world beyond?

9. **What are the strengths and weaknesses of your church in regard to mission engagement?** Do you think your church, perhaps to a greater degree than others, attracts people who are interested in mission and outreach?

10. **How else could mission be encouraged? What is the future of your denomination in mission work?** What should be done to enhance the mission engagement of the denomination?

11. An **'anything else'** question: Thank all participants for sharing their views and stories. If there were one other thing you would really want to tell me, what might that be? (1 minute each around the circle.) Close, thanks and prayer



## Appendix F: Survey Form

### An Evaluation of the Engagement of the Pakistani Churches in Mission

*A Comparative study of Church of Pakistan (Lahore and Hyderabad Dioceses) and Full Gospel Assemblies of Pakistan.*

This survey is being conducted for a PhD research with London School of Theology, Middlesex University, UK. You have been selected to participate in this survey because you are part of one of the above mentioned denominations. Please take some time out to express your opinion and evaluation of the Pakistani churches and their work.

**INSTRUCTIONS: Please read the stated restrictions in mission and rate them on a scale of 0 - 10. “0” indicating that it is not a restriction and “10” indicating that it is the greatest restriction.**

1	Lack of Finance in the local congregations.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
2	Lack of mission awareness among the local congregations.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
3	Local congregation’s busyness with itself – Internal focus.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
4	Lack of mission training in the local congregations.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
5	Lack of concern for the nations or unreached people groups	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
6	Family pressures. Household responsibilities.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
7	Lack of understanding of personal calling.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
8	Fear of persecution because of certain national laws. e.g. 295 C etc.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
9	Mismanagement of resources within the local congregations.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
10	The church structure of my denomination.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
11	Trends of self-centeredness and personal gain in churches.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
12	Lack of prayer.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
13	Lack of discipleship in the churches.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
14	Court cases in the churches over property matters.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
15	Internal politics within churches.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>
16	Lack of effective leadership.	<b>Smallest</b> 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <b>greatest</b>

#### PART II Assessing the Mission Practice

Please indicate your response to the following statements.				
1	My local congregation is engaged in establishing new congregations.	Yes	No	Not Certain
2	My local congregation provides financial supports to other organizations for mission work.	Yes	No	Not Certain

3	My local congregation has a clear strategy or a plan for mission.	Yes	No	Not Certain
4	My local congregation has a department of mission.	Yes	No	Not Certain
5	My local congregation regularly prays for unreached people groups.	Yes	No	Not Certain
6	My local congregation is regularly involved in social action.	Yes	No	Not Certain
7	Our local congregants are regularly involved in literature evangelism.	Yes	No	Occasionally
8	Have you attended a mission seminar in the past 3 years?	Yes	No	Don't Remember
9	Does your local congregation have a yearly budget for missions?	Yes	No	Not Certain
10	My local congregation has evangelistic outreaches every year.	Yes	No	Not Certain
11	My local congregation sends people for mission.	Yes	No	Not Certain
12	My local congregation financially supports other people for missions.	Yes	No	Not Certain
13	Does your local congregation offer mission seminars or training?	Yes	No	Not Certain
14	What percentage of your local congregation's income is used for mission work?	None	1-5%	Above 6%
15	Percentage of my congregation involved in personal witnessing.	None	1-5%	Above 6%
16	Overall the Pakistani Church is a receiving church	Yes	No	NC
17	Overall the Pakistani church is a giving church	Yes	No	NC
18	The Pakistani church without receiving help from foreign churches even with limited resources can complete the task of mission in the country.	Yes	No	NC
19	The Pakistani church due to limited financial resources cannot accomplish the task of mission within the country without foreign aid.	Yes	No	NC
20	Our church has daughter/sister congregations.	None	1 -3	Above 3
<b>Please circle one box in each row to indicate how often in the past year you have shared in mission work:</b>				
21	Prayed for the unreached people group.	Never	Sometimes	Regularly
22	Shared the gospel with non-Christian.	Never	Sometimes	Regularly
23	Shared my personal testimony with non-Christians.	Never	Sometimes	Regularly
24	Supported mission work by financial giving.	Never	Sometimes	Regularly
25	Prayed for missionary workers.	Never	Sometimes	Regularly
26	Involved myself with friendship evangelism.	Never	Sometimes	Regularly

**PART III**

<b>INSTRUCTIONS: This section is concerned with some of your attitudes and beliefs. Read the sentences carefully and think, 'Do I agree with it?'</b>					
<b>If you Agree Strongly, put a circle around</b>	<b>(AS)</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NC</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>DS</b>
<b>If you Agree, put a circle around</b>	<b>AS</b>	<b>(A)</b>	<b>NC</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>DS</b>
<b>If you are Not certain, put a circle around</b>	<b>AS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>(NC)</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>DS</b>
<b>If you Disagree, put a circle around</b>	<b>AS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NC</b>	<b>(D)</b>	<b>DS</b>
<b>If you Disagree Strongly, put a circle around</b>	<b>AS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NC</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>(DS)</b>

<b>Theology of Mission</b>						
1	The goal of evangelism is that people should accept Jesus Christ as their Lord after hearing the gospel.	<b>AS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NC</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>DS</b>

2	The goal of mission is to create harmony among all creation but not to win converts.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
3	God chose Israel to be the agent of God among all the nations.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
4	God chose Israel so that they only would love God and worship Him among other nations.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
5	The purpose of mission is the salvation of mankind.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
6	The purpose of mission is the redemption of the whole creation.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
7	Establishing new Churches is an essential part of mission.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
8	There is a strong and clear foundation for mission in the OT Scripture.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
9	The call of mission is a call of every believer.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
10	Only a few are called for mission work.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
11	Prayer is the most basic way of doing mission.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
12	Lack of missionary zeal in an individual is a sign of the absence of the Holy Spirit.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
13	Disregarding the great commission (Mt 28:19) is an act of disobedience.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
14	The ultimate purpose of mission is not necessarily to win converts for Christ but to be a witness for the glory of God.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
15	Mission is not only about crossing geographical boundaries, but also racial, cultural, economic and religious boundaries.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
16	Mission is the primary responsibility of missionary societies or parachurch organizations.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
17	Mission is the primary responsibility of the local church.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
18	The church is an ambassador of God in the world.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
19	God is missionary by nature.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
20	Christ died for all men, thus all men can be saved by believing in him.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
21	The gospel of Christ is the only hope for the world.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
22	Preaching the gospel to the ends of the world is a necessary condition for Christ's return (Matt. 24:14)	AS	A	NC	D	DS
23	All people who do not put their faith in Jesus and accept him as their personal savior will be condemned to eternal hell.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
24	A person cannot accomplish the mission of Christ without having the baptism of the Holy Spirit in his life.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
25	Salvation is due to the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross, once for all and for all mankind.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
26	The experience of new birth is a sufficient endowment of the Holy Spirit for effectiveness in mission.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
27	Reaching the people groups within Pakistan is the responsibility of the Pakistani church.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
28	Showing godly Christian character is a sufficient witness for Christ in mission.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
29	Not only godly Christian character but also a verbal witness of Christ is an essential part of mission.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
30	The presence of Christian institutions is a sufficient witness for Christ in the prevalent circumstances in Pakistan.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
31	The Church in Pakistan needs to give a verbal testimony to Christ along with the institutional presence.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
32	Corporate worship in an area is a complete witness for winning souls for Christ.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
33	Corporate worship in an area is not sufficient witness without verbal proclamation.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
34	The responsibility for world evangelization primarily rests with the foreign church in the economically developed countries.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
35	The Pakistani church has taken the responsibility for evangelizing its own people.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
36	The economically developed countries have an obligation that their missionary societies should finance the Pakistani church for evangelization.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
37	The foreign missionary societies should be a channel for missions in Pakistan.	AS	A	NC	D	DS

38	Local congregations should be the primary channel for mission in Pakistan.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
39	The indigenous church should provide the finance for the evangelization of Pakistan.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
40	The indigenous church does not have sufficient resources to finance the evangelization of Pakistan.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
41	The Pakistani church has been largely affected by the values and systems of the people that she lives among.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
42	The Pakistani churches lack a vision for mission.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
43	The Pakistani church is also guilty of adopting the values of dishonesty, bribery and corruption.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
44	Earth (Environmental) care is an essential part of mission.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
45	The beneficiaries of the church's developmental projects should only be the Christian community in Pakistan.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
46	All nations irrespective of their religion could benefit from the church's developmental projects.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
47	The church should do more and more developmental projects for the non-Christian community to share the love of God in a practical way with them.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
48	The church should do more developmental projects for the Christian community as they are a marginalized and persecuted community in Pakistan.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
49	The aim of social development should be to show the love of God in order to win converts.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
50	To raise the economic and living standards of living through Christian developmental projects is a sufficient witness.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
51	Every local church should be involved in some kind of developmental work as a witness.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
52	The second coming of Jesus Christ is for gathering his own people and judging those who have rejected him.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
53	Our social action is also a means to express the love of God and to reconcile people to God.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
54	Social action of the church should be separate from the mission of the church.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
55	Church should only focus on spiritual growth and Christ-likeness.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
56	The church should encourage its congregants for dialogue with other faiths even in the recent Pakistani context.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
57	The church should discourage its congregants from dialogue with other faiths in the recent Pakistani context.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
58	Any encounter of faith with other religions should be discouraged in the present Pakistani Context.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
59	Faith conversations are a dynamic part of the relationship with other faiths and should be promoted at all levels.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
60	Active Christian witness is mandatory for all Christians.	AS	A	NC	D	DS
61	Pakistani Christian do not have an effective Christian witness in everyday life.	AS	A	NC	D	DS

**Personal Information**

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: Male

Female

Name of Church \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Denominational affiliation**

CoP - Lahore Dioceses       CoP - Hyderabad Dioceses  | Full Gospel Assemblies

**Position in the local church**

Ordained Minister (Pastor/Elder)  | Parish/Church Leader  | Congregational  
Member

Age Group      15 -30                       30 -50                       Above 50

**A thank you note:**

I value your opinion in this evaluation and thank you for taking time to participate. Praying for your ministry.

**Gloria Calib**

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